



Imogen Whitaker - Clerk & RFO to the Council  
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Minutes of the Hybrid Annual Meeting of the Parish Council  
held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
at 7pm

**Present:** Cllr Timothy Firmston, Cllr Elizabeth Hamilton, Cllr Catherine Salamons, Cllr Jan Devos  
Cllr Gordon Churchill

**Zoom Attendee:** The Clerk

**In attendance:**

CDC Iain Ballantyne

CDC Elizabeth Hamilton

3 members of the Public

Ms Kerry Simmons Planning Agent

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**1. To elect the Chair of the Council and to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Timothy Firmston was proposed by Cllr Hamilton, seconded by Cllr Devos, and unanimously **ELECTED**. He duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

**2. To elect the Vice-chair of the Council and to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Salamons was proposed by Cllr Devos, seconded by Cllr Taylor, and unanimously **ELECTED**. She duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**3. Apologies**

Cllr Pieter Montyn – duties as Chair of WSCC

**4. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**5. Minutes - To agree and sign the minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

The Minutes, with the following amendment, were proposed by Cllr Salamons, seconded by Cllr Taylor and unanimously **AGREED** to be a true and accurate record. They were duly signed by the Chairman. Amendment: Item 6 top of page 2: Cllr Hamilton was present at Community Orchard meeting.

**6. Questions from members of the public in accordance with Standing Orders 1d – 11**

There were no questions.

**7. District Councillors, County Councillor & Chairman's Annual Reports**

**Cllr Ballantyne – CDC**

- i. Key attainments for this year included the Local Plan which had been expected to be submitted earlier but was now submitted to the Inspector.
- ii. Food waste collection service: this is a government backed initiative. Plans for the district are well advanced. Timing is to be confirmed.

- iii. Traveller Liaison Officer: a new position has been created to work with the traveller community with the objective of improving communication hopefully to avoid crisis management of sites.
- iv. Budget allocation: this year the budget is balanced and has sufficient reserves to allow the continuation of discretionary spending to support the most vulnerable members of our community. Specific projects include continued funding of the Social Prescribing scheme making the funding for a Growth and Sustainability officer permanent; support for the Supporting You team and for Discretionary Housing Payments.
- v. Events boosting the local economy this year has seen an increase in the number of events in addition to the well-established Festival. The Laser light show, and Star Wars Toys exhibition are examples of events that bring more life to the City.
- vi. Coastal projects we are bringing forward major coastal schemes and seeking to get further funding from the EA and other government schemes for example to improve Selsey flood defences and the Chichester Harbour Adaption Plan.
- vii. Planning Issues: Residents should be assured that CDC is working hard to defend the original decision at Stubscroft Farm against the appeal by the developers. If the new NFRA is to be meaningful, this is exactly the kind of location that it should be applied to.

#### **Cllr Pieter Montyn - WSCC**

Cllr Hamilton (on behalf of Cllr Montyn) said that the sewage pipe linings at Itchenor had been completed and that Southern Water would be starting in Birdham at Bell Lane to the petrol station and then into Crooked Lane to the Village Hall.

#### **Cllr Timothy Firmston – Chair’s annual report**

- a) The Parish has promoted biodiversity with the work continuing with the three ponds and within Triangle Copse. This area is now well known as a water vole ‘hot spot.’ The continuing help from the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group is much appreciated.
- b) For the playing field a second football pitch has been established with larger dimensions to suit an older group of players. A new ball wall with different sports features was erected to offer additional activities. A new all-weather footpath was constructed across part of the playing field which is a popular addition.
- c) The monthly parish council meetings continue in the Village Hall, apart from the month of August, and the ability to join remotely on Zoom is used by some residents
- d) The review of the current Birdham Neighbourhood Plan has been completed with the intention of resetting how the residents would wish the village to develop and thrive given the pressure of additional housing. This document needs to articulate with the long-awaited District Council’s updated Local Plan that is still to be submitted for examination by a planning inspector.
- e) The Birdham Speed Watch Group has been collecting the vehicle speed data to support the 20 mph. Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). The Parish Council purchased the Speed Indicator Device (SID) and the additional mounting poles on the highway verges. Some of the recorded vehicle speeds on Bell Lane, Crooked Lane and Church Lane are alarming.

