West Itchenor Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of West Itchenor Parish Council held on Monday 4 March 2013 in Itchenor Memorial Hall.

Present: Mrs J Boadle, Mr M Chater OBE (Chairman), Mr G Colbourne, Mr J Hartley, Mr A Spencer, Mrs S Taylor

In attendance: Mrs C Smith (Clerk), 3 members of public,

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm

16/13C Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

17/13C Questions/comments from members of the public.

Mr Mead-Briggs asked whether any contact had been made with the Goodwood Estate with regard to the registration of the Common and whether the Parish Council had submitted its comments on the LDF Consultation. The Clerk responded that contact had been made with the Manager at The Goodwood Estate but that she and Cllr Taylor had some investigations to complete before this could be pursued. A copy of the Parish Council response to the LDF consultation would be sent to Mr Mead-Briggs.

Mr Arnold presented a request for a previously agreed donation for the design of the updated Village Design Statement.

18/13C District and County Councillors reports.

The District and County Councillor had sent apologies due to a clash in meeting dates.

19/13C Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Varvill.

20/13C Declarations of Interest and dispensation requests.

There were no declarations of interest.

21/13C The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 January 2013

The Chairman called for the approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 14 January 2013. The word 'previously' was inserted into line 3 page 4 to aid clarification. The Minutes were then **AGREED** and the Chairman duly signed them as being a true record of that meeting.

22/13C Matters arising from the minutes of 14 January 2013.

Cllr Spencer expressed concern that at the January meeting he had raised the issue of developments with planning permission where no work had started and the response from Mr Montyn had implied that the number was insignificant. However, at the Tangmere housing conference it had been reported that 600 houses had received permission but had not yet been built and he felt this was very significant. He also was concerned about the provision of additional school places.

23/13C Members Reports.

23.1 <u>Meetings of Local Government Associations, AiRS/SALC, SERCAF, National/sub regional developments, Manhood issues and Birdham School – Cllr Chater</u>

The Chairman had attended the January meeting of WSALC where there had been discussions on incorporation. Papers are available if Councillors wish to follow this

up. The essentials are in the SALC newsletter. The Chairman explained the reasons for the changes and how the democratic process would be maintained.
The Chairman highlighted the LGA which represents County Councils adding there was still some suspicion of Parish Councils throughout the Country fearing that the decision making process would be held up. Two joint conferences have taken place and NALC spoke warmly about the partnership. LGA members recognise need to move forward on the localism agenda.
SERCAF has now expanded to include Hertfordshire. Extensive discussions localism and the future of NALC took place at the latest meeting. He highlighted the resignation of the Chief Executive of NALC for March 2014. NALC has been successful in its negotiations with Government on the role of Parish Council's but has not yet won the fight for financial support. It was noted that most bodies worried about cost of running their administration.
The Chairman commented that there had been comments that regional government had agreed appalling figures on housing numbers which had been passed to districts. With the Regional Plan being abandoned the housing figures were now much higher and debate was ongoing. He questioned the policy for the Manhood and cooperation amongst councils. Argument against development should be highlighted because of the flood plain, sewerage, schooling, and tourism issues. He suggested that there is an identity that needs to be better articulated.
School Governors meeting had agreed targets for the year for the Head Teacher of Birdham School.
Regular monthly meetings were being held for the lay team. A recent meeting of the United Benefice had looked at a vision for all 3 churches.
Along with Cllr Colbourne and Cllr Taylor he had attended the planning conference at Tangmere. There was common agreement on the impacts of planning and it was difficult to see how this can be ignored.
He highlighted a number of local meetings that Councillors would be attending.
The Chairman had attended a Manhood Peninsula Partnership meeting which had included representatives from CDC, Medmerry, Environment Agency and RSPB. Discussion about Pagham Harbour and other costal projects had taken place.
The Chairman highlighted a talk from Jane Reeve about water voles and their unique place on the Peninsula. This tied in with concerns on the way that ditches are maintained and the associated flooding issues. The Medmerry Scheme had been delayed because of the weather and was now to be opened up in the Autumn. It was noted that this was the largest scheme of its kind in Europe. Ideas to promote the Manhood Peninsula had been raised including maintaining use for Tourism at the end of the season. It was regarded as important to encourage better use of the area, ensuring the survival of business whilst being sensitive to communities and the limited infrastructure.
The Environment Agency has work going on from East Wittering to Selsey on shingle replacement. An Adaptive Management Scheme is in place for Pagham Harbour which is silting up.

