



**Chailey Parish Council**  
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**Minutes**

**A Meeting of Full Council was held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015 in the Reading Room, Chailey Green, commencing at 8.00pm**

**Present:** Cllr. M. Evans (Chairman).  
Cllrs J. Millam, K. Matthews, P. Olbrich, S Avery, P Atkins, P O’Conor

**Public present:** Two

**In attendance:** S Treharne (Clerk).

**15/65. Apologies:** None

**15/66. Declarations of Interest:** None.

**15/67. Questions/comments from members of the public:** Two members of the public were present to discuss item 9 on the agenda (the refurbishment of the Sports Club) and it was agreed that they should contribute when this issue was considered.

**15.68 New Councillor and Clerk:** The Chairman welcomed Philip O’Conor to the Council and to his first Full Council meeting. He also welcomed Stephen Treharne to his first meeting as Clerk, and reported that he had received a note from the previous Clerk, Bettina Newell, sending her best wishes to the Council.

**15/69. Items considered as a matter of urgency:** None

**15/70. To agree the Minutes of the Full Council held 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015:** these were approved by Councillors and signed by the Chairman

**15/71. To consider applications to be co-opted as members of the Council:** the Clerk reported that there were two applications to be considered at this meeting. A further expression of interest had been received which could lead to a further application being made.

(1) **Mr A Scott:** Councillors considered Mr Scott’s application and his email dated 26th June 2015. None of the existing Councillors knew Mr Scott although one lives across the road from Mr Scott and knows of him. Councillors welcomed Mr Scott’s application and considered that his skills and experience could be of great assistance to the Council. Cllr Olbrich proposed and Cllr Atkins seconded a motion that Mr Scott should be co-opted to the Council. This was agreed and the Clerk was asked to make the necessary arrangements.

(2) **Mr JP Ellis:** Councillors considered Mr Ellis’s application and his letter dated 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015. As a former Councillor Mr Ellis was known to some of the existing Councillors but his reasons for wishing to rejoin the Council were not clear from his letter which Councillors considered to be too brief and unspecific. Mr Ellis’s

application was not accepted at this time. The Chairman and the Clerk would contact Mr Ellis telling him of the Councillor's decision and seeking more specific and powerful reasons for his wishing to rejoin.

**15/72 To consider the refurbishment of the Sports Club:** this item was moved up the agenda in order to accommodate the two members of the public present.

The Chairman briefly reminded Councillors of the long history of this matter, and that the current position is that the Sports Club ("the Club") has procured estimates for the pavilion to be refurbished. He also reminded Councillors that for some years the Council has held a reserve intended to help meet the costs of the works. The Club was now at a stage where it was looking for an indication the Council was willing to commit funds to the project.

Cllr Olbrich advised the meeting that the pavilion is in a very poor state of repair. He and Cllr Barnard had conducted a site visit and had found smashed windows, broken tiles and other damage both inside and outside the building.

The Clerk was asked to explain the advice which had been received about the possibility of reclaiming the VAT incurred on the costs of the works. The Clerk said that the advice was that for there to be any prospect of VAT being reclaimed, the Council itself would have to carry out the project from start to finish. The Council's general ability to reclaim VAT could not be used to recoup VAT on what was clearly someone else's project. The Clerk pointed out that the advice that has been received was from SSALC. Whilst it was thought to be right so far as the present position is concerned, it could not be taken as guaranteeing that, if the Council were to undertake its own project, the VAT could successfully be reclaimed. His advice to the Council was that it should only proceed with its own project having first had the benefit of professional qualified advice on the Council's legal position and its ability to reclaim VAT if the Council were to carry out the project itself.

Cllr Avery asked about the ownership of the pavilion. The Chairman and the Clerk explained that the land had been leased to the Club in 1981 on a long lease which included the right for the Club to build a pavilion. The building is used by the Club which pays for all outgoings. The building only reverts to the Council at the end or earlier determination of the lease, although the Council has the right to ask the Club to remove the building. Mr Strangwood confirmed that the lease is a full repairing lease.

