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Minutes of the of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 13th December 2023
at 7pm

Present: Cllr Timothy Firmston (Chairman), Cllr Elizabeth Hamilton, Cllr Jan Devos,
Cllr Susan Taylor, Cllr Stephen Hastings
CDC Elizabeth Hamilton
4 members of the public (including representative from Smith Simmons
Planning)
Clerk (Zoom)

1. Apologies

Cllr Salamons, Cllr Churchill, Cllr Iain Ballantyne CDC, Cllr Pieter Montyn WSCC

2. Declarations of interest

- i. There were no declarations of interest for matters on the agenda (Later in the meeting Cllr Devos declared an interest in Item 6iv BI/23/02633).
- ii. There were no dispensation requests

3. Minutes – to agree and sign the minutes of 8th November 2023 meeting

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Hastings, seconded by Cllr Hamilton, and were **AGREED** to be a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

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

A member of the public asked who she should contact for a problem with trees outside her house on the public highway. She had written to CDC who had said it was not their issue. She was informed that she should contact WSCC who were responsible for highways. The fastest way to do this was through the online platform. [Make an enquiry or report a problem with a road or pavement - West Sussex County Council](#)

The resident also asked about the travellers and when there would be any implementation of the order to quit. She was informed that all information was, for legal reasons, classified as confidential but that progress was being made and that the legal team at CDC were working on it.

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

- a) Cllr Hamilton reported that at the latest debriefing session on the Local Plan it was still hoped that the plan would be submitted in January.
- b) She reported that the new administration wanted all meetings to be held in public (except for those where confidentiality was required).
- c) The council had been going through the budget examining all the expenditure and where savings could be made. It was agreed that the Foreshore Offices at Bracklesham are not a statutory obligation and that boats would therefore no longer be launched from there. Boat owners will either have to go to Itchenor or Chichester Yacht Club both of which have financial considerations, although you do not have to be a member of the club to use the launch facility. East Wittering Parish Council will discuss at their meeting tomorrow.

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

- i. **Notifications of new Planning Enforcement Notices – there were none received**
- ii. **Updates on Planning Enforcements – the status of Planning Enforcement at 22 Greenacres.**

A local resident from Greenacres asked for clarification on the enforcement status of 22 Greenacres. He said that it had been a contentious development since the outset. There had been a planning application and then an enforcement notice for all the works that had not been approved. The planning application to address these issues had been withdrawn. He has written to CDC to ask them to clarify what will happen and what enforcement is going to do about it. He wrote over a year ago and still has not had any response.

The Clerk also sent an email to Shona Archer last week and did not receive a response either. Cllr Firmston reminded the meeting that although planning applications are a statutory regulatory requirement, planning enforcement is not.

Cllr Taylor said that Enforcement should respond despite the non-statutory nature of enforcement. It was agreed that the Clerk should write again asking for a proper update on the situation.

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| Action | Clerk |
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Mr Burgess said that 2 other neighbours were also trying to get a response.

Cllr Hamilton said that she would try and get some further information too.

- iii. **Notifications of Planning Appeals – there was still no news on the 150 house development since the council had been informed that the inspector had been diverted to other work.** Cllr Taylor said that tomorrow Michael Gove MP would be making an announcement concerning the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and it was possible that he would say that Green sites need to be protected.

iv. Planning applications to be decided:

| Planning application number | Address | Details | Comment |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
| 23/02415/FUL | Plovers Cottage Batchmere Lane | Demolition of a section of 1 no. building and erection of 1 no dwelling (alternative permission 20/01130/FUL). | OBJECT as outside the settlement area contrary to the Birdham Neighbourhood plan. BPC would also need to be assured that the Habitat regulation assessment has been completed. |
| BI/23/02400/ELD | Copper Beech, Church Lane, Birdham, Chichester | Existing lawful development - garage conversion and side extension | The complexity of this application renders it impossible for the parish Council to make an informed decision and therefore defers to the decision of the planning officer. |
| BI/23/02462/DOM | 11 Greenacres | First floor extension to the west side elevation to provide home gymnasium | OBJECT as overdevelopment of the existing property rendering it no longer compatible with other houses in the road, and has a negative visual impact on the AONB |
| 23/02616/FUL | Creek Cottage Westlands Estate Birdham Chichester West Sussex PO20 7HJ | Replacement dwelling and associated works | As the application stands the Parish Council Objects as the Harbour Conservancy has expressed reservations and it is therefore also against the Birdham Neighbourhood Plan. If the issues could be resolved with the Harbour Conservancy then the Parish Council would likely follow suit. |
| BI/23/02633/ADJ - | Access Channel To Marina Chichester Harbour Lock Lane Birdham | Renew Marine Licence L/2014/00154/4 which expires in February 2024 for a further 10 years to undertake dredging of the access channel at an increased capacity in order to maintain navigational depths for vessels entering and departing the lock. | (Interest declared by Cllr Devos.) No objection |