23.2 <u>Planning – Cllr Taylor</u>

Cllr Taylor reported on the recent Planning Committee meetings advising that three applications had been considered and no objections were made. The District Council has permitted three applications and refused three applications.
Cllr Taylor reported that the Planning Committee had questioned the way applications were handled. Currently, if the Parish Council recommends refusal of a planning application and the Planning Officer recommends approval, the application is referred to the District Council Development Control Committee. However, if the Parish Council recommends no objection and the Planning Officer recommends refusal, no referral is made to the Development Control Committee and the refusal stands. The Planning Committee thought the process should be symmetrical

Cllr Colbourne explained that the Planning Committee was looking at whether comments recommending approval were being investigated. He questioned whether an elected body such as the Parish Council should be over-ruled by a Planning Officer. He expressed concern that the only opinion that could be given was a negative one. It was noted that the Clerk had asked for clarification on what the legal position is regarding comments as a statutory body.

In answer to a question raised by a resident it was noted that although generally the Planning Committee decisions were in line with responses from the Harbour Conservancy there were occasions when views differed. This was because the two organisations had slightly different viewpoints.
Cllr Colbourne commented that the Harbour Conservancy was not a statutory body and whilst the District Council gave significant weight to the Conservancy comments if they objected this would not necessarily mean that an application would go to the Development Control Committee.
The Chairman briefly gave some background to national issues that surround giving responses to planning applications.

Cllr Taylor reported on a meeting with County Council Officers from Highways, Drainage, footpaths and legal departments which had been organised by Mr Montyn. She commented that it had been important for all of the departments to know the extent of the issues relating to the land adjacent to The Oast. The time for compliance with the Enforcement Notice had been extended to 28 February 2013 and Cllr Taylor suggested that the owner had more or less complied with the notice. An Email had been received from owner detailing what he was going to do with the ditch and the extent of the land he owns.
The Drainage Officer was concerned about the ditches but could not do anything whilst the enforcement notice was in force. The Footpath Officer was adamant that the footpath needs to be 2metres wide. It had been agreed that the Legal Department would write to the owner of the land and the Planning Inspector detailing the issues raised.
Cllr Taylor reported that she was now waiting notification as to when the Planning Inspector would visit the site.
Cllr Colbourne suggested that now the Enforcement Notice period had expired as the ditch was still filled in the Parish Council should write to the District and County Councils and press for the ditch to be cleared. It was agreed to wait for copies of the letter from the County Council to the Planning Inspector first.

Cllr Colbourne reported on the Housing Conference at Tangmere which he had attended with Cllr Taylor and the Chairman. It was noted that the MP Nick Herbert and the Parish Councils were in agreement and that the Officers from Chichester District Council and Arun District Council were out of step with these views. Everyone was very concerned with the lack of infrastructure. Amanda Jobling was asked about the planning application responses from Southern Water. It was noted that Southern Water Management were not admitting to there being problems. However workers on the ground were highlighting problems. It was felt that the District Council should be highlighting this issue and that Southern Water should be objecting when housing developments are being proposed as it cannot support existing clients.
It was noted that there were in the region of 600 houses that have planning permission where development has not yet started.

Cllr Spencer expressed concern that no one at District or County Council level appeared to be listening. The concerted view was that for too long a period of time piecemeal housing had been taking place.

The Chairman commented that there was a need for a Manhood Plan to look at all interests against a balance with demand for housing. It was noted that a number of groups were coming together now. The Peninsula Forum remained a voice for Manhood communities coming together.

23.3 Road issues – Cllr Colbourne, Cllr Spencer

Cllr Spencer reported that he had been in touch with Greg Ockwell and was waiting for notification as to when speed testing can take place. Cllr Colbourne reported that PCSO Rose Bainbridge had also offered to do speed checks. It was noted that PCSO Bainbridge was working very hard in the community. She had reported via email that there had been a burglary in Spinney Lane and the culprits were caught in the act.

