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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 11th October 2023
at 7pm

Present: Cllr Timothy Firmston (Chairman), Cllr Catherine Salamons (Vice-chair)
Cllr Elizabeth Hamilton, Cllr Jan Devos, Cllr Gordon Churchill, Cllr Susan
Taylor, Cllr Stephen Hastings.
WSCC Pieter Montyn CDC Elizabeth Hamilton CDC Iain Ballantyne
Clerk (Zoom) and 4 members of the public

1. Apologies

None

2. Declarations of interest

- i. Cllr Jan Devos for Item 8iv – Potential development. Cllr Devos has interests in the land being discussed. Cllr Devos will leave the meeting during the discussion.
- ii. There were no dispensation requests

3. Minutes – to agree and sign the minutes of 13th September meeting.

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Devos, and with the following amendments were unanimously **AGREED** to be a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chairman. Item 16: To get a quote for the repairs to the lock will cost about £20K, and the work itself will be about £300K.

4. Public Question time from residents of Birdham in accordance with Standing Orders 1d – 11

There were no questions.

5. To receive a report from CDC members for Birdham:

Cllr Iain Ballantyne

- i. Cllr Ballantyne reported that there is yet another hiccup with the Chichester District Local Plan. Following an announcement from National Highways concerning the A27 CDC will have to reevaluate the Traffic Management plan. Cllr Taylor said then the Local Plan will not now be submitted and that if there is a new traffic report then CDC will have to accept the higher number of houses per annum of 635. The Statuary 19 consultation will also have to be redone. This will take another 2 years at least and probably 3, during which time the region will be subject to speculative development.
There was no guarantee that it would succeed after 2 years. The push on effect of this was that other reports would have to be redone – flooding for example. National Highways had produced a new circular requiring a “modal Change” with a priority for public transport, for cycling and trains.
- ii. Cllr Ballantyne is the planning officer for the Harbour Conservancy. They are currently looking at three projects: the lock, a project on Hayling Island and a move to fight off development in the dark skies’ area.

Cllr Elizabeth Hamilton

- i. Cllr Hamilton had attended a Cabinet meeting yesterday where they had looked at reducing council tax for next year.

- ii. There is to be a Community Land Trust project in Southbourne which will be the first in the district to return to a Council housing initiative.

(Cllr Ballantyne left the meeting at 7.14pm)

6. Planning matters including appeals, applications and CDC delegated decisions.

- i. **Notifications of new Planning Enforcement Notices** – the clerk asked if the council wanted to discuss the issue that had been notified from Earnley with regard to a rubbish tip seen from footpath 13. Cllr Hamilton had suggested that this should be reported to CDC fly tipping. Clerk to notify the clerk of the suggestion.

Action	Clerk
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- ii. **Notifications of Planning Appeals – there were none received.**
 iii. **Updates on Planning Enforcements – there were none received.**
 iv. **Planning applications to be decided:**

Planning application number	Address	Details	Comment
BI/23/01553/FUL	Scout Hut, Crooked Lane, Birdham	Replacement scout hut and facilities to include new drop kerb and vehicle access.	SUPPORT
BI/23/01926/TPA	14 Pipers Mead	Reduce southern sector by 2.5m on 1 no. Monterey Pine tree (quoted as T1) within Group, G2 subject to BI/83/00023/TPO.	Defer to tree officer
BI/23/02144/DOM -	Loxworth, Main Road, Birdham, Chichester, West Sussex, P	(E) 481855 / (N) 99444 Proposal: Remove existing flat roofed timber framed garden room and timber flat roofed porch area and walls. Replace with "like for like" brick built flat roofed garden room and new flat roofed timber construction porch to the same dimensions	No objection
BI/23/02135/ELD	1 Cowdray Cottages, Sidlesham Lane	Existing lawful development certificate for non-compliance with Condition 3 of planning permission BI/13/53 - agricultural occupancy condition which has not been complied with for a period in excess of ten years.	No objection
BI/23/02106/TPA	Land North Of 10 To 29 Old Common Close Birdham West Sussex	Reduce back lower limb (at 3.5m from ground level) by 4m on south-east sector, crown reduce by 4m (remaining crown) and crown thin re-growth by 25% on 1 no. Black Poplar tree (T19). Reduce height by up to 6m on 1 no. Black Poplar tree (T20). Both subject to BI/97/00036/TPO.	Defer to tree officer
BI/23/02183/TPA	26 Walwyn Close Birdham Chichester West Sussex	Reduce height by 2m and crown on North, East and West sectors by 2m on 1 no. Oak tree (T6). Reduce height and spread on South sector	Defer to tree officer

