



# Chailey Parish Council

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## Draft minutes subject to confirmation

**A Meeting of Full Council was held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2009 in the Reading Room, Chailey Green, commencing at 7.45 pm.**

**Present:** P. Olbrich (Chairman)  
Cllrs. M. Downey, J. Millam, J. Tillard & L. Waller.

**Public present:** None.

**In attendance:** R. Seccombe (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for absence received from:** *[text for item 1 to be supplied at a later date]*
2. **Declarations of interest:** None.
3. **Items not on the agenda which the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency:** None.
4. **Council resolution (No. 09/138):** to agree and sign as a true record the Minutes of the of the Annual Meeting and Full Council held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009.  
**Council decision:** Accepted.
5. **Matters arising for information:** None.

**6. Update on Chailey Parish Survey 2009.**

Cllr Waller reported that a total of 107 Parish Survey questionnaires had been received (representing approx. 10% of households) and that the responses from the on-line and paper questionnaires were in the process of being consolidated prior to issue of a report on the survey. An agenda paper was circulated which summarised key findings from the survey sections dealing with housing, leisure, travel, traffic & parking. Members reviewed the questionnaire responses and the comments submitted by respondents.

Cllr Waller reported that a significant number of respondents had raised concerns about the following matters:

- Lack of footpaths along the A275 between S. Chailey and N. Chailey making it difficult for pedestrians to access St Peter's CE Primary school or for residents from central and southern Chailey to access the outlets in N. Chailey;
- Danger of crossing the A272 in the vicinity of the N. Chailey crossroads and crossing the A272 at Chailey Green, South Street and the Mill Lane junction area - it was noted that whilst there is a signal controlled crossing at the primary school itself there are no other such crossings on approach roads;
- Speed of traffic on the A275 especially on the stretch of highway near the S. Chailey stores area of South Street ;
- Lack of integrated cycle ways within the parish and cycling safety problems associated with frequency of large vehicles on small rural roads.
- Safety of the junctions of the Beggars Wood Rd, North Common Rd. & Haywards Heath Rd.

Members commented that the various road-related issues would be raised again with Highways. It was noted that responses with regard to rural public transport provision were to be discussed later

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in the meeting under item 8. Questionnaire responses relating to housing and development will be incorporated within the Village Design Statement and will be discussed with LDC Planning Services. It was noted that The majority of respondents favoured increased provision of starter homes for young adults and small family homes as either single dwellings or units in developments of less than 10 houses. With regard to the Chailey brickworks site, the majority of respondents favoured provision of leisure facilities or a nature conservation area if/when the brickworks were to close. Cllr Waller was thanked for her on-going work in compiling the survey report.

#### **7. BT consultation on red telephone boxes in Chailey parish.**

Members had previously been circulated with an agenda paper which provided information about the current BT consultation on the future of red telephone boxes within the parish. Members noted that BT has identified three boxes which, according to BT, have insufficient use to justify continued provision of the service. These are the box adjacent to the A275 near Swan House in S. Chailey (163 calls made pa); the box outside the old post office adjacent to the A272 in North Chailey (158 calls pa) and the box outside the Reading Room at Chailey Green (16 calls made pa). The telephone kiosk located at Chailey Green has Grade II listed status and is not under threat of removal of the structure itself. Members were informed that residents' views are to be sought by way of the council's article in the October edition of 'Chailey News'. The three alternative options put forward by BT were discussed, namely:

- withdrawal of the existing chargecard telephone service (the phones concerned do not accept coins) and ultimately removal of the kiosk;
- 'adoption' of the kiosk structure by the local parish council without continued provision of telephone service for a nominal sum of £1 (ie an empty box) and any electricity costs for lighting;
- continued provision of the service with an on-going 'sponsorship' by the parish council at an annual cost of £300 pa to be funded from the parish council Precept.

Members queried whether BT was actually permitted to withdraw the telephone service from listed boxes and asked the Clerk to check on this matter. Members made the following comments:

- If a box were to be 'adopted' the council would incur future insurance and maintenance charges (and electricity charges if lit at night). From a distance it would not be immediately apparent to passers by whether a service was available within the box or not.
- The annual 'sponsorship' charge to retain services may be an unwelcome drain on the council's resources and may not be a cost effective use of council funds in terms of benefit to the community, given the prevalence of mobile phones and the number of calls currently being made from the boxes.
- If the service was discontinued hirers of public meeting places with no landlines near existing public boxes would need to be notified about the removal of the service. In the event of an emergency calls would have to be made from mobiles or from nearby private landlines within the parish.