The meeting discussed at length the alternatives of the Club continuing with the project, and therefore having to raise the funds to cover the VAT element of the cost, and the Council undertaking the project itself thereby opening up the possibility of the VAT being reclaimed. The former meant that, as long as the Council was willing to commit the funds by way of a grant/donation, the project could go ahead now although the opportunity to cut the cost by reclaiming the VAT would be lost. The latter could save money, but would lead to the project being delayed and additional costs being incurred which would reduce any benefit derived from reclaiming VAT.

Councillors considered that it was important that the Council was not the only contributor and enquired from where the Club proposed to obtain funds in addition to any that may be committed by the Council. Mr Strangwood explained that the Club had itself so far raised £1,800. There were others who, over time, had indicated that they would be willing to provide funds, but whether that remained the case was not known. It was hoped that, if it could be confirmed that the Council was willing to commit funds, those other potential benefactors would do likewise.

Councillors discussed the safeguards that would be necessary should the Council agree to commit funds to the project. It was agreed that it would not be right for funds simply to be paid across to the club, but that arrangements such as paying the contractors direct on the receipt of certificates or similar should be put in place. Councillors agreed that the Council would need to be satisfied that the work was being properly carried out to the appropriate standards. It was important that those Councillors representing the Council on the Club's committee played a full part in protecting the Council's interests.

Councillors were concerned about the vandalism that was largely responsible for the present poor state of the pavilion and enquired what measures would be put in place to prevent this from happening once the works had been done. Gary Strangwood explained that CCTV would be in place and paths around the pavilion rerouted to deter casual vandalism. Items such as window grills had been considered, but these were seen more as a challenge to determined vandals than an effective deterrent.

Cllr Olbrich proposed that the Council should agree to commit £30,000 to the project with the balance of the reserve (£5,000) being held for future commitment if thought appropriate. Gary Strangwood explained that, whilst he understood the reasons for this approach, it would hamper the Club's ability to get the most out of limited project resources and to work with the contractor to tailor the project to within the available funds. Having to go back to the contractor to agree what further works would be done if funds were committed only at a later date would increase costs.

Councillors resolved that the Clerk be authorised to write to the Club to confirm that the Council was willing to commit £35,000. This commitment would be subject to the appropriate safeguards being agreed as to the control and quality of the works and the disbursement of the funds from the Council. It would also be subject to the full involvement of the Council's representatives on the Club's committee.

Councillors also resolved that the letter to be sent by the Clerk to the Club confirming the Council's willingness to commit should not be sent until the Council has received and considered professional advice on (1) the legal position of the Council in relation to the pavilion and the existence of the lease, and (2) given the legal position what arrangements would have to be put in place in order for VAT to be reclaimed. The Clerk was instructed to seek the required advice.

**15/73 To review and agree the membership of Council committees and appointments to other organisations:** the following appointments were agreed:

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Chailey Windmill Advisory Committee | Cllr Avery                                       |
| Personnel Advisory Committee        | Cllr Olbrich (Chair)<br>Cllrs Matthews and Avery |
| Chailey Commons LNR MC              | Cllrs Evans and Avery                            |
| Chailey Sports Club                 | Cllrs Barnard and O'Connor                       |
| Chailey Parish Hall                 | Cllr Matthews                                    |
| Highways/SLR                        | Cllr Evans                                       |
| Provision for Young People          | Cllrs Olbrich and O'Connor                       |
| Lewes District Association          | Cllr Evans                                       |

Initials:

Date:

|                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Liaison with Emergency Services | Cllr O'Conor             |
| Chailey Bonfire Society         | Cllr Atkins              |
| Member for Finance              | Cllr Evans               |
| Allotments Officer              | Cllr Millam              |
| Parish Tree Wardens             | Cllrs Millam and Olbrich |
| Neighbourhood Plan              | Cllrs Evans and Matthews |
| Website                         | Cllr Avery               |

It was noted that two posts still needed to be filled: representative to the Chailey Commons Society and a second representative to Highways/SLR.