		by 1.5m on 1 no. Oak tree (T5). Subject to BI/97/00037/TPO	
BI/22/03026/FUL	Birdham Marina	Demolition of three workshops/sheds for the comprehensive redevelopment of the SouthWest area of the marina comprising four purpose built buildings including marine related workshops, offices, storage, reprovion and extension of the retail (chandlery) and a cafe/restaurant together with an additional 23 car parking spaces, boat parking and storage and appropriate landscaping - Variation of condition 3 from planning permission BI/12/00475/FUL (as amended by S.73 permission B1/22/01742/FUL) - Use Class variation of buildings A and D (Units A2 and D7 only) to allow greater flexibility, as amplified by email dated 22 May 2023.	Reinforce and amplify the council's previous STRONG OBJECTION
POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	Wopham's Lane	Installation of light-industrial unit for making of yacht blinds	See below

Wopham's Lane potential development (Cllr Devos left the meeting.)

Mr Ed Fitzgerald attended the meeting to present to the council the project for the former nursery site opposite Chichester Yacht club on the A286 at Wopham's Lane.

Mr Fitzgerald has a relatively new, bespoke blind making business for the yacht and boat industry. Currently the company is based in Almodington, but the site is now too small and is restricting the growth of the company. He is looking to increase staff from 20 to 25 before Christmas (the limit for the present site) and hope to have a staff of 40 by next year. He said that they wanted the building to be low key, situated where the garden centre used to be. (50% will be where the current operational site is and the rest on the "pick-your-own-strawberry" site which apparently is no longer financially viable). 70% of his staff come from the peninsula and he wants future staff also to come from the peninsula. There is a bus stop opposite the site and staff would be able to cycle or bus to work.

The eves of the building would be 1½ storey similar to their current site. They are a light industrial firm and will apply for change of use from horticultural to light industrial. There is no noise, and it is more akin to a craft workshop.

He was asked if there would be an increase of lorry traffic driving to the premises? No, there would not, and they are making sure that the apron in front of the gates will be large enough to accommodate an articulated lorry completely off the A286 whilst waiting for gates to be opened. There is a car park, and they will retain the good solid green hedge to be in keeping with the area.

Mr Fitzgerald was thanked for his attendance and for the information.

(Cllr Devos returned to the meeting).

v. Delegated decisions to be noted.

Planning Application number	Address	Details	Decision
BI/23/01788/TPA	Moorings, Westlands Estate, Birdham	Tree works	PERMIT

BI/23/01410/DOM	Cotswold House, 6 St James Close	Single storey extension to replace existing garage, 2 storey rear extension.	PERMIT
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7. To receive a report from WSCC member for Birdham

- i. Southern Water are in the process of lining the sewage pipes currently elsewhere, but they are expected in Birdham in about a month where they will undertake the same process. Cllr Montyn said that they would have to wait and see the effect that that has on the Pinks Lane plant – it is possible that it doesn't fix it at all. But their van "IMC" will be around Birdham, and they are happy to discuss what they are doing.
- ii. Finally, after months of waiting the sign at Crooked Lane has been replaced.
- iii. Cllr Montyn has seen that there is progress being made with siting the Speed Indicator Device but that not all of the 3 posts chosen belong to WSCC which could be problematic.
- iv. Cllr Montyn has responded to the A27 Mitigation Consultation document which is a far cry from the initial supposition that this is a National Highways route. He said that the region will be open to speculative development because of the National Highways delays. The Clerk will forward his responses to all on the council.

8. A27 mitigation consultation

It was agreed that Cllr Taylor would look at the consultation document in more detail and if necessary, make comments.

Action	Cllr Taylor
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9. Electors' Meeting update

- ✚ Cllrs Salamons and Devos had been working hard gathering groups together to each have a table at the "Drop in" on 28th October. It will be a less formal affair with tables set up around the room. Councillors will each have a topic or two on which they can answer questions from the public. Each councillor will have a stick-on label with their name and their particular "reference" subject.
- ✚ Cllr Salamons has prepared a consent form for the gathering of email addresses from those members of the public who wish to be kept informed of council business by email.
- ✚ There will be free refreshments (cakes, coffee and tea) to be distributed by three young "volunteers".
- ✚ Various topics will be on display: local plan (Cllr Taylor); Neighbourhood Plan (Laurie Pocock); Talking about becoming a councillor (Cllr Devos); Birdham Village Hall (B Geary and Cllrs Hastings and Churchill); Birdham Choir (Susan Monks); Playground (Cllr Firmston); Sewerage and waste water (Cllr Montyn); Traffic (Cllr Firmston); Medical centre (Cllr Churchill); CDC Cllr Ballantyne; CIL spending (Cllr Firmston); Clerk on zoom for any questions. Hopefully, there will also be representation from the Cricket Club, the Scouts, Manhood Wildlife Heritage Group, and some others.
- ✚ CIL monies to be spent: the clerk had forwarded some ideas of possible spend including a teen shelter. She said that she felt that it was important that the young people in the village felt that they had something for themselves, and this was not to be disguised as something for everyone. Cllr Firmston to propose along with other ideas at the meeting.

