West Itchenor Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of West Itchenor Parish Council held on Monday 11 November 2013 in Itchenor Memorial Hall.

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

In attendance: Mrs C Smith (Clerk), Mr P Montyn (CDC/WSCC) 8 members of public

The meeting commenced at 7.04pm

91/11C Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the procedure for public comments.

92/11C Questions/comments from members of the public.

Mr Dunn made three comments; he suggested that the Parish Council should make readily available on the website documents such as the recent RoSPA report on the village Pond as this would help residents understand the Parish Council's decisions. He thanked Councillors for the opportunity to discuss issues relating to the Common and he understood that the Common Management Policy would be updated. He finished by suggesting that the Parish Council looks for a volunteer Archivist as a formal role to keep historical documents for both the Parish Council and the Itchenor Society.

The Chairman thanked Mr Dunn for his comments adding that the Parish Council would review the issues raised.

Mr Burnford commented that he did not feel that the Minutes of the September meeting accurately reflected the decisions made by the Parish Council on the proposals for the Pond. He thought that the Council had agreed on the first proposal but that the remaining proposals would be subject to some further discussion.

He added that in September the parish Council had agreed that a newsletter informing residents of the proposals would be issued shortly after the meeting but this had not yet happened.

The Chairman explained the difficulties that could arise if the Parish Council consulted members of the public on every aspect of the work it undertook. He highlighted the value of having meetings to make decisions on matters of controversy.

Cllr Spencer clarified the issue adding that the Parish Council had agreed to continue with the work that had started.

The Chairman further explained the work of the working party and the brief it had been given by the Parish Council which included consultation and the reporting of activities via the newsletter. He advised Mr Burnford that his comments had been noted and the Parish Council would be mindful of the points he had raised.

. Mr Burnford added that he could see no reason to open up the back of the pond.

The Chairman advised that the Parish Council had deliberated on how to maintain life of pond because the habitat was dying whilst also considering the flooding issues. He praised the efforts of the Councillors working with the Itchenor Society to get things done. He reiterated that the Mr Burnford's concerns were noted and should he continue to attend meetings with concerns then this would be reviewed.

It was reported that the work that had taken place because the freeholder, the Woodger Trust had requested that work be undertaken. After additional discussions with the RoSPA Inspector stakes would be placed down Blackhouse Lane to mark the edge of the pond.

Mrs Webb commented on Old Haven. An approach had previously been made to the District Council requesting a Section 125 notice be served on the owner but this had been unsuccessful. The Itchenor Society were considering putting in a further

application to the District Council but wanted to work with the Parish Council on this matter. Cllr Taylor explained that Section 125 of the Town and Country Planning Act compels the owner to renovate a property. It is mostly associated with slum dwellings in inner cities. Cllr Taylor added that she had spoken to the Planning Officers about using this but they were of the opinion that it did not fall within the act. Mrs Webb advised that the Itchenor Society was intending to make further comment of the Draft Local Plan and she highlighted the area of concern.

93/11C District and County Councillor reports.

Mr Montyn reported as follows:
The District Council Draft Local Plan was now for consultation on its soundness. After which it would go to the Secretary for Sate for approval.
The Conservancy having reviewed the wording relating to the AONB has agreed to leave the reference as 'considered' rather than 'being met' as this relates to the Management Plan. He intimated that there would be no further negotiation on this from the District Council.

The County Council is facing severe grant cuts next year. The next reduction covering four years is likely to be £141 million which is significant relative to the revenue budget of around £550 million. The County Council has over the last few years already made reductions of £79 million. The impact on residents so far has been minimal. The revised cuts will have a noticeable impact on residents.
The Chairman highlighted a recent joint conference noting that WSCC Officers are already working more closely with Parishes on services. Partnership working is going to be very crucial.

The County Council will consider its draft budget on 18 December. The County Council will not borrow further and it will not increase its share of the Council Tax.

Operation Watershed, the Parish Council had submitted an expression of interest for flood work which had been noted but no formal funding request had yet been made. The Council was advised to complete the funding request as funds were limited and this offer was unlikely to be repeated.

The Chairman explained that the flood group had been monitoring the ditches and the flow of water through the village. This would be followed up.

94/11C Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Boadle.

95/11C Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman declared an interest in Agenda Item 11 as a resident on the Common.

96/11C The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 September 2013

The Chairman called for the approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 9 September 2013. The Minutes were **AGREED** and the Chairman duly signed them as being a true record of that meeting.

97/11C Matters arising from the minutes of 9 September 2013.