- f) The parish council continues to examine and comment on the many and varied planning applications every month for large and small developments and building changes. The parish council continues to liaise and co-operate with the Chichester Harbour Conservancy on these and other matters.
- g) Recent planning appeals have been upheld in favour of the developers despite the hard work carried out by residents and the Parish Council. These appeals are often lodged by well-resourced companies and developers using a range of expert staff and high-level legal professionals.
- h) A new idea was implemented with a Drop-In Morning event on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at the Village Hall when 40 to 50 residents were able to meet with representatives of various Birdham clubs and organisations to identify local opportunities and gain information about our local community.
- i) Finally, I would like to thank the parish councillors and residents who carry out all this work and attend other events and meetings all as volunteers, ably assisted and guided by our Parish Clerk, Imogen Whitaker. The local elections in May 2023 resulted in six parish councillors within our compliment of nine - vacancies remain.

Thanks were also given to Cllr Firmston for all the work he does and for having so ably chaired the council over the last year.

**8. Election of Councillors and/or invited members of the public to the following outside bodies:**

- i. Chichester District Association Local Councils**  
Cllr Firmston and Cllr Salamons
- ii. West Sussex Association of Local Councils**  
Cllr Firmston and Cllr Salamons
- iii. Manhood Peninsula Partnership (MPP)**  
Cllr Firmston
- iv. Green Links across the Manhood (GLAM)**  
No representative for the moment
- v. Surface Water Issues and Solutions (SWISh)**  
Cllr Churchill
- vi. Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group**  
Cllr Firmston
- vii. Witterings Medical Centre Participation Group**  
Cllr Churchill
- viii. Village Hall Trust**  
Cllr Churchill
- ix. Traffic Calming Group**  
Mr David Thompson and Mr Mike Evans (tbc)

All the above were proposed by Cllr Taylor, and unanimously **ELECTED**.

**9. To consider and approve nominations of Councillors to lead on the following:**

- i. Staffing Committee**  
Cllrs Churchill, Devos and Hamilton
- ii. Communications working group**  
All councillors
- iii. Planning Committee sub-group**

Not to be continued – all councillors will receive planning applications for comment.

- iv. **Resilience/Emergency Planning**  
Cllr Firmston and Devos
- v. **Birdham Neighbourhood Plan Review Group**  
On hold until CDC Local Plan adopted
- vi. **Playground/Recreation Ground**  
Cllr Churchill

All the above were proposed by Cllr Devos and unanimously **ELECTED**.

**10. To approve the following policies and procedures for the Council**

- **Civility and Respect Pledge**
- **Dignity at work policy**
- **Councillor Model Code of Conduct**
- **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**
- **Document retention scheme**
- **Risk assessment**
- **Scheme of Delegation**
- **Standing Orders**
- **Financial Regulations**

All the above were proposed by Cllr Salamons, seconded by Cllr Hamilton and unanimously **ADOPTED**.

**11. To approve the following Data Protection Policies for the Council**

- Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Incident Policy
- IT, Communications and Monitoring Policy
- Privacy Impact Assessment

All the above were proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Churchill and unanimously **ADOPTED**.

**12. Clerk's Report**

**i. To approve Internal Auditor's report**

The Internal Auditor's Report was proposed by Cllr Churchill, seconded by Cllr Devos, and unanimously **APPROVED**.

**ii. To approve the Annual Return for 2023 - 2024**

The Annual Return/accounting statements were proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Hamilton and unanimously **APPROVED**. The Chairman signed the accounting statement.

**iii. To confirm appointment of Internal Auditor for 2024 - 2025**

Cllr Salamons proposed Smithe and Co (Jennifer Smith), seconded by Cllr Taylor, and unanimously **AGREED**.