Cllr Firmston asked that all Councillors try and gauge exactly what Birdham residents want and what they don't want so that the council supports those wishes.

(Cllr Taylor left the meeting).

10. Request for BPC to support the Climate and Ecology Bill

It was agreed that Cllr Churchill would review the request and present to the Council at the next meeting so that a decision could be made.

Action	Cllr Churchill
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(Cllr Montyn left the meeting).

11. Football pitch request for regular hire (Tuesdays).

The council were generally minded to accept but it was agreed that Mr Brooks should meet with Cllr Firmston who could show him the pros and cons and discuss further. The pitch does flood at certain times, and it would have to be monitored in case the grass was damaged beyond repair. It was also suggested that perhaps Mr Brooks would like to come to the Drop-in meeting.

Action

Clerk

12. The future of the All Parishes meeting - CDC

Cllrs Firmston and Salamons had both attended the last meeting. Cllr Firmston proffered these suggestions to improve the effectiveness and operation of the meetings:

a) Offer hybrid meetings with either attendance in person in Chichester or by the Zoom platform to those parishes further from Chichester.

This combination should apply to both meetings held each year.

b) Offer some coffee / tea and biscuits for hospitality and as a social interaction.

The rather lavish buffet provided before the meetings pre-Covid times was not really necessary or proportionate.

c) Avoid district councillors asking questions to other district councillors / officers – the meetings are for the benefit of the parishes.

d) Ask speakers / presenters to allow time to discuss their subjects and not just to read from their power point slide presentations.

e) Retain two meetings a year so the content is busy but not too busy.

Cllr Salamons felt that enough time should be allowed for Parishes to make suggestions for the agenda.

The Clerk will forward these comments to CDC.

Action

Clerk

13. Updating of Councillor appointments for Outside Bodies

With the resignation of the Parish Council representative for GLAM that position was now open. The Chairman asked everyone to have a think about who could fill that post.

Other positions:

Communication working group: all councillors.

Planning and planning subcommittee: all councillors

Staffing committee: Cllrs Churchill, Hamilton and Devos

Resilience/emergency planning: Cllrs Firmston and Devos

Playground: Cllr Churchill

Neighbourhood plan: a little in limbo as no progress can be made without the CDC Local plan but Cllrs Hastings, Taylor and Devos waiting in the wings.

West Wittering Parish Council has suggested a joint Resilience training by CDC for Manhood parishes. The clerk will put forward the names of those councillors interested.

Action

Clerk

14. Clerk's report

i) Correspondence

- If any councillor is interested there is a consultation currently open on Active Travel in West Sussex.
- An email had been received from the hall concerning the lack of trustees. Unfortunately, this was received too late for it to be included on the agenda. It was agreed that an extraordinary Parish Council meeting should be held to discuss this issue probably in November.
- The clerk is to write to Kennedy's to ask them not to mow over the grasslok and not to strim against the wooden posts of the play items.

Action

Clerk

- ii) **Changing of bank account.** The clerk said that there was a possibility of applying for a NatWest account, if the council wanted to change banks. If they wished to stay with Barclays, then several must go and sign up as signatories. It was agreed to try and open a community account with NatWest as several councillors already banked with them. Setting up the account would no doubt be tedious but once up and running the online version was easy and clear to use.

Action

Clerk

iii) **Accountancy programme**

Currently the Parish Council accounts are all produced on Excel. The clerk had had an introductory session with “Scribe” an accountancy programme for Parish Councils. The clerk already subscribes to their (free) news-bites which often contain useful information for clerks. The programme is simple and will ensure that there will be no difficulties when clerks change for example. The cost was an annual fee of £660 and a one-off fee of £479 in the first year which guaranteed free training and support for the time that the council was signed up to the system. The clerk will email other clerks in West Sussex to ask for any opinions on its functionality and ease of use. If the council wished to use it the amount would have to be included in the budget next month. (Price to be confirmed – it is set on the precept amount.)

