



# Chailey Parish Council

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## Minutes

**A Meeting of Full Council was held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in the Reading Room, Chailey Green, commencing at 7.41pm.**

**Present:** Cllr K. Gould (Chairman)

Cllrs. P. Carpenter, M Evans, K. Gould, J. Tillard & L. Waller.

**Public present:** Two (part of meeting) : Mr Jordan representing the Vale of Sussex Society and Miss Kybert representing Chailey Youth Group.

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

1. **Apologies:** Cllrs. D. Cowan, M. Downey, J-P Ellis & P. Olbrich
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. 09/150):** to agree and sign as a true record the Minutes of the of Full Council held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009.  
**Council decision:** Accepted.
5. **Matters arising for information:** None.
6. **To consider the following appointments:**  
**Council Representative to Outside Bodies:**
  - representative to Chailey Common LNR Management Committee
  - representative to Chailey commons Society**Post of Responsibility:**
  - **Communications Advisor**

Appointments to posts vacated following the resignation of Cllr Hampton were deferred to a later date. Members took the opportunity to thank the former councillor Sean Hampton, in absentia, for his services to the council during his period of office.

**7. To update the Register of Members' Interests.**

Members were given the opportunity to check and update the Register for 'Appointments to Outside Bodies' and other interests.

**8. To consider feedback on the SALC Councillors' Info. Update and to complete the SALC Councillors' 2010 training requirements survey.**

Members had previously been circulated with notes arising from Cllr Waller's attendance at a recent SALC councillor's update day. The following matters were discussed:

- Reference was made to the guidance on annual parish meetings and Members discussed the appropriate time horizons to be covered by the review of past activities and plans for the year ahead.
- It was noted that parish councils have powers to contribute to the costs of PCSO provision. Members commented that a substantial sum is paid by residents as part of the council tax charge and councillors did not wish to introduce additional funding of police services via the

Initials:

Date:

Local precept. Nevertheless Members noted that PCSOs have an important role to play in combating crime and disorder within the parish. A parish adjoining Chailey parish is reported to be considering inclusion of PCSO funding in the budget for 2010-2011. Chailey Members did not wish to trigger removal of PCSO cover by suggesting that such costs might be included in the Precept and believed that such costs would result in an unacceptable increase in the Precept.

- As discussed within council on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009 parish councils may operate as landlords for up to six homes. This is subject to the council obtaining the 'Power of wellbeing' status which involved training of 80% of Members, the CiLCA qualification for the Clerk and satisfaction of at least 67% of elected (as opposed to co-opted) Members. In the case of Chailey the high proportion of co-optees would prevent 'Power of Well Being' status until at least May 2011.

Members were asked to complete and return a questionnaire on training needs issued by LDALC for the purposes of the 2010 SALC training programme. Members were asked if they were interested in attending a planning seminar to be arranged in Cooksbridge in early 2010. Four Members expressed interest, subject to availability on the date to be notified, and the Hamsey Clerk is to supply details in due course. Members were also asked if they would like to send a representative to a training session about website recording of parish action plans in Ringmer in March 2010. The session aims to facilitate updating of the Chailey action plan on the Community Led Action Plan website run by South East Rural Community Councils. Members agreed to nominate a delegate nearer the time.

**Items 10 & 11 were taken out of sequence.**

**10. To consider pedestrian crossing provision.**

An agenda paper had been circulated with details of a proposed pedestrian crossing across the A272 at Chailey Heritage School, which had been approved 'in principle' by ESCC's Transport and Environment Committee on 8.9.2009 as satisfying the criteria for provision of crossings. The proposed crossing is yet to be evaluated in terms of its ranking on the waiting list.