Cllr Colbourne reported that a resident had commented on the number of cars travelling down The Street which is a dead end. The resident felt that the signage was inadequate and had asked if the Parish Council could ask the Highways Department to improve the signage. Cllr Hartley suggested it may be appropriate to look at decluttering signage in this area.

Cllr Colbourne also reported that the most dangerous part of the road was from the Church to the Memorial Hall. He suggested clearance of the verge to allow an escape for pedestrians. People currently walk on left side down the hill from the Church as it provides a better view. He thought that people should not be encouraged to walk on that side. It was noted that there was enough room on the Church side to clear the verge. Cllr Colbourne explained he was not suggesting putting in a footpath but with help from the Itchenor Society to clear the verge as an escape for pedestrians. It was felt that crossing the road to the memorial Hall on the corner provided the best view from both directions.

The Chairman suggested that the verge may need a small amount of levelling.

24/13C CCTV in the village.

Cllr Colbourne explained that Councillors had received a copy of a proposal put together by the working party. As a result of the research the conclusion was to suggest a single camera on the junction of Shipton Green. It was close to an electricity supply and telephone services. It was noted that there would be no protection for residents on Shipton Green or the builder's merchants. The advice had been to go for a number plate recognition camera. The Police had suggested this would be very helpful.

The cost of installation would be approximately £4300 and around £700 a year to run the system. The resulting costs to residents would be about £6 per household.

Cllr Colbourne commented that it was strange that residents contribute through the Council Tax system but businesses do not. He suggested the Parish Council write to local businesses to ask for a contribution to support the system This would offset the running costs.

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow residents to comment.

Mrs Arnold expressed concern about what the Parish Council was hoping to achieve and questioned who had said it was advisable.

Cllr Colbourne explained that it would be used as a deterrent and would only record the registration number of vehicles going in and out of the village. Where a vehicle had been stolen if the number plate was recognised this was helpful to the Police. He added that the Parish Council was not claiming to use this to reduce crime but there was a lot of CCTV around and it does seem to limit crime.

The Chairman added that the measures were not draconian but could be useful.

Mrs Arnold commented that she had spent 13 years as criminal judge. It may be that CCTV provides reassurance but it is not actually useful. She expressed concern about the Parish Council spending money on a project that is not going to achieve anything.

Mr Mead Briggs asked if the Parish Council had spoken to the Harbour Office on the success or otherwise their CCTV had provided.

The Chairman thanked residents for their comments and resumed the meeting.

Cllr Boadle asked how this proposal would be communicated to residents. Cllr Colbourne suggested the Parish Council might undertake a survey. An article was going in the newsletter asking residents to feed their views back to the Parish Clerk. He added that it might be a useful topic for the Annual Parish Meeting and if the residents don't want CCTV then they won't get it. It was recognised that there was a need for positive feedback to enable the project to go ahead.
Cllr Hartley commented that a spate of thefts from the Sailing Club were recorded on CCTV but it only showed a lot of ghostly shapes which was difficult to use.
However when an engine was taken from a garden a resident of Lansdale was standing on their balcony and recorded most of the number plate. They informed the Police who located vehicle three weeks later. He suggested that it does require the Police to respond quickly.
The Chairman added that the Parish Council would clearly review the scheme and effects on an annual basis.

RESOLVED to accept the paper presented to the Council and to raise the issue with residents at the Annual Parish Meeting.

25/13C Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Chairman explained the importance of having a Neighbourhood Plan.
Cllr Taylor added that a Neighbourhood Plan would give the Parish Council more influence even in draft form.
The Chairman reported that Neighbourhood Plans were being highlighted by NALC.
It was noted that Birdham were having a community event for their Neighbourhood Plan which might be useful to attend.
Concerns were expressed about the associated costs and it was suggested that the Parish Council should carefully look at its capacity to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.
Cllr Taylor explained the importance and the statutory value of the plan.

