

Minutes of Chailey Annual Parish Meeting

Held on 6th May 2016 at Chailey Parish Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Cllr. Mark Evans: Chairman of Chailey PC and Chairman of the meeting.
Cllr. Peter Olbrich: Vice-Chairman of Chailey PC.
Cllrs. Pascal Atkins, Stephen Avery, Roger Barnard, Ken Jordan and Philip O'Connor, all of Chailey PC.
Cllr. Sharon Davy: District Councillor.
Stephen Treharne: Clerk to Chailey PC.
Jack Cranfield: Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
John Smith: Chailey Windmill.
Gary Strangwood: Chailey Sports Club.
David Dembury: Chailey Cricket Club.
Mandy Dembury: Village News.
Ken Furmedge: Chailey Youth Group.
Approximately 12 residents of the village

1. Welcome.

Cllr Evans welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr. John Millam and Sussex Police.

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 29th May 2015.

The minutes of the 2015 Annual Parish meeting were approved.

4. Annual Report from the Chairman of Chailey Parish Council

Cllr. Evans presented his report of the past year.

The early months of 2015 had been difficult ones for the Council with the unexpected need to appoint a new Clerk. This had been achieved in June 2015. The new Clerk had embarked upon a review of the Council's financial and administrative policies and procedures and of the filing systems.

Projects completed included the move of the Parish Office to the Reading Room (meaning that the office is located in the Parish for the first time in many years), the creation of the new website (with thanks to Cllr. Stephen Avery for his work in achieving this) and the repainting of the lettering on the war memorial.

Other key projects underway are the refurbishment of the Sports Pavilion and the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. The Council has agreed a surrender of the lease of the Pavilion returning full responsibility for the building to the Council. The Council has agreed to commit £35,000 to a refurbishment project and the Sports Club is also raising funds. The work has been put out to tender and it is hoped that it will start soon.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is in the early stages of preparation. When completed it will form part of the Lewes Local Plan giving it legal authority. It was vital that residents show support for the process and participate at all stages of the process.

Cllr. Evans referred to the Parish Council's ownership of about half of the commons in Chailey. He thanked Jo Heading, the Ranger, and the Commons Society for their work in preserving this important asset. He was though concerned about the lack of clarity over the management of the commons.

Following the election in 2015 it was necessary to co-opt a number of Councillors. Cllr. Evans thanked those Councillors who had volunteered to be co-opted for picking up the reins. He believed that the routine work of the Council, including responding to planning matters, working with village organisations etc had been carried out effectively and he thanked all Councillors for their work ,often undertaken behind the scenes and unnoticed, and for their support.

Cllr. Evans thanked the volunteers in the village who are vital to the running and existence of the many village organisations.

5. Reports from organisations who work in and/or on behalf of Chailey and its residents.

Cllr. Davy reported on District matters over the year. The sharing of services between Lewes and Eastbourne Councils was working well, although she was keen that the villages were not forgotten. It was likely that ward boundary changes would mean the link between Chailey and Wivelsfield being broken and a new ward of Chailey, Barcombe and Hamsey being created. This was not a move of which Cllr. Davy was in favour, but indications were that it would go ahead. Cllr. Davy agreed that the management of the commons needed to be sorted out between the landowners and Lewes District Council and East Sussex County Council. Cllr. Davy was sympathetic to the need to retain the rural nature of Chailey and building and other developments would need to be carefully managed in coming years. Finally, Cllr. Davy thanked all those who give their time to help in the community.

Mr. Strangwood spoke about the Sports Club, and explained its role as an umbrella organisation for individual clubs such as the Colts Football and Cricket Clubs. He outlined the successes of the two clubs over the past year. The refurbishment of the pavilion had been on the cards for many years and was vital to those many users of the facilities, including many children. He welcomed the involvement of the Council in planning the proposed works and hoped that these would start soon.

The Clerk reported to the meeting on behalf of the Allotments Association and Sussex Police. The Allotments Association had just held its first AGM. A number of new tenants had taken over allotments and a working day is planned to further enhance the overall look of the allotments area. Sussex Police is going through a time of significant change, largely driven by the need to save money. The effect on Chailey will be most evident through the loss of its dedicated PCSO as such officers will no longer be assigned to individual parishes. In future there will be teams of PCSOs working out of Lewes. The aim is to provide greater flexibility with resources being deployed as circumstances demand.

6. The Chailey Neighbourhood Plan ("NHP")

Mr. Cranfield presented a slide show explaining the purposes of a NHP and explaining why it was in Chailey's interests to put one in place. He explained what NHPs are designed to achieve and outlined some of their limitations.

He explained that the Steering Group was currently gathering the evidence that would be needed to support the NHP. This was being done through surveys and questionnaires and through engagement with local residents, businesses and groups. The experience of other Councils, both good and bad, was being used to inform the Steering Group's work.

Mr. Cranfield explained that three Task Groups would be formed to work on the detailed objectives and policies. These would cover Housing and Environment, Economy and Transport, and Community. He repeated Cllr. Evans's request for as many residents as possible to get involved either in working directly with the Steering Group and Task Groups to prepare the plan or by providing ideas and other

input to be considered. It will be very important to be able to show that the village has fully engaged with the NHP process. The NHP is for the village not for the Council or the Steering Group.

Mr. Cranfield advised the meeting that a questionnaire was being included in Chailey News. Cllr. Jordan stressed the need for Parish involvement as it would in due course would necessary to show that this had happened.

7. Questions and comments.

Cllr. O'Connor spoke about the proposed refurbishment works at the Sports Pavilion and outlined what was proposed.

Mr. Furmedge spoke about Chailey Youth Club. He paid tribute to Gemma Kybert who had run the Club for many years but had now stepped down. About 30 young people attend the Club regularly, but it was increasingly difficult to keep the Club going without the energy that would be injected by vitally needed new adult volunteers.

Cllr. Olbrich spoke on behalf of Councillors and the village to thank Cllr. Evans for acting as Chairman of the Parish Council for the past year.

Cllr. Evans thanked Cllr. Olbrich for his comments and those present for attending. He brought the meeting to a close.

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