Min 84.3 – Cllr Watson reported that he had met with Nicky Horter (Conservancy) to discuss the Pond. 30 mixed hedgeland saplings had arrived and with the support of the Itchenor Society planting would take place on Friday 15 November at 10.30am
A site visit to the Common had also taken place. It has been arranged that Ed Rowsell (Conservancy) will advise and/or help with an ecological survey. This will provide details on whether it may be possible to open up areas of the woodland to enhance growth or whether the wildlife in the area should not be disturbed.

98/11C Member's reports.

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

The Chairman reported that he had attended a large number of meetings, some of which were highlighted.

Chairman's training course at Lodge Hill which was very informative for all who attended.

Attended an event at the Novium Museum which highlighted the visit of Queen Elizabeth 1 through Sussex.

The Conservancy held an event at Bosham Sailing Club when the Freedom of the Harbour was presented to Louise Goldsmith, Peter Taylor and Tim Knight (Hants)

NALC Council reception to launch 'Local Councils Explained'. The book provides an easy to read narrative about the role of parish councils, their councillors and officers and how they work. There is comprehensive and practical guidance about the legal issues that local councils are exposed to.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman undertook the annual appraisal of the Clerk.

SSALC Board of Directors meeting, the Chairman briefly explained the workings of SSALC.

A farewell event for the youth leader of this area, a community event that included a welcome to the new youth leader.

A meeting of the Diocese on the education of Governors. There are many changes in education affecting children in the village. Free schools and Academies came under the spotlight. All schools in Sussex will be changing as result of the cut backs and these changes will be coming in very quickly.

NALC AGM took place on 30 October. John Lytton was re-elected as President. The Chairman was elected as one of the Vice Presidents. The current Chief Executive attended last his last AGM before retirement. Debate continues on how NALC moves forward.

The Parishing of urban areas is now beginning to take place. This could take 10/15 years but will provide a statutory democratic local voice throughout the country.

A joint event between WSCC, WSALC and local councils took place in Boxgrove. Council leaders and officers worked alongside 60 parishes sharing visions, concerns and strategy. The Chairman hailed this as a good omen for the future.

The SALC and AiRS AGM's took place at the beginning of November and included a conference entitled 'Growth for whose benefit?' The Leader of East Sussex CC addressed the conference. It was noted that AiRS as a voluntary body was having to tighten its belt and be more selective in its funding. There was however a vast amount of expertise within the organisation.

The Itchenor Society AGM took place the previous week. The Chairman paid tribute to the hard work and expertise of Christopher Mead-Briggs who had retired as Chairman and welcomed the new Chairman Alex Webb.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Cllr Hartley for his work with the Itchenor Society on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Spencer had now been elected onto the Itchenor Society Executive Committee.

Two members of the public left to meeting.

98.2 Planning – Cllr Taylor

Cllr Taylor reported that there had been only two planning committee meetings since September. The Committee had no objections to two applications and support for one. An application for a Certificate for Lawful development was considered. Applications for Lawful Development Certificates are based on statements of fact, not planning issues and it was felt that being the case the planning committee could not pronounce on the issue but would encourage individual residents to support or oppose the application based on their own knowledge of the property.

CDC Decisions: - Approval of the marine stores change of use to A3 use as a cafe.

Tree work approved to be carried out to a property in the Conservation Area approved.
Residents will have noted that Footpath 31 has been reinstated to a width of 1.8 metres and a hard core put down to facilitate mobility along the path. This work was carried out by WSCC and presumably they will recover their costs from the owner.
Enquiries were made about the digger which had been on the land for over a year as to whether planning permission was required. Planning permission is not required.
It will have been noted that the owner has now submitted a revised application for a two bedroom dwelling which will be considered by the Planning Committee on 18 November 2013.

98.3 Road issues – Cllr Spencer

Cllr Spencer had received notification from Greg Ockwell that he was finishing off the Section 278 paperwork in relation to the 20mph speed limit. Negotiations were ongoing regarding the legal fees as this was substantially done by the Council's solicitors. Mr Ockwell had advised that further speed data was required and two new speed loops would be installed around the end November. It was noted that there was support from the Officer for the scheme and that the scheme would be completed in due course.