The Chairman closed the meeting to allow residents to make comments.
Mr Arnold suggested that Itchenor was a small area in comparison to the whole of the Manhood and therefore any plan needs to be interdependent on other parishes. The Jigsaw cannot fit together without co-operation between parishes. He added that this was a unique location and not like areas such as Southampton or Portsmouth.
The Chairman agreed that there would have to be co-operation between parishes but that the Parish Council had a duty in statute to look at producing a Neighbourhood Plan.
The Chairman thanked Mr Arnold for his comments and resumed the meeting.

Cllr Colbourne suggested that either the Planning Committee deals with the provision of a Neighbourhood Plan and makes a recommendation to the Parish Council or a small working party is set up to look at this and report back to the Parish Council.
RESOLVED that the Planning Committee starts the process of looking into producing a Neighbourhood Plan and that it draws in residents to assist where it feel it is appropriate.

26/13C Risk Assessment for the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council should formalise its risk assessment process. A draft Risk Assessment was circulated to Councillors. Some discussion on the keeping of records, particularly deeds and leases, followed. It was agreed that the location of these should be reviewed. It was also suggested that any contractors should be asked to provide a copy of their risk assessment and method statement for the work they were undertaking.

The Chairman highlighted some difficulties that this may present and suggested that there should be encouragement for communities to support each other and help out. It was agreed to review the Risk Assessment on an ongoing basis.

27/13C Appointment of an Internal Auditor.

The Clerk proposed the re-appointment of Mark Mulberry as the Parish Council's Internal Auditor for this year.

RESOLVED that Mark Mulberry be appointed as Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 March 2013.

28/13C Annual Parish Meeting.

The date of the Annual Parish Meeting was set for Thursday 16 May 2013.

The subjects to be reported on included CCTV, 20mph speed limit, drainage issues and the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Itchenor Society very kindly offered to provide refreshments. The Chairman expressed thanks on behalf of the Parish Council for the generous offer.

29/13C Clerks Report.

CDC – Meeting with the Parishes

The next meeting between members of Chichester District Council and representatives of Parish Councils will be on Thursday 23 May 2013. All Parishes are invited to send up to two representatives to the meeting. Further details of the venue and of the topics to be discussed (which will include the use to be made of the New Homes Bonus) will be notified in due course. It was agreed that Cllr Spencer and Cllr Taylor would attend.

Chichester District Association

The next meeting of the District Association will take place on Monday 25th March at 7pm in Lavant Village Hall. It was agreed that Cllr Spencer would attend.

SALC newsletter

The February newsletter from SALC was circulated to Councillors.

Clerk's holiday

Councillors were reminded that the Clerk will be away from the 11 to 18 March. Emails and calls will be diverted in the first instance to Cllr Colbourne.

CDC – Local Plan

The Clerk reported that Chichester District Council will be going out for Public Consultation on our Local Plan – Preferred Options in March / April. Details on the timetable were circulated to Councillors and would be put on the Parish Council website.

CDC – Public Conveniences

A letter regarding the future of public conveniences was circulated. Support for the service is being sought from parishes across the district.

Practitioners Conference

The Clerk thanked Councillors for the opportunity to attend the Practitioners conference the previous week. A full report would be circulated shortly. Attended events included the writing of effective press releases, VAT, Succession planning, Code of Conduct, confidential minutes and the new PAYE reporting system.

Newsletter

There was now enough content for the newsletter which would include a note on flooding. As soon as the last articles had been edited the newsletter will be circulated before going to print. It was intended that the newsletter should be distributed before the Council Tax bills were issued.

The Clerk commented that the Memorial Hall Committee had asked if the filing cabinet in the store room could be reduced in size to a 2 drawer cabinet. It was agreed that the Clerk should look into this.

30/13C Finance.

30.1 Schedule of Payments and Receipts

RESOLVED that the payments listed in the schedule of payments and receipts totalling £1846.73 be made. See appendix 1 (March 2013)

30.2 Statement of Accounts

The Statement of Accounts up to 28 February 2013 was **APPROVED.**
See appendix 2 (March 2013).

31/13C Items for referral to the Annual Parish Council Meeting on Monday 13 May 2013.

It was noted that the Parish Council had the option to change from being a Parish to a Community, Neighbourhood or Village Council. Debate on this to take place at the May meeting.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed_____ Date_____
Chairman