The following information was supplied to Members:

- The ESCC criteria for crossing provision is for the site to achieve a sample  $PV^2$  value (where P=pedestrians crossing within 50 metres of the site per hour and V= two way traffic flow of vehicles per hour) of at least  $0.2 \times 10^8$  or at least one pedestrian casualty in the last three years. P gives an indication of the level of demand for the crossing and the higher the value of V the harder it will be for a pedestrian to find a safe gap in the traffic through which to cross.
- With regard to the proposed Chailey Heritage crossing site no pedestrian casualties have been recorded on in the latest three year period. The school has supplied an estimate of 32 as the number of people that would cross in an hour during a school outing and the average hourly daytime vehicle flow on the A272 determined from an existing automatic traffic count is 830. This gives a  $PV^2$  value of  $0.22 \times 10^8$  (rather than the higher figure inadvertently shown in ESCC minutes of  $0.28 \times 10^8$ ).

Members commented as follows:

- Members expressed concern that neither the parish council nor the county or district councillor for Chailey had been notified about the petition and referral of the proposed crossing to the ESCC Committee for its consideration.
- Members noted that at present the footpaths on the north side of the A272 offer limited scope for wheelchair access to sites of interest – the narrow tarmac footpath towards the St George's site (formerly linking to the old 'Boys Heritage' site) ends abruptly and the only way forward is by unsurfaced mud tracks over the common which are not suitable for wheelchair traffic. The roadside footpath going west from the proposed crossing point only provides access to residential properties.
- As part of the proposed fencing and grazing scheme for Chailey Common a combined pedestrian and animal crossing has already been proposed by ESCC Countryside Management in conjunction with the Chailey Common LNR Management Committee for a site to the east of the site for the Chailey Heritage School crossing described above. This crossing linking Red House and Memorial Commons would have a boxed area set back off the road for gathering before crossing.

Initials:

Date:

- Members recommend that the demand and needs of the two sites on the A272 should be considered at the same time when priority setting is next undertaken in July 2010 so that any eventual crossing takes into account the needs of all potential users.
- Members noted that they are repeatedly contacted by residents of South Chailey with concerns about the safety of crossing the A275 and the parish council urges that this crossing at the Mill Lane/South Street junction is given high priority (currently ranked 10 on the waiting list). This would provide a safe way of linking the residential areas on either side of the A275 and would improve access to the village stores/PO and Public House on the east side of the A275 and the school on the west side of the A275.

#### **11. To consider Community Transport and the ESCC Bus Strategy Consultation.**

Members considered the proposal by Airst/ESCC to hold a public meeting in January to gather feedback about local demand for CT schemes. At the time of the council meeting, the Parish Hall was available for hire on the morning of 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2010 however councillors felt that attendance would be low due to the location of the hall relative to the bulk of the population. Members commented that a meeting based in Chailey School would encourage participation by teenagers in the village and would provide a convenient venue for the residents of South Chailey where most of the parish's population is concentrated. The Clerk was requested to ask whether the subject of CT suggestions could be incorporated as part of citizenship/civic studies at the school in time for the meeting in January. The school management is to be approached to see whether a public meeting could be held at the school.

Further to discussion on the ESCC Bus Strategy within council on 20<sup>th</sup> October (FC minutes item 7) an agenda paper had been circulated with details of the following topics: facilities for passengers; information provision, concessionary fares and fares and ticketing and these were briefly discussed by Members. The ESCC hierarchy of school, peak, daytime and off peak services for the supported bus services was circulated. The Clerk confirmed that specific feedback on route 121 had been sent to ESCC Transport following discussion on 20.10.09. The Clerk was asked to send a representation on the Bus Strategy to ESCC on behalf of the council.

Members were informed that feedback from ESCC Transport indicated that it was unlikely that funding would be made available for a supervisor/assistant to travel on route 121 to escort children travelling to and from South Chailey to St Peter's School, Chailey Green because of budget constraints.

#### ***Item 14 was then considered out of sequence.***

#### **14. To consider the draft Budget and Precept for 2010/2011.**

Members had previously been circulated with details of recent changes in annual Precept in the parish and in the weighted average cost per Band D property. The Precept has remained at £43k for the past two years (2008/9 and 2009/2010). Members examined a breakdown of forecast revenue and expenditure for 2010-2011 which takes account of inflation and changes in the level of activities undertaken.

