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Minutes of the of the Hybrid Parish Council Meeting  
held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025  
at 7pm

**Present:** Cllr Timothy Firmston (Chair), Cllr Catherine Salamons (Vice-chair)  
Cllr Elizabeth Hamilton,  
WSCC Pieter Montyn CDC Elizabeth Hamilton, CDC Iain Ballantyne  
Clerk (Zoom) and 1 member of the public

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**1. Apologies**

Cllrs Taylor and Churchill – holiday.

**2. Declarations of interest**

i. There were no declarations of interest for matters on the agenda

**3. Minutes – to approve and sign the minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025 meeting**

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Salamons and seconded by Cllr Hamilton. They were unanimously **AGREED** to be a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

**4. Councillor Resignation**

Cllr Jan Devos had sent her letter of resignation to the Chair and Clerk. The Chair accepted the resignation with regret and thanked her for all her hard work on the Village Day and other projects since her time as councillor.

**5. Youth Project – how we can help – talk from youth worker.**

Item deferred as the youth worker had not replied to the invitation. The clerk to contact Youth and Communities team at CDC, and also the Youth Council (some students at Bishop Luffa) to see how best to move the project forward.

Action	Clerk
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**6. Public Question time from residents of Birdham in accordance with Standing Orders 1d – 11**

A member of the public has tried to have a heat pump installed on his property but the companies involved are unable to proceed because the smart meter would not work. Can the council do something about the poor Wi-Fi signal in Birdham. He asked how the new development would deal with this as they were also to install some heat pumps.

Cllr Iain Ballantyne (CDC) said that he had a smart meter which worked but that he would look into the issue. The area is still on 3G – would 5G come to Birdham.

A second question from the resident was why Birdham did not seem to have any Village Pride? He said that a vision had been set out in the Birdham Neighbourhood plan. He suggested that the PC should put some thought into making the village a village. He cited Boxgrove as a village with pride – with a village sign, clean and tidy, new bus-stops etc.

The clerk said that Boxgrove had several volunteer groups that were very active.

**7. To receive reports from CDC members for Birdham.**

**Cllr Ballantyne**

a) Cllr Ballantyne reported that this afternoon CDC had held a seminar to update councillors on the new planning regime. There is a new National Policy Planning Framework. The CDC Local Plan

was based on the previous NPPF and will have to be reviewed quickly after being made. This will make refusals of development more complicated.

Affordable housing is to become more like social housing and available to all.

Large developments must comply with the Biodiversity Net Gain clause. CDC will be appointing an officer for monitoring purposes. A net gain of 10% will be required (wildlife corridors/tree planting for example). The developer must pay for this for 30 years.

- b) Devolution is moving forward with East/West Sussex and Brighton and Hove having been accepted for the fast-track tranche. The CEOs are working on outline plans for 21<sup>st</sup> March and full proposals must be submitted for 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025. In 2027 the Shadow Authority elections will be held.

**Cllr Hamilton**

- c) Cllr Hamilton reported that the CDC had resolved an increase in council tax of 2.9% which equates to £5.58p per year for a tax band D property.
- d) CDC is now using hydrogenated vegetable oil for its bin lorries.
- e) Local Authorities will now receive a grant from the government to help cover the Employers' National Insurance contribution rise. The rise for CDC is £545,000 and the grant will pay £430,000 for this year only.
- f) CDC is putting in a bid to the National Lottery fund for £1.4million to pay for private action projects such as repairs in enclosed churchyards.
- g) A recommendation by cabinet is to try and bring several charitable groups together under one umbrella.
- h) CDC has put aside money to pay for housing the homeless and rough sleepers.
- i) Cllr Hamilton reported that the Planning Committee had approved the traveller site for Pinks Lane even though the ownership of the lane is in question.

