West Itchenor Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of West Itchenor Parish Council held on Monday 12 January 2015 in Itchenor Memorial Hall.

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

In attendance: Mrs C Smith (Clerk), 8 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 7pm

1/15C Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2/15C Questions/comments from members of the public.

A resident commented that Southern Water was not taking away waste when it rains which was down to hydraulic overload. The Parish Council was asked whether as a result of the surveys it had done the question of rainwater management had been addressed. It was noted that in some areas people had diverted surface water drains into the sewer system.

Southern Water did undertake some work in the summer trying to fix pipes where they found areas where water was getting into the system. In the previous week sewers overflowed and the pumping system shut down because of overload. Other examples of sewerage overflow were discussed along with some further remedial work done by Southern Water.

The Chairman reassured residents that the Parish Council was in constant communication with Southern Water regarding this issue.

The Parish Council was asked if storm water was getting into the sewers could the areas affected be identified using a CCTV survey.

Cllr Colbourne reported that Southern Water had visited his property to look at the flow rate and were surprised that it was so high. They had planned to go north and open the sewers and see when flow rate was as it should be to work out where any breach may be. Although some work was carried out the problems have returned and this may have to be done again.

The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council would keep communicating with Southern Water on the issue.

It was reported that the District Council can provide containers to have any overflow checked. If residents can show that rainwater is not getting into the system reductions in charges may be applied.

It was noted that although the existing pipes in the network were relatively small they were deemed appropriate for the expected flow. If the volumes and flow were increasing and breach points could not be identified then it may be time to increase the size of the pipes in the network.

A resident registered his disappointment that the last Neighbourhood Plan meeting had been cancelled at short notice adding that all the good work undertaken by the subgroups could have been shared and it would have been a good opportunity to co-ordinate all the work done so far.

3/15C District and County Councillor reports on matters affecting the Parish.

No reports

4/15C Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Boadle.

5/15C Declarations of Interest.
There were no declarations of interest.

6/15C The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 November 2014
The Chairman called for the approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 10 November 2014. The Minutes were **AGREED** and the Chairman duly signed them as being a true record of the meeting.

7/15C Matters arising from the minutes of 10 November 2014.
Minute 110.14C – there had been no reply from Travis Perkins

8/15C Members Reports

8.1 Meetings of Local Government Associations, AiRS/SALC, SERCAF, National/sub regional developments, Manhood issues and Birdham School – Cllr Chater
Cllr Chater's report is attached as an addendum to these Minutes.

Cllr Chater was asked why the Government did not make a Statutory Instrument to ensure principle councils paid over the full Council Tax funding support grants to parish councils. Cllr Chater acknowledged that there was concern over the effects of this. Some Local Authorities had been very sympathetic but a small number were not co-operating and there had been some naming and shaming of these councils.

Cllr Chater was asked how many vacant spaces there were in Birdham Primary School. The answer was none.

8.2 Planning – Cllr Taylor
Cllr Taylor's report is attached as an addendum to these Minutes.

The question was raised as to whether parishes could automatically object to large housing developments through the Western Manhood Consortium.

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow comments from the public.

It was reported that the Western Manhood Consortium shared the concern. Arguments against the 160 dwellings at Clappers Lane were the same for other similar applications. The Parish Council was asked to object to the new Bell Lane application as the concerns were the same. It was reported that the Western Manhood Consortium was set up to participate in the Clapper Lane enquiry and it may disband at the end of the enquiry. It has been suggested that the Consortium continues particularly in light of the likelihood that the Chichester Local Plan is unlikely to be operational until the autumn of 2015.
The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

The usefulness of the Peninsula Forum meetings between parishes and the District Council was highlighted. It was also noted that the Local Plan had included a number of local employment opportunities that were no longer in existence because of the closure of Flexotech, Northshore and Chobham Microwave. It was felt that if an application was made that would result in the loss of employment making land then the Parish Council should try and protect the employment use of that land.
Government was asking for greater development and the countrywide debate is focusing on where this development should be.