**iv. To approve the payments for consideration**

With the addition of the Chichester Tree Services bill for £275, the payments for consideration were proposed by Cllr Hamilton, seconded by Cllr Taylor, and unanimously **RESOLVED**.

**v. Bank reconciliation – circulated.**

The clerk drew the council's attention to the fact that the Action in Rural Sussex subscription had been returned because not enough money. The council agreed to continue to subscribe for an increased fee of £65.

Action

Clerk

**13. Planning matters including appeals, applications and CDC delegated decisions**

**i. Notifications of new planning enforcement notices**

Correspondence pertaining to clean up of traveller site ongoing

**ii. Updates on planning enforcements – ditto above**

**iii. Notifications of Planning Appeals**

The council has been notified of the appeal of the Compulsory Purchase Order (to which Birdham objected) for the plot off Crooked Lane. It is to go before an inspector for a total of 6 days over a two week period in August. Awaiting further details.

**iv. Planning applications to be decided.**

Planning Application number	Address	Details	Comment
BI/23/02616/FUL - Minor Dev - Dwellings	Creek Cottage, Westlands Estate	Replacement dwelling and associated works.	Council previously objected. Following changes in design and Harbour Conservancy agreement <b>No Objection</b>
BI/24/00727/FUL	Pinks Four, Bell Lane, Birdham, West Sussex, PO20 7HX	Change of use of land for the provision of six pitches for gypsies and travellers including associated access tracks, parking and turning areas.	<b>OBJECTION</b> on grounds of likely overdevelopment; lack of information on pitch size; out of settlement area; access unsuitable; Brierly Cottage is cited as a Heritage asset in BNP and permanent sewerage lorry in lane.
<b>Appeal</b> APP/PCU/CPOP/L381 5/3323287	The Chichester District Council (Access Track Off Crooked Lane, Birdham) Compulsory Purchase Order 2023 (the Order)		<b>August 6<sup>th</sup></b>
BI/24/00752/ELD - Other Dev - Certs of Lawful Development	Kellys Nursery , Bell Lane, Birdham, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 7HY	Existing Lawful development - change of use from horticulture to retailing (Classe E).	<b>Objection - lack of information of existing use of greenhouses over last ten years. Affidavit does not gi question.ve any evidence to answer that question</b>

**i. Delegated decisions to be noted:**

Planning Application number	Address	Details	Decision
BI/23/02912/FUL	1 Cowdry Cottages Sidlesham Lane Birdham	Application for pair of farmworkers cottages - variation of condition 3 from planning permission BI/13/53.	<b>PERMIT</b>
BI/23/02868/FUL	Little Copse, Westlands Estate, Birdham, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 7HJ	Replacement dwelling, outbuildings and associated works.	<b>PERMIT</b>

BI/24/00382/PA6ABE	Hundredsteddle Farm	Upgrading of existing farm track to enable farm vehicles to travel between the farm buildings	WITHDRAWN
22/02064/FUL	Tideways Lock Lane	Like for like replacement of timber sea wall on existing sea defence line	PERMIT
BI/2400566/DOM	Salthouse Martins Lane	Outbuilding to form annexe and incidental space to Salthouse	PERMIT

#### 14. Councillor reports

- i. **Play area and Playing Field – to approve expenditure on playground repairs** The needed repairs to the play area following the inspection last year would cost £1731.04. This was unanimously **AGREED** by the council. Tenders for the next section of the all-weather footpath will be sought.

- i. **Village Green and Pond – no report**

- ii. **Communication Working Group – no report**

- iii. **Community resilience – no report**

#### 15. Reports of meetings attended by councillors

##### Cllr Salamons – West Sussex Association of Local Councils

- i. Cllr Salamons had attended the West Sussex Association of Local Councils meeting. She reported that there had been much discussion of poor behaviour on councils, and that it was getting worse. Use of personal addresses on Register of Interests forms is not recommended following a death threat to a councillor. The official status of uniquely remote meetings in England has not changed. (Not lawful). Growing problems with banks handling Parish Council accounts – Metro and Unit Bank had appeared to fare better.