Action	Clerk
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iv) **Payments for consideration** – with the following additions the payments for consideration were proposed by Cllr Devos, seconded by Cllr Churchill, and unanimously **RESOLVED**. £95 Mr Dover for bus stop clearance and grass cutting; £571 Lollipop printers (newsletter); £24.95 Cllr expenses for “Drop in” meeting.

v) **Budget against expenditure and consideration of additions to budget for 2024 - 25.** The clerk had circulated the Expenditure to date. The projected £810 for the fencing at the play area was not included (although the repair of the bus stop was). This would bring the overspend to about £4000 at the end of the financial year. Both the fencing and the repair of the bus stop had been unexpected, but the clerk suggested that greater contingency funds were allowed for in the next budget. The Chairman said that after the “Drop In” meeting there should not be any further unbudgeted spending.

The clerk had already previously suggested that a new website could be considered, and she had included this last year in the projection for next year.

Councillor Reports:

- i. **Play area and playing field** – Cllr Firmston said that the bund that had been created with the making of the footpath would be planted with wildflower seeds on 16th November on a corporate day learning how to sow seed.
- ii. **Village green and pond/condition of Village Drain/Ditch network – no report.**
- iii. **Communication working group** – 60% of the newsletter deliveries to the village were done and the rest would be accomplished shortly. Cllr Firmston thanked all those who had helped with this.
- iv. **Community resilience – no report**

15. Reports of meetings attended by Councillors – Cllrs Firmston and Salamons had attended the All Parishes meeting and had listened to a presentation on avoiding damp and mould/a presentation on the Supporting You team and an update on the Local Plan – which now has all changed.

16. Items for inclusion on the next agenda

- Budget 2024 -25
- Tree planting
- Feedback on Drop In meeting

17. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 8th November 2023.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 9.21pm

Signed: _____
Tim Firmston - Chairman

Date: _____

Bank accounts as of 6th October 2023

Current Account	£ 83,798.19
Deposit Account	£ 100,709.24
National Savings	£ 7,099.85
Total	£ 191,607.28

Opening balance 1st April 2023	£ 201,592.77
add receipts in the year	£ 74,363.65
less expenditure to date	£ 84,349.14
Balance	£ 191,607.28

Less

Reserve @ 50% of Precept	£ 32,458.50
Total	£ 32,458.50

Ringfenced Funds

Op Watershed	£ 2,400.00
Culvert Ditch Maintenance	£ 14,000.00
Adams bequest	£ 6,500.00
CIL Payments	£ 75,553.43
NHB	£ 6,404.46
NP Grant Parish Land	£ 600.00
Car charging points	£ 1,500.00
Trees	£ 4,000.00
Ponds improvement long term	£ 2,000.00
Total	£ 112,957.89

Available Funds

Total	£ 46,190.89
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Outstanding PWLB

Total	£ 108,150.80
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Signed: *IXWhitaker - Clerk 6th October 2023*

**Birdham Parish Council Payments for Consideration
Meeting October 2nd 2023**

Balances on accounts:

Current account	
Deposit account	£ 100,709.24
NS&I	£ 7,099.85
	£ 107,809.09

Received since last meeting

£ -

Paid since last meeting

Elan Cité	SID payment (CIL)	£2,809.93
Edburton	Footpath (CIL) deposit	£5,400.00
Rospa Play Safety	Playground inspection	£136.20
mark harrod	football goals (CIL)	£1,595.62
betty geary	litter picking	£70.00
betty geary	litter picking	£70.00
imogen whitaker	salary	£877.59
imogen whitaker	salary	£877.59
nest	pension	£64.00
nest	pension	£64.00
ico	data protection fee	£35.00
adrian dover	grass cutting and bus stop clearance	£130.00
adrian dover	grass cutting and bus stop clearance	£95.00
zurich insurance	insurance premium	£1,107.00
mh kennedy	grass cutting	£298.56
sse	street lighting	£98.33
sse	street lighting	£183.02
chris milford	installation goal posts	£525.00
chris milford	playground repairs	£420.00
		£14,856.84

Payments for consideration

Edburton	Footpath (CIL)	£11,705.59
betty geary	Litter picking	£70.00
imogen whitaker	salary	£877.59
nest	pension	£64.00
hmrc	employer contributions	£64.65
boston seeds (clerk)	wildflower seeds for bund	£101.99
poppy shop	poppy wreath	£23.98
mh kennedy	grass cutting	£597.12

redemptive media	web hosting	£180.00
Groundwork	NP grant repayment	£39,149.00
T Firmston	councillor expenses	£92.68
boxgrove pc	telephone contribution	£71.94
I whitaker	council running costs	£479.54
		£53,478.08

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