8.3 Ditches/Flooding issues – Cllr Spencer/Cllr Watson
The first draft of the Drainage Report has now been received and a further meeting has been arranged with the contractor to review the data and associated maps. In addition the Parish Council is sharing part of the report with CH2M Hill who are

compiling a Surface Water Management Plan on behalf of WSCC, for the Manhood Peninsular that includes Itchenor. CH2M Hill will be sharing relevant data with the Parish Council will be given a full copy of their report when published. Much of the draft report is commercially sensitive and all paper based maps that will be included are the copyright of others, as such this data cannot be distributed electronically. Further, in due course relevant information generated by the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group, who have recently conducted a detailed ditch survey in parts of the village, will be included in the Parish Council's data.

Most of the build-up of water recently has built up at pinch points identified. The Parish Council is aware of problems round the pond. Thanks were recorded to Peter Arnold and Mike Goddard who helped plant the trees alongside the pond.
Problems in Chalkdock Lane appear to have come from a new source and this is being addressed. The Parish Council highlighted the need for residents to keep ditches clear along their properties.

2 members of the public left the meeting.

8.4 Trees Assessment update

The Chairman & Cllr Watson had met with Ben Tidey from Envirocology the previous week. The Parish Council had now been given some ideas on how to assess and manage the trees. The Parish Council now had to prepare a Management Plan for the inspection and maintenance of the tress and it was thought that some of the work could be done with local support use of the green gym. It was felt that a GPS survey of the trees would be necessary for all trees in excess of a 7.5com trunk. Many trees appear to be suffering at the moment and although the Parish Council did not have adequate funding to action everything a Management Plan would at least identify the main areas of risk.
It was noted that trees along the highway were the responsibility of the County Council. However, although trees may not be on Parish Council land it would be liable if there were any incidents where trees overhang onto the Pond or the Common.

The Parish Council was advised that the public paths locally were maintained by the Harbour Conservancy who could be called upon to do survey of trees.

It was noted that adjustments to the canopy would unlikely affect wildlife but removing any spoil may have an effect. It was important to ensure that any workers taken on were suitably qualified and insured and working in accordance with the management plan.

9/15C Traffic Regulation Order.

The Parish Council has two potential Traffic Regulation Orders in the pipeline. The first relates to parking at the north end of the village and the Chairman and Cllr Colbourne are due to meet with adjoining residents to discuss this proposal.
The second relates to the proposed 20 mph speed limit. The Parish Council is now having to deal with a new member of staff as to the details of this proposal.

10/15C Records Management Policy.

The Clerk reported on recent Freedom of Information requests which had highlighted the importance of sensible and transparent guidelines. A draft Records Management Policy had previously been circulated to Councillors for consideration.

As a result of the review of the document two amendments were made; bank statements are to be kept for 6 years and Insurance policy documents are to be kept for 6 years.

RESOLVED that subject to the agreed amendments the Records Management Policy be adopted with immediate effect.

11/15C Precept and budget for 2015/2016.

A draft budget had been circulated to Councillors. The Clerk briefly reminded Councillors of the changes to the Council Tax Benefit system and advised that the Parish Council would not be in receipt of a grant from the District Council. The Tax base has this year increased by 0.467%. Details of how these figures affected the Band D rate were highlighted. The Clerk also advised that there was to be no capping of the Precept for Town and Parish Councils for the forthcoming year although it remains possible that this may be imposed in the future.

General expenditure was reviewed and increased where necessary. It was reported that the budget did not include potential funding assistance for the Manhood Peninsula Partnership or a trees survey. The Parish Council agreed to look into grant funding to help towards the cost of replacing the noticeboards and for associated work around the pond.

Although Parish Councils were not currently subject to any capping it was noted that Government were looking at changes for larger councils. The Parish Council felt that if it was expected to do more within the local community then this would require increased funding to cover additional costs.

The Parish Council received comments regarding the funding contribution towards the upkeep of the public toilets. The Harbour Conservancy receives income from both the car park and mooring fees and it was felt that they should provide these services. The Parish Council receives no such income yet helps provide some benefits to local businesses.

The Parish Council agreed that in previous years it had been very conservative in its budget setting and there was concern that it would be able to complete a number of projects if it did not budget properly for them.