Members agreed on the following matters:

- the grants and donations budget is to be adjusted downwards from £7,000 to £4,500 (in line with actual historic levels for this caption) – this matches the reduction in deposit interest associated with the downturn in interest rates in the financial markets;
- net recurring expenditure is to be adjusted for increases in inflation since the last time the Precept was raised and for known and estimated changes in contractual rates eg staff costs;
- no 'general' provision for contingencies is to be made since the Budget includes contingencies for repairs and renewals within the Parish Maintenance, Reading Room and Windmill cost captions. Working capital is considered to be adequate given the forecast timing of drawdown of ear-marked reserves in 2010-2011;
- no provision is to be made for election costs falling due in 2011 (up to £2,800 if election 'contested');
- Members noted that provision has been allowed for in the mill budget for repairs including possible fuse box replacement in the mill and granary. Cllr Evans reported that at the Friends of Chailey Windmill AGM mention had been made of acquisition of a generator as an alternative to mains supply. Electricity costs are high relative to opening hours and

Initials:

Date:

consumption each year. Members commented that they were opposed to the use of a generator on various grounds:

- (i) infrequent use of petrol fuelled generators tends to lead to problems in starting and operating the generator since the fuel settles and deteriorates over time;
  - (ii) possibility of noise and fumes affecting stewards, visitors and residents;
  - (iii) fire risk of storing/using petrol near a timber structure (insurance risks);
  - (iv) a reliable generator may cost more than the £100 suggested at the committee meeting.
- Uptake of an alternative electricity tariff with no standing charge element is to be suggested to the mill committee.
- Members decided that adequate provision should be made in the Budget for the costs of upgrading water supply apparatus at the allotments and for metered consumption charges.
  - Members decided not to make provision for the registration and training costs of £1,100 associated with Power of Well Being Status (see item 8).

Without any provision for loan payments or other costs associated with a proposed play site, the Precept was provisionally set at a level of £46,500. The costs associated with land purchase and site preparation, administrative and legal costs, equipment, running costs and financing costs for the proposed play site will be considered within council in December. The deadline for Precept submission is 6<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

***Following the arrival of Mr Jordan, item 9 was considered.***

**9. Presentation by the Vale of Sussex Society.**

Mr Ken Jordan of the Vale of Sussex society (VSS) had been invited to attend the meeting to inform Members about the activities and objectives of the Vale of Sussex Society (the Vale being the land that lies between the South Downs and the High Weald AONB). Reference was made to the threats to the landscape from housing targets in the South East Plan with approximately 1,000 homes to be built in the plan period to 2026 in the area between the South Downs National Park and the High Weald. Such housing would impact on the views from the National Park and AONB as well as on views within the Vale itself. Mr Jordan emphasised that threats need to be monitored and the general public needs to be encouraged to get involved in the campaigns. He said that reliance on the work of heritage and landscape organisations alone is not enough.

Mr Jordan outlined the aims of the VSS as follows: to reduce speeding traffic; to maintain grass margins to full width, to extend the network of licensed paths; to ensure rights of way are fully accessible and to organise events for the enjoyment of the countryside.

VSS has organised various campaigns including 'Slow Down, Share the Roads' and the Quiet Lanes campaign. A booklet on walks and footpaths in the Vale is being prepared to enable residents and visitors to appreciate the scenery of the Vale.

VSS is a membership based voluntary organisation and has recently entered a partnership agreement with CPRE which operates on a national basis. Consideration is being given as to how to involve parish councils whilst attempting to avoid the conflicts that may arise between neighbouring parishes. Mr Jordan was thanked for giving up his time to attend the meeting.