98.4 All Parishes Meeting – Cllr Spencer

Cllr Spencer reported that it had been an excellent meeting and that the District Council seemed to be taking Parish Councils seriously. There was an excellent presentation on the Traveller problem. If there was an incursion in Itchenor the District Council had funding available help in the costs of moving any Travellers on. There are not enough permanent traveller sites in West Sussex and the Council is looking for volunteer sites. The local Police Superintendant had provided some information on the legal issues.
An overview of the changes to planning at the District Council were provided and it was noted that consultations would be conducted electronically from April 2014. Training on the new procedures would be available in February/March.
The District Council advised that there was still little in the way of financial resources. As far as Parish Councils are concerned it was reported that they were unlikely to be subject to any capping in the next financial year.
The District Council's 'My District' section of its website was highlighted. By putting in your postcode residents can access a wide range of information such as bin collection dates, local amenities and Councillor details. By registering for 'my alerts' residents can get an email when a planning application in their area is submitted. Cllr Spencer raised the issue of putting in Parish Council details on the site and this is being looked at.
There had been discussion on the issue of Fracking. The Department for Energy is the body which decides who will be permitted a licence even though the licence would be issued by the District Council. It was noted that Portsmouth Water had stated that it could not provide enough water for Fracking plants in the area which clearly may limit opportunities for this to take place.
Information from Portsmouth is that they have received around 500 representations on their Local Plan. In Chichester there have been over 5000 representations. It is also worth noting that for parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan the parish would be entitled to 25% of any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). For parishes without a Neighbourhood Plan this would reduce to 15% of the CIL and would be subject to a maximum of £100 per household.

98.5 Community Resilience workshop

Cllr Watson gave a brief report on the Community Resilience Workshop he had attended. Details of the workshop were circulated. Further information from the Fire

Brigade was awaited. This information should link in with the Emergency Plan. Cllr Watson offered to assist the Emergency Planning group.

99/11C Maintenance on the Pond.

Cllr Colbourne reported that the large willow tree fell down on the island. A working party with assistance from the Itchenor Society had cleared up the considerable mess that had arisen. Further clearing along the lane had also taken place in preparation for the planting of the hedging.

The Conservancy have also offered additional plants which would be available in February, suggested to keep the density of the edging.

Cllr Watson reported that grants were available through the County Council which would allow silt from pond to be sucked out. This method would be simpler, more efficient and cleaner.

RESOLVED that Cllr Watson be authorised to pursue this funding.

It was also reported that more posts had been ordered from Covers and these would be used along with sections of the felled tree. It was noted that the tree should resprout in due course.

100/11C Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Taylor reported that since the last meeting the Parish Council had submitted an application for the parish to be designated a Neighbourhood Area. The consultation for this expires on 21 November 2013. If there are no objections to the map then the Parish Council can proceed to next stage.

A working party is being set up to encompass views throughout the village.

Invitations were sent out to three individuals and local businesses. Most invitees had responded and no-one had refused to be part of the working party. A meeting of the working party would be held shortly and Tom Bell (CDC – Neighbourhood Planning Officer) would come and explain in further details the next stages.

The Parish Council is also looking at other organisations that may assist with advice and funding such as AiRS. Before an application for funding is made there is a need to assess the likely costs. It was noted that there was a wealth of expertise within the village that can be drawn on.

101/11C The Common.

Cllr Colbourne reported that there were two major areas of interest, encroachment and maintenance. A letter has been sent to all residents and businesses situated adjacent to the Common reminding everyone of the 'Common Management Policy'. The next stage would be to write to individual residents / businesses highlighting any infringements and requesting a meeting. This should be done in stages because of the timescales involved.

It was noted that a detailed inspection of the Common would best be carried out once the leaves had fallen. It had been suggested that the Common should be zoned with different styles of maintenance for each of the zones.

There remained some uncertainty over who had damaged the trees along Shipton Green Lane. It was suggested that a strip of grass a minimum of a meter wide should help reduce any further damage.

It was noted that there was a need to consult and confer with residents who live on common particularly those who maintain the common outside their properties. In addition to looking carefully at the common maintenance plan and taking into account views about maintaining the wild habitat within it.

It was suggested that the wildlife survey planned for the pond was extended to include the Common.

It was noted that the area around the memorial area was very overgrown. It was suggested that a working party be organised to look at this and to clear up the debris from the damaged trees.

102/11C Unnamed roads within the village.

A report on the unnamed roads in the village had previously been circulated to Councillors for consideration. The difficulties in directing people was highlighted. There would be a need to consult with residents living on the roads and to establish ownership of the roads.

The history of Pier Point Lane / Club Lane was discussed. It was noted that the Post Office has that road noted as Pier Point Lane. The road to Southerly Yachts was also discussed.

It was agreed that clarification of the road names would be useful but that there was a need to be mindful of the history of these roads.