- ii. Cllr Firmston had attended the following meetings:

- a) **Manhood Peninsula Partnership Meeting**

Monday 19th March 2024 commencing at 10.00 a.m. on Zoom. There were twenty-four participants.

These are highlights of the various presentations as the amount of information forthcoming was considerable.

##### **Realities of Future Sea Level Rises and Surface Water Flooding**

Dom Henley, Coastal Partners which comprises five adjoining local authorities. With increased storminess and rising sea levels there is increased risk. Some of the present coastal assets are over 50 years old and are / will fail. For surface water keep ditches clear to transfer water and additional pumps will be required. Tidal extent maps are now available and need to be considered when purchasing a property. Need to check the Environment Agency website for these maps.

##### **Home Energy Efficiency**

Sara Osman, Environment Officer CDC. Part of the Climate Team

The CDC Climate Emergency Action Plan 2019 – 2025 is being rethought and revised. Planning to have Climate Champions, are the Parish Council interested in this scheme?

Greenhouse gas emissions include transport contributing 37% and residential use 30%. Need to ensure all new properties are energy efficient. Retrofitting is possible but more difficult.

### **Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)**

Involved with the Three Harbours Partnership part funded by Southern Water. 25 Super Partnerships have been created in the U.K. as part of the King's Initiative. A group of farmers on the Manhood Peninsula are working on environmental schemes and reducing nitrate run off. Southern Water want to create their own wetlands to filter and improve sewage treatment. This is to happens at Sidlesham WWTW.

### **Speed Limits on the Manhood Peninsula**

Here is increasing interest on reviewing speed limits within this area with a 20 mph. speed network. This can tie in with the current scheme of Quiet Lanes. "Vulnerable road users" is a better term to use collectively including pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists.

The meeting closed at 11.20 a.m.

## **b) Three Parishes Traffic Group**

Report of the initial meeting of the Group held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 commencing at 7.00 p.m. at Chichester Yacht Club.

Present; Marsha Jones – Apuldram P.C., Anna Gaymer - Donnington P.C. and Timothy Firmston - Birdham P.C.

### **Introduction.**

The formation of the group was suggested at a meeting with West Sussex County Council Highways on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023 with the three parishes each looking at improving the safety and speed limits on the A286 as it passes though the three parishes of Donnington, Apuldram and Birdham, starting at the A27 bypass down to the Shell fuel station in Birdham.

After discussion it was advised the three parishes should consider the proposal as one project working together to produce recommendations to WSCC Highways with the support of their respective county councillors.

### **Context.**

Progress is usually achieved using a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and a Community Highways Scheme (CHS) which can be either simple or complex. Assessment of these schemes uses a framework with points awarded called SPACE covering People, Access, Cost and Environment.

The West Sussex Transport Plans has four parts with schemes needing to show improvements to residents being Healthy, Prosperous, Protected and Connected.

Having a road safety audit of the A286 road is a separate piece of work including the monitoring of accident statistics. This can be carried out some 1 to 2 years later.

Considering vulnerable road users is important. These include cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians.

Active travel is being encouraged to promote exercise and join the different modes of transport.

There is increasing interest in reviewing speed limits on the Manhood Peninsula and having a network of 20 mph. speed limits.

## **Presentation**

After discussion it was agreed the three parishes would identify the common issues with the A286 road and then each parish would list problems and safety issues relevant to their area.

## **Common Issues**

1. Need to consider the consistency of the speed limits which range from 30 mph. in Donnington then 40 mph. then 50 mph and finally 40 mph. in Birdham. The double bend at Crouchers Cider House is particularly dangerous with an increase in turning traffic to the site.
2. Remark / reline the road junctions and centre lines where faded or disappeared. Remark the cycle lanes.
3. Install additional 30 mph repeater signs within the Donnington section of the road. Use SID (speed indicator device) data to justify the road proposals. This equipment is available within some parishes or is not functioning.
4. Construct more footpaths and cycle ways.
5. Create a new replacement entrance and exit at the Cider House bend to avoid using the double bend.