***Following the arrival of Miss Kybert, items 12&13 were considered.***

**12. To consider parish outdoor play facilities.**

Gemma Kybert had previously been invited to attend the meeting to provide feedback from Chailey Youth Group (CYG) on facilities for outdoor play in Chailey. She was asked to comment on the play facilities at Mill Brooks in South Chailey. Members noted that development contributions of £10,886.59 for equipped play space and £2556.13 for informal play space are available for enhancing the equipped and informal play areas at Mill Brooks (to be defrayed by 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010).

Ms Kybert made the following comments:

- Users of the equipped play area do not like the wood chips used as surfacing since they are hard to fall on and cause skin grazing. Members of the public apparently try to remove the chips to use as mulch in their gardens. Residents are concerned that cats foul the wood chips. Users would prefer impact-absorbing 'soft' tarmac instead.
- Users and residents do not think that the picnic tables serve the purpose intended – they are not used by parents/carers supervising younger children on the play equipment. They tend to be used by older children who sit on top of the tables with 'nothing to do'. The picnic benches are often surrounded by unsightly litter.

Initials:

Date:

- Teenagers in the area are in the process of producing a video about life in a rural village – the video starts with shots of the ‘No ball games’ signs in Mill Brooks. There are no available open spaces in S. Chailey for an informal ‘kick around’. The open spaces in the parish are at Roeheath Village Green and N. Chailey recreation ground – both are not within walking distance of S. Chailey and there are currently no footpaths linking North and South Chailey.
- The 6 -16 year olds would appreciate provision of a ‘caged ball sports unit’ (either fixed or mobile) instead of the picnic area. Consideration could be given to lowering the raised turf area. Members of the Youth Group have previously tried out a mobile caged ball unit at Newhaven Fort and a static caged ball spots unit located in a residential area of Brighton. Residents living in close proximity to the Brighton facility have reported to CYG that the soundproofing on the interior of the cage reduces any noise disturbance even for homes close to the unit. The mesh of the cage could be painted in green to blend with vegetation. The unit is lockable. Members of CYG have volunteered to do fund raising for signage if the request is approved. The caged units are reported to be very popular for 1 or 2 a side football/basketball. Residents have been informally canvassed about the proposal by CYG and their comment was that it might attract too many young people into the cul-de-sac but were otherwise supportive. The unit would have to have restricted ‘opening times’ to minimise any noise/movement disturbance to residents late in the evening. Residents have indicated that they would be willing to act as volunteer caretakers. The impact on residents was discussed with particular mention of possible noise disturbance during summer evenings.

Members asked the Clerk to pass on the suggestions to LDC Parks & Community Services.

Members then proceeded to discuss the proposed outdoor play project and the land plot currently up for sale off Markstakes Lane. Miss Kybert provided a ‘*wish list*’ supplied after consulting with members of the Chailey Youth Group. The list ‘Our Voice, Our Choice’ read as follows: Football pitch; Cricket pitch; Rugby pitch; Skate board park; Youth shelter; Hard tarmac area to play tennis or basketball/netball; Benches & Bins. CYG has also expressed interest in provision of a large board for outdoor ‘art attack’ style murals/graffiti to be re-painted each month on a rota basis. This provision may help reduce the incidence of ‘tagging’ by offering an alternative outlet for creative expression.

Members agreed that it would be helpful to set up an advisory committee to consider the detailed plans and proposals for the outdoor play project. The committee should report back to Full Council on a regular basis and would have no powers to sanction expenditure or enter contractual agreements. Cllr Waller and Olbrich (the latter serves as Member for Outdoor Play Provision) were nominated to serve on the council and Miss Kybert agreed to join the committee in her capacity as representative of Chailey Youth Group. It was noted that representatives of Sussex Police Community Safety are to carry out a site visit on 18.11.09 and that if no major objections were identified the advisory committee could continue with its investigations.