RESOLVED that the Precept for 2015/16 be set at £20200.00
RESOLVED that the budget as amended be agreed.

12/15C Clerks Report

Training Session

Approval is sought for the Clerk to attend the Society of Local Council Clerks training event on 11 February 2015 in East Grinstead. Subjects being covered include; Legal and Employment briefings on recent changes in the sector and how these impact on the powers, duties and procedures of parish councils. Neighbourhood Development Plans help from the Neighbourhood Development Planning team at the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), with practical advice on how to effectively engage your community with your plan. This was agreed.

<u>Local Plan modifications</u>

The final scheduled session on the examination in to the Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies Pre-submission 2014-2029 was held on the 3rd December. The Inspector advised the Council to consult on the Proposed Modifications as she considers they go to the heart of the Chichester Local Plan and are required to make the Plan sound. Any minor changes required on the basis of accuracy, clarity or for updating

purposes will be included in the adopted version of the Chichester Local Plan. Anyone wishing to comment on the Proposed Modifications should confine their comments to the Proposed Modifications as set out in the schedule. It is important to note this consultation does not provide an opportunity to raise other matters which should have been raised during the earlier rounds of public consultation or at the hearings. The Proposed Modifications consultation runs for six weeks from 8 January 2015 until 5.00pm Thursday 19 February 2015.
The Parish Council is advised to hold a separate meeting to consider any response once Councillors have had an opportunity to review the proposed modifications.

The Chairman suspended the meeting.
Mr Mead-Briggs reported that as a result of the Local Plan hearing the District Council had agreed a recommendation to an additional 80 houses in East Wittering/Bracklesham. The District Council audit had provided an additional 450 houses most to be built in Chichester. The additional housing in East Wittering/Bracklesham did not make sense in context of the Manhood pressures. The Western Manhood Consortium was considering objecting to and further housing allocations for the area. It was agreed that the Parish Council would object to the modifications that related to the additional housing allocation on the Peninsula should the Consortium also object.
The Chairman resumed the meeting.

Transparency Code for Councils with turnover under £25,000
The Government has published the final version of this Code which replaces the need for external audit for parish councils with turnover less than £25,000. The code will require the on-line publication of information which the Government says will provide taxpayers with a clear picture of the council's' activities, spending and governance and will improve the ability of communities to hold local public bodies to account. Although the Code is published initially as recommended practice, the Secretary of State told Parliament on 17th December that he intends to make the code mandatory by the start of the 2015 to 2016 financial year and will offer support to the local council sector to help authorities comply with these requirements.
It was noted that the Parish Council already conformed to the requirements within the code.

13/15C Finance.

13.1 Standing Order for the Clerk's pension contributions
Due to the requirement to pay Pension contributions on a regular monthly basis it was proposed that payments be made by Standing Order. **RESOLVED** that a Standing Order be set up to pay the Clerk's pension contributions each month.

13.2 Schedule of Payments and Receipts
RESOLVED that the payments listed in the schedule of payments and receipts totalling £2,427.06 be made. See appendix 1 (January 2015)

13.3 Statement of Accounts
The Statement of Accounts up to 31 December 2014 was **APPROVED.**
See appendix 2 (January 2015).

14/15C Dates for the Parish Council meetings for 2015.
The Parish Council usually meets on the second Monday of every other month. This year the May meeting will have to be postponed due to the elections taking place. The dates of meeting for the remainder of the year were agreed as; Monday 16 March, Monday 18 May, Tuesday 7 July, Monday 7 September and Monday 9 November 2015.

15/15C Annual Parish Meeting.

The Clerk reminded the Parish Council of the requirement to hold a Parish Meeting each year. This had to be held between 1 March and 1 June. It was proposed to hold this year's Parish Meeting in April prior to the elections. It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Monday 13 April 2015. Details of the meeting would be discussed at the Parish Council meeting in March.

16/15C Items for referral to the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 9 March 2015.

The Chairman reported that there was no body in Itchenor represented on the Harbour Conservancy Advisory Committee and a proposal to rectify the situation had been put forward. It was agreed to put this on the agenda for March.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.38

Signed_____ Date_____
Chairman