The deadline for the public consultation is 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009 however the parish council's representation needs to be received by LDC Planning for incorporation in the district wide response in time to meet the BT deadline. Members agreed to discuss the matter again on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009 after taking into account any comments received from residents.

#### **8. To consider bus service provision within Chailey.**

Members noted recent press coverage of problems associated with the frequency, cost and degree of integration of the rural bus network within the parish and were supplied with information about concessionary fare schemes, route subsidies and transport policy matters. Cllr Waller informed Members that the recent Parish Survey had highlighted concerns about off peak services, reliability and limited choice of routes. Members reviewed the current subsidised 'Rider' services in the parish, including the main east- west A272 route (from Uckfield to Haywards Heath), the north-south A275&A272 route (from Lewes to Newick) and the infrequent village Rider services serving the Sheffield Park and S. Chailey areas and the weekly 'shopping' bus to Brighton. Members also noted the provision of school buses and public buses serving the three schools in the parish. Members remarked that many residents were concerned about the high cost of full fares and discussed the problems of low bus occupancy rates. ESCC requires that any subsidised routes must cover at least 40% of running costs from fares. ESCC currently incurs considerable expense in provision of the subsidies for 25% of public bus journeys made in the county. Members were

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informed that Airs and ESCC Highways are meeting in the near future to discuss pilot routes for new community transport schemes and that Chailey's transport needs will be reviewed.

#### **9. Various matters relating to maintenance at Mill Brooks.**

Members were advised that various maintenance problems at Mill Brooks had been reported to the parish council and that these have been referred on to LDC. These problems relate to graffiti, road signage, litter and litter collection, broken gates/fencing & car park white lining. Graffiti has been removed and missing road signs replaced by LDC. LDC has conducted a site visit attended by the LDC Estates Manager, the LDC Housing Officer and a representative of Street Cleansing and the following action has been agreed

- A contractor is to be sought by LDC to provide a more regular sweep and litter pick than is currently offered. The Street Cleansing team is currently under-resourced.
- LDC will repair the damaged gates in the area and ESCC is to be contacted by LDC about remedial work on the fence by the school playing field.
- Fly tipping will be cleared from the pathways and they will be weed sprayed and cut back as appropriate.

Members noted that members of Chailey Youth Group had conducted a successful litter pick in the S.Chailey area.

#### **10. To consider requests from Chailey Youth Group.**

Members discussed a request from Chailey Youth Group (CYG) for further assistance with running costs (in addition to payment of hall hire fees), namely for costs of baby sitting incurred by single parent volunteers who have been helping to run group meetings. Members did not wish to use council funds to contribute to these indirect costs and were informed that alternative grant sources may be available and that advice was being obtained from Action in rural Sussex. Members also discussed proposals for provision of a community shed to be located near the Mill Brooks play area to be managed by CYG. Young residents would be able to borrow sports items from the shed for table tennis, cricket, football etc. Members were not supportive of the idea due to the vulnerability of a shed to vandalism and/or theft given the recent spate of such incidents reported to the police in rural areas of Lewes District. It was noted that CYG continues to be concerned about access to the alternative play area at Roeheath due to safety problems in crossing the A275. Members referred back to previous discussions under item 6 on adequacy of footpath and crossing provision on main roads.

#### **11. Reports from Council Representatives on Village Organisations.**

- Cllr Tillard, Council Representative to the SLR Highways Liaison meeting, brought Members attention to the previously circulated notes of the liaison meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2009. He referred to discussions with ESCC Highways about overhanging vegetation near 'Chippinge' on North Common Road. Members noted that various residents had complained to the parish council about the poor visibility along North Common Road and that there had been three recent minor accidents on the road. The Clerk was asked to request that ESCC Highways repair the damage to kerbs caused by one of the accidents. ESCC Highways had advised the parish council representatives that it was possible for the parish council to issue its own 'vegetation cut back orders' and that Crowborough Town Council had recently used these orders and would be able to provide advice on the matter. At the liaison meeting ESCC Highways stated that they had inspected the hedges in the area and did not believe that it was a high priority matter requiring action. Members were informed that it is the responsibility of property owners to ensure that vegetation does not overhang the carriageway. The Clerk was asked to contact the owner of 'Chippinge' and to request that the roadside hedges be regularly inspected and trimmed back. The response to the request is to be notified to Members.
- Members were informed that there had been a further incident at the parish allotments involving theft of property and poultry. Cllr Millam, Member Responsible for Allotments, commented that provision of improved security measures around the entire site would not be cost effective and noted that the Police were to be made aware of the incident.