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

- i. Planning Enforcement Notices – new and/or updates –** there were none received
- ii. Notifications of Planning Appeals –** there were none received
- iii. Planning applications to be decided:**

Planning application number	Address	Details	Comment
BI/25/00089/TPA	Nevis Martins Lane Birdham Chichester	Crown reduce by up to 20% on 1 no. Oak tree (T1) subject to BI/81/00020/TPO.	Refer to discretion of tree officer
BI/25/00130/ADV	Land At Main Road Birdham	2 no. non-illuminated totem signs.	Retrospective app. No Objection
BI/25/00177/DOM	1 Rowan Close, Birdham, Chichester	Lift the internal height of the roof and replace the roof pitch and 2 no. additional gable ends on either side of the building. 1 no. dormer to south with 2 no. skylights and Juliet balcony. (Variation of condition 6 of permission 24/01057/DOM - proposed grey fibre cement cladding boards).	No objection

**iv. Delegated decisions to be noted**

Planning Application number	Address	Details	Decision
BI/24/02500/TPA	28 Rowan Close	Tree works subject to BI/83/00023/TPO.	PERMIT
BI/24/02247/DOM	Dragonsfield, Westlands Estate, Birdham,	(E) 481888 / (N) 100604 25th October 2024 Single storey extension to south elevation linking dwelling assoc .works	PERMIT
24/01896/FUL	Clayton's Corner	Planning Application: 24/01896/FUL Demolition of 4 no. existing dwellings and erection of 5 no. dwellings, including revised drainage runs	PERMIT
BI/24/01046/DOM	7 The Saltings, Birdham,	Single storey side extension and internal alterations.	PERMIT
BI/24/02688/FUL	The Boat House, Units 4 And 6, Building D,	Retrospective (Section 73a) for the change of use of land and siting of mobile container	PERMIT
BI/24/02808/TPA	Land North Of 10 To 29 Old Common Close Birdham	Prune back to previous pruning points on 1 no. Black Poplar tree (T18), subject to BI/97/00036/TPO.	PERMIT

BI/24/01422/FUL	Unit 4A Premier Business Park Birdham Road Appledram Chichester West Sussex PO20 7	Change of use of existing business premises from Use Class E(a) to Use Class E(d) where there is a restrictive condition on an historic change of use permission. Additional Information: Amended Redline Plan.	Has gone before committee and has been deferred as objection from neighbour. To come back to committee at a later date.
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**9. GLaM Quiet Lanes Survey – suggestions for additions.**

David Thomson had informed the council today that the 20mph TRO for Birdham had moved forward to the next stage and was now being put out for public consultation. The consultation would run from 20<sup>th</sup> February until 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

Jane Cunningham of CDC/MPPG had asked all Parishes to put forward their suggestions for Quiet Lanes (overlap slightly with the TRO but the 20mph of a TRO is enforceable).

Suggestions for Quiet Lane designation were: Batchmere and Almodington Lanes; Westlands Lane and Martin’s Lane; Sidlesham Lane.

Action	Clerk
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**10. To receive a report from WSCC member for Birdham.**

Deferred until later in meeting

**11. Clerk’s report**

**i) Correspondence**

- the clerk asked if the council wished to continue to support the campaign for the safety of lithium batteries being brought to government attention by Lord Foster and Electrical Safety First charity. Lithium batteries (used to propel e-scooters) for example are not always properly tested and can self-ignite in garages etc. The council agreed to write a letter of support.

Action	Clerk
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- the clerk had received a letter from St Richard’s NHS asking if Parish Councils would consider siting a laundry-retrieval bin in the parish. Patients from the hospital are often sent home with blankets, clothes etc belonging to the hospital, which they then discard. If these items could be recuperated then it would save the hospital thousands of pounds. It was AGREED in principle but further information is required from the hospital.

Action	Clerk
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- a member of the public had contacted the council concerning a Deed of Easement that he had signed with the Parish Council and the agreed insurance. The Clerk and Cllr Salamons to look into the issue.

Action	Clerk
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- the clerk had received a letter asking if the Parish would like to take part in the South and Southeast in Bloom competition and campaign. It is not possible for the Council at this time.

**ii) Payments for consideration** – the payments for consideration were proposed by Cllr Salamons, seconded by Cllr Hamilton and unanimously **RESOLVED**.

**iii) Bank Reconciliation - circulated.**

(Cllr Montyn arrived at 8.15pm)

**Item 10:**

Cllr Montyn reported that more and more information about the Devolution proposals was getting known and that there was a lot of work to be done to meet the deadlines of 21<sup>st</sup> March and end of September, as required by the Minister. The WSCC elections of May 2025 will not take place, and the elections for Mayor will be in May 2026.