## **Birdham Parish Issues**

1. Bus stop opposite Church Lane on the southbound carriageway is dangerous to use when getting on or off the bus with the close proximity of the bus.
2. Reduce the 40 mph. limit to 30 mph. through Birdham
3. Provide entrance gates / markers on both sides of the carriageway at the three road entry points to the parish.
4. Create an active travel hub at the Church Lane T junction with the A286 to include bus information, bus shelter, cycle racks and information on the heritage assets to be seen on the walking trail.

## **Consultation**

Each parish would present their report at their next parish council meeting or parish meeting to inform all the councillors and seek additional issues and safety concerns.

## **Next Meeting**

Subject to the resulting discussions the next meeting could be held in late June 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.



c)

**16. Items for inclusion on the next Agenda**

- Organisation of dealing with planning applications
- The Birdham Community Orchard
- Date of Autumn event for the village

**17. Date of next meeting**

**The next meeting will be on Wednesday 12th June 2024**

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Firmston – Chairman

**Birdham Parish Council Payments for Consideration  
Meeting May 8th 2024**

**Balances on accounts:**

Current account	£100,183.59
Deposit account	£71,398.42
NS&I	£7,099.85
	<b>£178,681.86</b>

**Received since last meeting**

Precept	£36,908.00
	<b>£36,908.00</b>

**Paid since last meeting**

betty geary	litter picking	£70.00
I whitaker	salary	£877.59
nest	pension	£64.00
hmrc	contributions	£64.65
sse	street lighting feb	£173.94
cdc	waste collection	£839.90
wsalc	wsalc and nalc contributions	£578.11
adrian dover	grass cutting and bus stop clearance	£60.00

I whitaker	council running costs	£245.32
boxgrove parish council	telephone contribution	£35.97
arbus	SID installation	£1,512.00
Action in rural sussex	subscription	£50.00
		<b>£4,571.48</b>

### Payments for consideration

Jackson's fencing	cost of parts (barrier repair)	£1,416.23
betty geary	litter picking	£70.00
imogen whitaker	clerk's salary	£877.59
nest	pension	£64.00
hmrc	contributions	£21.55
satswana	data protection officer	£180.00
JNR	MS365/domain/email	£1,631.52
cdc	mpp project officer	£496.00
ams contracting ltd	hedge cutting	£724.50
elan city	mpounting bars sid	£124.96
sse	street lighting	£186.34
Screwfix	hose clips for SID	£19.99
Smithe and Co Ltd	internal audit	£324.00
T Firmston	councillor expenditure	£75.99
		<b>£6,212.67</b>

### Birdham Parish Council Recon 8th May 2024

### Bank accounts as of May 7th 2024

Current Account	£100,183.59
Deposit Account	£71,398.42
National Savings	£7,099.85
<b>Total</b>	<b>£178,681.86</b>

Opening balance 1st April 2023	£147,709.91
add receipts in the year	£36,908.00
less expenditure to date	£5,936.05
<b>Balance</b>	<b>£178,681.86</b>

### Less

Reserve @ 50% of Precept	£36,908.00
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Total	£36,908.00
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**Ringfenced Funds**

Op Watershed	£2,400.00
Culvert Ditch Maintenance	£17,500.00
Adams bequest	£6,500.00
CIL Payments	£68,710.20
NHB	£6,404.46
NP Grant Parish Land	£600.00
Car charging points	£1,500.00
Trees	£5,275.00
Ponds improvement long term	£3,000.00

Total	£111,889.66
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**Available Funds**

Total	£29,884.20
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**Outstanding PWLB**

Total	£95,750.00
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Signed:

*IXWhitaker - Clerk 7th May  
2024*

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