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- Cllr Downey, Representative to Chailey Sports Club, informed Members that a club meeting was soon to be held and that the club was concerned that the grants budget held by the Football Foundation was under pressure which may impact adversely on grant availability for the proposed pavilion.

## 12. Finance Report to Council and revision of ear-marked reserves.

Members had previously been circulated with details of bank balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009 and bank credit ratings as at 7<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Ledger bank balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009 amounted to 8,215.75 (current account) and £36,999.16 (deposit account). Details of receipts and payments including the Clerk's salary and expenses were provided for inspection by Members (July and August 2009 listings). The net operating cash surplus before capital expenditure for the 5 months to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009 was reported at £24.50. The next installment of Precept will be received in October 2009. The low operating surplus in the year to date is caused by the timing of major payments, particularly insurance and grants under the council's small grants scheme. Capital expenditure incurred in the year to date amounted to £16,220.28. It was noted that a sum of £1,278.50 had been received from AirS under the RASP scheme to cover the costs of improved signage and information boards within the parish.

Members reviewed the level of ear-marked reserves and in the light of recent expenditure on the windmill and payment of legal fees decided to adjust the reserves from a level of £58,000 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 to £38,685 as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009, comprised as follows:

Ear marked reserves	As at 31.8.09
Chailey Sports Pavilion	30,000
Outdoor play provision	7,125
Funds held on account for third parties – refundable deposits and payments on account re legal fees	625
Legal expenses	615
Windmill re-painting (retention)	320
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38,685</b>

**Council resolution (No. 09/139):** to set the level of the council's ear-marked reserves at a level of £38,685 as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009.

**Council decision:** Accepted.

## 13. CONFIDENTIAL (legal matters):

- **Leydene Cottage, Lewes Road deed of grant for approval.**
- **Chailey Green deed of grant (Sclater Estate) confirmation of issue.**
- **Chailey delegated management licence (LDC) update.**
- **Little Exceat – fencing update.**
- **Little Exceat – proposed access way update.**
- **Review of encroachment, parking & turning issues on Chailey PC common land**

Minutes for this item appear in Appendix 1 which will be classified as 'CONFIDENTIAL' until the legal matters have been resolved. Whilst the discussions on legal matters included in item 13 were held in 'closed session' the resultant resolutions on two of the matters may be disclosed since the matters were concluded. These resolutions are reproduced below:

**Council resolution (No. 09/140):** to authorise Cllrs Olbrich and Millam to sign, on behalf of the council, the Deed of Grant between Chailey Parish Council and Sally Thomas of Leydene Cottage, Lewes Road. The signing is to be witnessed by the Clerk and the council's seal is to be affixed to the document.

**Council decision:** Accepted.

**Council resolution (No. 09/141):** to authorise Cllrs Olbrich and Millam to sign, on behalf of the council, the Common Land Delegated Management Licence Agreement between Lewes District Council & Chailey Parish Council. The signing is to be witnessed by the Clerk and the council's seal is to be affixed to the document.

**Council decision:** Accepted.

**14. Correspondence for noting:** A detailed listing of correspondence received had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members noted the correspondence received and issued.

**15. Risk Implications:** None.

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**16. Implications to Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Section 17:** See item 11 re theft at the parish allotments.

**17. Any Other Business:**

Members raised the following matters:

- Cllr Millam reported that he had been approached by CPRE with queries about planning issues at Wivelsden Farm, N. Common Rd. He had reported that the council acted as a standard consultee with regard to a recent planning application for an extension to consent for a lorry park at the farm and noted that the council had expressed support. He had explained that opposition to the application had been raised locally due to the volume of heavy vehicles engaged on works which were not associated with the planning application. The council had been notified by District Cllr Davy that investigations by LDC Planning and the Environment Agency had not revealed any breach of planning or other regulations at the site in relation to recent earth-moving works.
- The Clerk notified Members that the Reading Room may have hirers running activities for three different children's groups after the October school half term and that a number of minor safety modifications to internal fixtures and fittings would be required to satisfy Ofsted requirements. Costings would be obtained for approval.
- Members were advised that the next SLCC Regional Conference will be held in Uckfield on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and that any Members interested in attending should request the Clerk to make a booking.
- The annual conference of parish and town councils run by LDC and SALC is to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2009 in Plumpton and will be attended by the Clerk and a provisional booking will be made for the Chairman.
- It was noted that ESCC is holding a Play Strategy meeting in Seaford on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009. Members decided not to send a representative to the meeting.

**18. Date of next Full Council meeting:** Confirmed as 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

The meeting closed at 9.47 pm.

**Signed:**

**Chairman**

**Date:**

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