It has been suggested that more power may be devolved to Parish Council’s and more money, but that has yet to be confirmed.

Mayors will not act alone but will have to work together for the big issues such as rail/roads/buses.

The WSCC budget is to be proposed at the meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> February. The budget is completely balanced and no cuts have been made to services, nor has the council touched its reserves.

However, the pressures are building up all the time, and demands are getting greater, particularly in

Adult Social Care and Children's Care. Extra capital will be put into Highways. The budget can be seen in its entirety online:

[Budget 2025-2026 - West Sussex County Council](#)

Adult Social Care can be viewed on pages 24 – 27

Children on pages 27 – 32

Highways on pages 41 onwards

(End of report)

Cllr Firmston asked Cllr Montyn about the TRO for yellow lines in Crooked Lane. Cllr Firmston sent the draft report and results of the resident survey to WSCC on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 but had not heard back. There were 52 letters received and 92% were in support of the TRO.

He asked that when the final copy of the consultation was made, that Cllr Montyn would write his letter of support.

Cllr Firmston to forward documents to Cllr Montyn

Action

Cllr Firmston/Montyn

## 12. Councillor Reports:

### i. Play area and playing field – Playground Inspection action to be taken

- the playground inspection had highlighted some works that needed to be done. The red carousel has reached the end of its life and could be replaced with a piece of equipment aimed at the younger age group and which would involve more climbing activity. The suggested item costs £27K. The council to investigate further.
- The slide needs some repairs – Cllr Firmston to ask the builders at the scout hut if this was something they could undertake.
- The high winds on 27<sup>th</sup> January caused some branches to break on the trees alongside Farne Lane, and the tree surgeon was called out. He still has some branches to tidy up and will return.
- The picnic shelter is now installed and the rubber mulch should be done on Monday or Tuesday. It is currently protected by Heras fencing.

### ii. Village green and pond

- Cllr Firmston had agreed that the three village ponds (Kingfisher, the Green and Triangle) should be added to the Strategic Wildlife Corridors to and from the Downs and the sea.
- There is a working party to sow wildflower seeds on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February at Triangle pond if anyone would like to join.

### iii. Communication working group – no report

### iv. Community resilience – no report

## 13. Reports of meetings attended by Councillors

Cllr Firmston's report from the CDALC meeting had been circulated.

Cllrs Salamons, Firmston and the Clerk had attended the All Parishes Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February. Power point had been circulated.

## 14. Items for inclusion on the next agenda

- Youth provision
- Plaque for Walnut tree in commemoration of Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

## 15. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7pm.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Firmston - Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Balances on accounts:**

Current account	£42,711.71
Deposit account	£132,266.56
NS&I	£7,154.78
	<b>£182,133.05</b>

**Received since last meeting**

£0.00

**Paid since last meeting**

betty geary	litter picking	£70.00
imogen whitaker	clerk's salary	£877.59
nest	pension	£64.00
hmrc	contributions	£64.65
mh kennedy and sons	grass cutting	£323.32

**£1,399.56**

**Payments for consideration**

betty geary	litter picking	£70.00
imogen whitaker	clerk's salary	£877.59
nest	pension	£64.00
imogen whitaker	council running costs	£251.45
Boxgrove Parish Council	telephone contribution	£35.97
pwlb	loan repayment	£8,591.04
sse	street lighting	£274.42
mh kennedy and sons	grass cutting	£339.49
device doctors	m365	£1,958.40
super signs	village pump signs	£90.00

**£15,351.48**

**Bank accounts as of 5th February 2025**

Current Account	£42,711.71
Deposit Account	£132,266.56
National Savings	£7,154.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>£182,133.05</b>

Opening balance 1st April 2023	£147,709.91
add receipts in the year	£101,100.83
less expenditure to date	£66,677.69
<b>Balance</b>	<b>£182,133.05</b>

**Less**

Reserve @ 50% of Precept	£36,908.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£36,908.00</b>

**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	£500.00
Car charging points	£1,500.00
Trees	£5,275.00
Ponds improvement long term	£3,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£111,789.66</b>

**Available Funds**

<b>Total</b>	<b>£33,435.39</b>
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**Outstanding PWLB**

<b>Total</b>	<b>£95,750.00</b>
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Signed:

*IXWhitaker - Clerk 5th February 2025*