It was agreed that any useful information should be fed back to Cllr Colbourne.

There was a brief discussion on the name of the waterway from the Pond to the harbour which was referred to as 'the rife' or 'the haven'.

Investigations would continue to see if clearer information was available.

103/11C Draft budget for 2014/2015

The draft budget had previously been circulated to Councillors for consideration.

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the changes to the Council Tax Benefit system that had taken place and how this had affected the tax base set by the District Council. Tax base increased significantly because of the removal of second home discount. The tax base figures usually are published in December but the Clerk did not anticipate much of a change for Itchenor.

Consideration needed to be given to an increase in hours for Clerk for work on the Neighbourhood Plan and there needed to be some budget for the costs of producing the Neighbourhood Plan.

It was noted that the current year's budget included £1000 towards the VDS which had be paid in the previous financial year. Some budget provision might be necessary for the 20mph speed limit although it was noted that residents in Chichester had not had to contribute to the 20mph limits in the city centre.

It was agreed to finalise the budget at the January meeting.

104/11C Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies Pre-Submission 2014-2029 Consultation

Chichester District Council's Local Plan has moved a step closer to being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, since District Councillors agreed that the Plan was ready for its final round of public comment. This is the final stage that the Plan has to go through before it is submitted to an Inspector. The Consultation takes place between 8 November 2013 and 6 January 2014. Following this, the Plan will be subject to a public examination, held by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The Inspector is required to consider whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the relevant regulations and is 'sound'. All the comments made now will be sent to the Inspector to assist this process.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council would hold an additional meeting in December to discuss its response to the consultation.

Mr Montyn left the meeting.

105/11C Risk Assessments.

Cllr Spencer advised that he had prepared a document but this had been left at his office. He explained the reasons why he felt this should be a regular agenda item. The Parish Council is subject to risk in its assets and the things it does. The potential problems should the Parish Clerk be out of action were highlighted as an example.

It was agreed that Cllr Spencer present the proposals at the next meeting after having discussions with the Clerk.

106/11C Clerks Report.

WSCC – Highways and Transport works program

WSCC has started a consultation on its future schemes for 2014/15 and 2015/16. Responses are required by 6 December 2013. Scheduled work in Itchenor is proposed as follows:

- Resurfacing works on Itchenor Road, The Street and Shipton Green Lane.

CDC – Polling review

The District Council must undertake a review of the polling districts and polling districts and polling places in the district. Although arrangements for polling districts and polling places are continually under review CDC is now asking for constructive comments on the current arrangements.

WSCC – West Sussex Waste Local Plan

The Clerk highlighted the consultation on the WSCC Waste Local Plan.

Training

The Clerk reported that there were still a few spaces left on the SALC Councillor and Chairman training courses being held on Saturday 23 November 2013 in Chichester. It was noted that Cllr Watson was already booked on the Councillors course.

Birdham Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk reported that a letter had been received from the Birdham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group inviting representations to be made on their Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that Cllr Taylor would attend.

Dates of meetings 2014

The Clerk advised Councillors of the meeting dates for 2014.
Monday 13 January 2014, Monday10 March 2014, Monday 12 May 2014, Monday 14 July 2014, Monday 8 September 2014, Monday 10 November 2014.

The remaining members of the public left the meeting.

107/11C Finance.

107.1 The completion of the External Audit for the year ended 31 March 2013

The Clerk reported that Littlejohn had completed the external audit and there were no matters to report. The Auditor had commented that the return had been received late but the Clerk had contacted them and established that this was down to their recording procedures not her failure to send in the documents in time. A copy of the Annual Return has been placed on the website in accordance with regulations and the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit had been posted on the notice boards and the website.

107.2 The Schedule of Payments and Receipts

RESOLVED that the payments listed in the schedule of payments and receipts totalling £2,185.32 be made. See appendix 1 (November 2013)

107.3 The Statement of Accounts

The Statement of Accounts up to 31 October 2013 was **APPROVED.**
See appendix 2 (November 2013).

Concerns were expressed about the Council's current bankers and it was agreed that the Clerk would look at other options.

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

The Clerk left the meeting.

108/11C Staff Matters.

After a report to Councillors the Clerk was invited back to the meeting.
It was agreed that this item would be deferred to the extra meeting in December to allow further information to be obtained. The Chairman on behalf of the Council expressed gratitude to the Clerk for her continued hard work.

109/11C Items for referral to the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 13 January 2014.

No additional items were raised.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.05pm

Signed_____ Date_____
Chairman