v. Delegated decisions to be noted

| Planning Application number | Address | Details | Decision |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|----------|
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| BI/23/02174/DOM | Waders, Westlands Estate, Birdham, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 7HJ | Conversion of garage into habitable space, new rooflight to garage North elevation, alterations and additions to existing kitchen space, new pool house, swimming pool and associated landscaping | PERMIT |
| BI/23/02106/TPA | Land North Of 10 To 29 Old Common Close Birdham West Sussex | Tree works subject to I/97/00036/TPO. | PERMIT |
| 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 | PERMIT |
| BI/23/01669/FUL | Chichester Yacht Club, Chichester Marina, Birdham, | Installation of Solar PV panels onto existing pitched roof | PERMIT |

7. Threats to elected representatives – action going forward.

The clerk had forwarded an email from the Police and another from the monitoring office at CDC with regard to the safety of elected officials. The advice was for councillors to remove all indication of personal addresses from websites which would mean adapting the Register of Interests. It had also been suggested that councillors undergo personal security training.

It was agreed that the Clerk would adapt the register of interests and all personal information would be removed from the website. The clerk will also find out about the training and where it can be undertaken.

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| Action | Clerk |
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8. To receive a report from WSCC member for Birdham Cllr Montyn

Cllr Montyn had been unable to attend the meeting but had sent the following report:
"Regrettably I am unable to be with you at your Parish Council meeting 13th December as I have another council engagement in Chichester.

I therefore submit the following comments which I hope you can note and will find of interest.

- a) Councillors should have received the County Highways winter service programme and the pothole briefing I forwarded to the Clerk earlier.
I attach a supporting Winter Preparedness on the Highways presentation given by WSCC officers last week to County Councillors for your interest also. (Available from Clerk on request)
- b) Southern Water's specialist sewer sealing contractor has completed operations in Itchenor and has now started work at Westlands as you may have noticed.
We are now at the start of a programme for Birdham: I was provided by Southern Water with the attached map (Appendix 1) showing those pipe sections of our network where sealing is planned in Birdham.
This is based on a sewer condition survey carried out here the year before in preparation for this purpose.

This will take several months. The team are very helpful and approachable and ready to discuss keeping disruption to a minimum while their vans and equipment are stationed here; their leader Daryl is very happy to explain what they are doing, how it works and helps reduce ground and rain water infiltration and thus flooding of the sewer network.

The red triangles on the map are waste pumping stations (WPS) which all ultimately connect to the main Pinks Lane WPS -shown at the bottom of the diagram- which receives all the waste water from Itchenor and Birdham and transports this to the Almodington WPS from where it is pumped to the Sidlesham Waste Treatment Works and ultimately via Broad Rife to Pagham Harbour after treatment.

The upstream Itchenor branch connects with Birdham near Florence Close.

The pipe runs from the Witterings, Bracklesham, Earnley, and Selsey are connected separately to the Sidlesham treatment works.

Contrary to widely held belief, therefore, none of the Peninsula's waste water from existing, or any contemplated development goes to the Apuldram Waste Treatment Works or to Chichester Harbour.

May I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and the every best for the New Year.”
End of report

Cllr Firmston added that when asked Cllr Montyn had been optimistic that the Mobile Waste facility unit would continue for the next three years. They are still awaiting the agreement of two councils.

9. Motion to approve the Budget and precept setting for 2024 – 24.

The parish taxbase has unfortunately been reduced from 859 to 851. To try and mitigate this the £750 car charging reserve was cancelled for next year as well as several smaller cuts in training, chairman's allowance, resilience. This gives a final precept of £73816, and an increase of 14.84% over last year. This will make the weekly payment for a Band D property £1.67.

Cllr Devos asked what the legal fees were going to be. This is to pay for a part of the legal fees incurred by the village hall in granting a lease to the Scouts. The Scouts should have acquired their planning permission now and all that remains is for the lease to be drafted. Cllr Salamons was thanked for all the extra hard work involved in helping with this.

Cllr Devos proposed that the council should agree the budget as presented by the Clerk. Seconded by Cllr Taylor and unanimously **RESOLVED**.

Action

Clerk

10. Clerk's report

i) Clerk's Correspondence

- a) Cllr Firmston had been contacted by the Chair of Governors of the local primary school. They would like to co-opt a new governor onto the board and are asking if any residents would like to fill this role. If anyone is interested, please contact Birdham Primary School directly.
- b) The Chichester Local Plan team had asked for suggestions for spending if there should be a development within the village so that the S106 monies or CIL monies from developers could be allocated. They had to be within the Sports and Leisure category.