### **13. CONFIDENTIAL (Legal Matters)**

#### **To consider land acquisition for outdoor play facilities.**

Minutes for this item appear in Appendix 1 which will be classified as 'CONFIDENTIAL'

***The meeting then continued with item 15, item 14 having already been considered (page 3).***

### **15. Reports from Council Representatives on Village Organisations: None.**

### **16. To note the terms and conditions of the BT payphone adoption agreement.**

Members were informed that following discussion within council on 20.10.09 the Swan House payphone box adoption agreement had been received for return and an un-metered supply agreement with EDF had also been received. Members were advised that the insurers had supplied a costing for insuring the box to cover safe disconnection from the mains and removal from site (no replacement box would be obtained by the council in the event of an incident involving damage beyond repair). The cost for the remaining portion of the insurance year to 31.5.09 is approx £25 (subject to date item put ‘under cover’). The box would automatically be included in the public liability cover as a structure for which CPC has responsibility for

Initials:

Date:

maintenance. After discussion of costs and liabilities the Clerk was advised to proceed with submission of the BT & EDF agreements under resolution 09/143 dated 20.10.09.

**17. Finance Report to Council and to nominate Members as signatories on a fixed rate deposit account ('specified investment' under s15 LGA 2003).**

Members were circulated with details of bank balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009 and bank credit ratings as at 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Ledger bank balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009 amounted to £2,363.58 (current account) and £56,655.58 (deposit account). Details of receipts and payments including the Clerk's salary and expenses were provided for inspection by Members (October 2009 listing). The net operating cash surplus before capital expenditure for the 7 months to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009 was reported at £14,086.95. Capital expenditure incurred in the year to date amounts to £16,220.28.

Members noted that the production of Chailey News is currently running at a loss after grants and advertising revenue and donations. Members discussed whether to change the frequency of payments of the £2k annual grant. Further information is awaited from the Church treasurer. Members considered whether to request South East Water to supply a meter to the Reading Room (currently a meter is available free of charge). There is an option to revert to payment based on rateable value after one year without penalty if metered consumption charges exceed charges based on rateable value. Members agreed to proceed with metering of supply since water usage is minimal.

Members were informed that the proposed transfer of a sum of £25k to a fixed term 6 month Sterling deposit account (Guaranteed Reserve with Halifax/HBOS) satisfies the criteria for a 'specified investment' under s15 LGA 2003 and, in accordance with the Treasury Management Code of Practice in the Public Services, would be subject to regular monitoring of the bank's credit rating (see monthly Financial Report agenda paper section D). The account is within the UK Government's Credit Guarantee Scheme. Cllrs Olbrich, Gould and Waller had previously agreed to act as cheque signatories (two signatures required for withdrawals as with the council's other bank accounts). See item 15 of FC minutes dated 20.10.09.

**Council resolution (No. 09/151):** to open a fixed rate Guaranteed Reserve account with Halifax plc for a period of 6mths at the rate prevailing upon account opening with a deposit of £25k drawn from the council's Bank of Ireland instant access Treasurer's Deposit account.

**Council decision:** Accepted.

**18. Correspondence for noting:** Members were consulted about a request from Anchor (home handyman services for the elderly and disabled) for accommodation for interviewing householders about their needs. It was agreed that interviews could be conducted at the Reading Room free of hire charge during the day time when there were no prior bookings.

Members noted that a complaint had been received with regard to the state of the footpath on the A275 between the entrance to the brickworks and the Mill Lane junction bus bay and also with regard to Green Lane (byway open to all traffic) – these are to be discussed with Highways at the SLR meeting in December.

**19. Risk Implications:** None.

**20. Implications to Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Section 17:** None.

**21. Any Other Business:**

- Members noted that the hedge at Chippinge on North Common Road had been substantially cut back during the recent road closure for works by Highways and that the damaged kerbs have been replaced.
- Cllr Millam stated that the pulley mechanism at the top of the flagpole was faulty and that in his opinion the flagpole itself did not need to be replaced (see prior discussion within council on 20.10.09 item 8).

**22. Date of next meeting: Full Council 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009**  
**(NB: the next Full Council is on the second Tuesday of the month)**

The meeting closed at 10.12 pm.

Initials:

Date:

**Signed:**

**Chairman**

**Date:**

**Initials:**

**Date:**