**15/74 To receive financial reports.**

The Clerk presented a Financial Report showing the receipts and payments made in the first three months of the financial year and a comparison with the budget for 2015/16. He further reported that, whilst he was happy that the figures were correct, the way in which they were presented may need to be refined and he would continue to work on this.

The Clerk circulated an annual account of the Council's receipts and payments for the year ended 31 March 2015, showing receipts for the year of £65,551 and payments of £111,533. After considering the account it was approved unanimously by Councillors.

The Clerk also reported that he had met Steve Brentnall, the Council's Internal Auditor and had provided information required in order for Mr Brentnall to sign off the Council's Annual Return, which he had done. The Clerk circulated to Councillors a copy of Mr Brentnall's report to the Council and Councillors were pleased to note that there were no matters which had arisen which needed to be drawn to Councillors' attention. The Chairman and the Clerk informed Councillors that the way was now clear for them to complete the Annual Return and for this to be submitted by the deadline of 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015. Councillors approved the annual governance statement for 2014/15 included as part of the Annual Return.

**15/75 To consider applications received for small grants to be made by the Council:**

the Clerk reported that 10 applications had been received and these were discussed.

The Chairman drew Councillors' attention to the applications from the Chailey Bonfire Society and Plumpton Guides. The application from the Bonfire Society represented a 50% increase over the grant awarded in 2014. Councillors recognised the good work that the Society does in and for the village but considered that such an increase could not be merited. Councillors resolved to award a grant to the Society of £1,250. Councillors noted that the application from Plumpton Guides was in essentially identical form to the applications received from the Brownies and Rainbows in Chailey. They also noted that the only material link between Plumpton Guides and Chailey appeared to be that some of the Guides go to school in Chailey. Councillors agreed that the link between Chailey and Plumpton Guides was insufficient to enable them to agree making any grant to Plumpton Guides.

After further discussion, Councillors agreed that the grant applications made by the remaining 8 applicants should be met in the sums requested, as follows:

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Chailey Brownies                                      | £400 |
| Chailey Rainbows                                      | £400 |
| Chailey Cricket Club                                  | £350 |
| Chailey & Newick Painting Club                        | £200 |
| Chailey Heritage Information and Parent/Carer Support | £200 |
| Chailey Evening Women's Institute                     | £400 |
| Chailey Commons Society                               | £250 |
| Chailey Allotments Association                        | £250 |

**15/76 To receive reports:**

- (1) The Clerk reported that BT had carried out their survey and were now seeking to enter into the necessary wayleave agreement with the landowner before installing the line. Councillors briefly discussed the possibility of locating the parish office in the storeroom and recognised that appropriate advice would be required as to the feasibility of doing this.
- (2) The status of the repairs to the Windmill had not yet been determined and a report would be given at the next meeting.
- (3) The provision of play equipment at Roeheath was discussed. Cllr Olbrich showed the meeting a picture of the sort of shelter that could be provided, and he was authorised to continue discussions.
- (4) The matter of the pedestrian refuge was carried forward to the next meeting.
- (5) The Chairman reported that the work to repaint the lettering on the War Memorial had been commissioned and would be completed before 11 November.
- (6) The minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were noted.
- (7) The Clerk was asked to find out exactly what East Chiltington PC intended by way of a village gateway and to what extent they were expecting Chailey PC to contribute, including financially.

**15/77. To consider items of correspondence for noting and response.**

The Clerk drew Councillors' attention to correspondence which had been received, a list of which had been circulated.

The Clerk showed Councillors a picture of the way markers that it was proposed should be affixed to posts along the Greenwich Meridian Trail which crosses Lane End Common. Councillors had no objection to what was proposed.

**15/78. To note Risk implications:** none to note.

**15/79. Confidential information – exempt matters:** the Chair asked members of the Council to make a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1(2) in order to discuss two items of correspondence received due to the confidential nature of these items. The resolution was passed unanimously.

**15/80. Next Full Council meeting: 15th September 2015 at 7.30pm.  
Next Planning meeting: 1st September 2015 at 7.30pm**

Signed: *Mark Evans*  
2015  
Chairman

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> September