The following was suggested:

- continuation of all-weather footpath around the recreation ground from play area to footbridge
 - an active travel hub for walkers and cyclists at the end of Church Lane with an integrated information board displaying footpaths and heritage assets so that when people get off the bus they can walk or cycle to places of interest;
 - allotments for mindfulness and wellbeing
- c) opening of new bank account moving slowly forward
 - d) WSCC has sent out an appeal for more homes for Ukrainian refugees – please contact the clerk if you have available accommodation
 - e) Playdale have finished installing the grasslok on the recreation ground. They have identified a bolt which needs changing and sent a quote. It was agreed that at the start of the financial year some money will be spent on these jobs in the play area.
 - f) RESILIENCE TRAINING: The Clerk from W Wittering has organised a training day on resilience to be given jointly by CDC and WSCC. The training will take place on Friday 26th January between 1pm – 4pm at Bracklesham Barn. Any councillors interested in attending please let the Clerk know as soon as possible.
 - g) The Clerk has received the annual report from the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority. Any councillor interested please contact the Clerk.
 - h) The clerk had been contacted by a resident who said that the new bund was responsible for flooding as the usual drain off had been blocked by the bund. Cllr Firmston said that this was likely but until a vast improvement of weather was announced it would be impossible to get machinery onto the ground to deal with the problem. As soon as the weather improves it will be looked into.

Action

Clerk

- ii) **Payments for consideration** – an updated payments sheet had been circulated to councillors (see below). The payments for consideration were proposed by Cllr Devos, seconded by Cllr Taylor and unanimously **RESOLVED**.
- iii) **Expenditure to date and Bank reconciliation – not circulated - the clerk will prepare for the next meeting.**

11. Councillor Reports:

- i. **Play area and playing field** – as mentioned above the grasslok has been completed.
- ii. **Village green and pond** – tree in memory of Mr Fisher the inventor of Scalextric was planted by Cllr Hastings, Cllr Firmston and Mrs Hastings. The plaque is to be removed for repair. The tree was bought for the parish by Mr Francis' daughter. The Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group will be working on Triangle Copse.
- iii. **Communication working group – no report**
- iv. **Community resilience – training as mentioned above on 26th January 2024.**

12. Reports of meetings attended by Councillors

- Cllr Churchill had attended two meetings on which he will report next month
 - Cllr Firmston had attended the Manhood Peninsula Partnership meeting and he will circulate notes shortly
 - the Manhood Peninsula Greenway is now open from Selsey towards Chichester. Further notes to come later.
 - Cllr Hastings reported on the Action on Poverty meeting that he had attended at the Church which he said had reflected very much the Parliamentary Select Committee meeting on the same subject which he had also attended. He said that even with two working people a family could still be in poverty with the cost of living crisis. Following on from that there will be a small increase in benefits which is a start, but which isn't enough. He said that there were lots of different groups locally all trying to help but none of them linked to each other. The group is to try and overcome that problem with linking everyone up online. He reported that it was often the case that no one was aware of a poverty problem in a family until it was too late. The aim is to try and reach these people before that time.
- Cllr Hamilton said that CDC also had a team called "supporting you" working along the same lines. Often people don't claim what they are entitled to - for example pensioners could get pension credit but sometimes it was too complex for them to do online.
- Cllr Hastings said that the Parliamentary select committee would be sending a script out of the meeting which he would circulate.

13. Items for inclusion on the next agenda

(Cllr Taylor gave her apologies for the next meeting as she will be away).

- **new website**
- **new Register of Interests form**

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday January 10th 2024 at 7pm

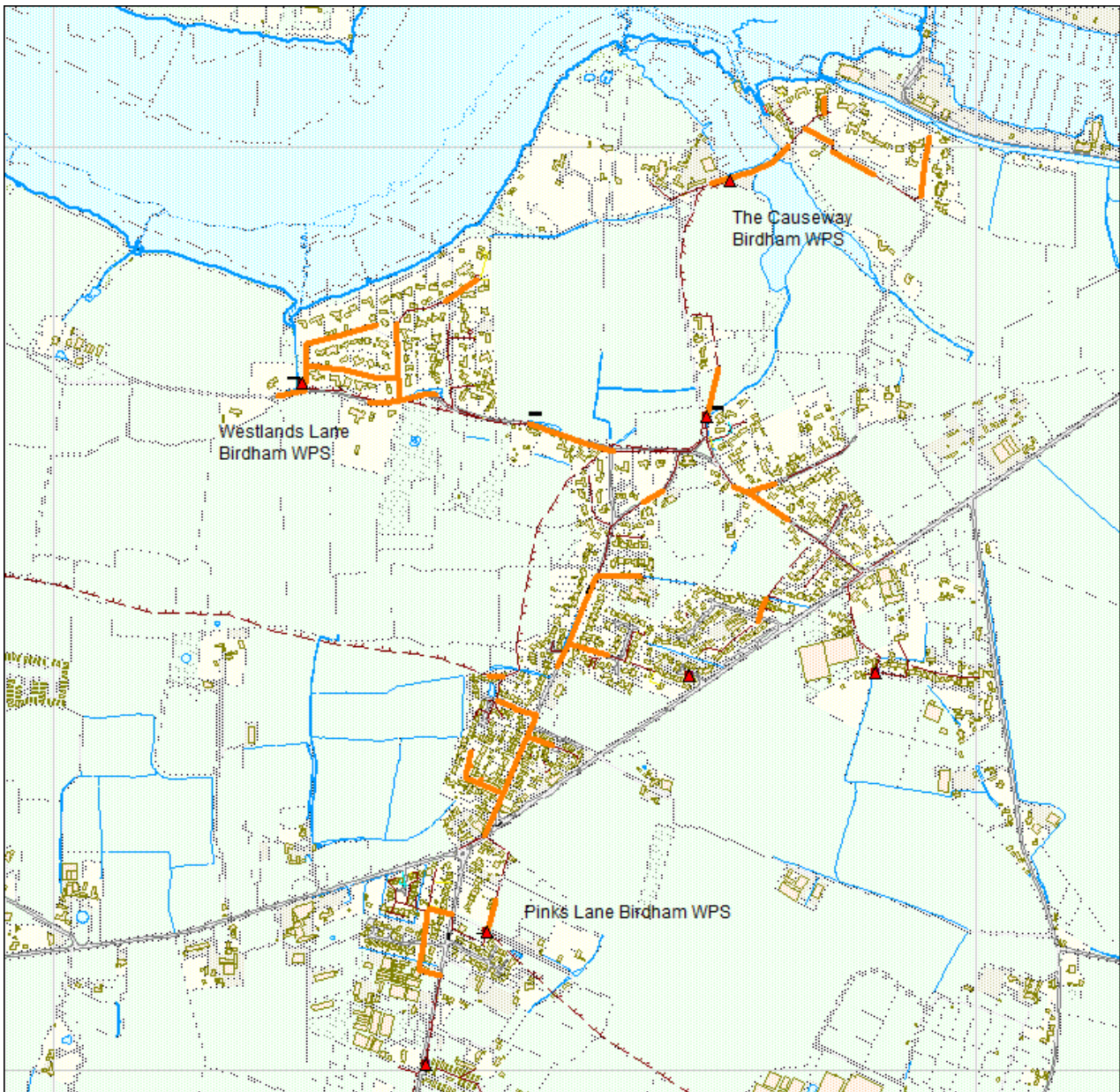
The Council wished everyone a very Merry Christmas!

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed: _____
Tim Firmston - Chairman

Date: _____

Appendix 1: Southern Water works



**Birdham Parish Council Payments for Consideration
Meeting December 13th 2023**

Balances on accounts:

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| Current account | £ | 43,745.78 |
| Deposit account | £ | 101,059.93 |
| NS&I | £ | 7,099.85 |
| | £ | 151,905.56 |

Received since last meeting

| | | |
|----------|---|---------------|
| interest | £ | 350.69 |
| | £ | 350.69 |

Paid since last meeting

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| betty geary | litter picking | £70.00 |
| I whitaker | salary | £877.59 |
| nest | pension | £64.00 |
| sse | street lighting | £173.94 |
| mh kenney | grass cutting | £298.56 |
| adrian dover | grass cutting | £95.00 |
| SLCC | subscription 50% | £284.94 |
| local councils direct | subscription 50% | £60.00 |
| Tsohost | np webpage renewal | £73.00 |
| lake road landscaping | fencing | £972.00 |
| st james birdahm | graveyard grant | £325.00 |
| cdc | cost of election | £333.50 |
| | | £3,627.53 |

Payments for consideration

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| betty geary | litter picking | £70.00 |
| I whitaker | salary | £877.59 |
| nest | pension | £64.00 |
| sse | street lighting | £185.87 |
| parish online | sub | £60.00 |
| morley and son | bus stop repair | £1,980.00 |
| a dover | grass cutting/bus stop clearance | £95.00 |
| c salamons | councillor expenses (drop in) | £141.00 |
| | | £3,473.46 |

