

# NORTHCHAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

## DRAFT Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held at Northchapel Village Hall on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 8pm

**Present:** Councillors Mrs Lynda Bell (Chairman), Mrs Sharon Holden, Mrs Gaye Jordan, Mr Paul Markides, Mr Willie Poste, Mrs Daphne Trussler and Mr Stephen Wordsworth

**In attendance:** Mrs Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk  
Mr Nick Thomas, District Councillor  
There were two members of the public in attendance.

*The talk from Northchapel Post Office and Stores was postponed until the next meeting.*

**1/17. Apologies for absence:** Parish Councillor Simon Arnold  
Parish Councillor Jan Glover  
County Councillor Janet Duncton  
Owner of Northchapel Post Office and Stores  
Manager of Northchapel Post Office and Stores.

**2/17. Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.

**3/17. Minutes:** The Minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed.

#### **4/17. Reports from the District and County Councillors**

County Councillor Janet Duncton had sent through her 2016 report as follows;

I thought just an e-mail to keep you up to speed with what has been happening in the Petworth division and West Sussex as a whole. Plus a little on Chichester District Council. Although I do my best to get to most of the Parish/Town meetings it is often the way that although a lot is happening County wide not all of it has a direct effect on your monthly meetings. If I start with County wide and things that may or may not affect you directly. It is difficult to go into the detail of Care for our elderly population and as you know you had a 2% increase in the County Council Tax last year to specifically help in this area. Things are not getting easier and it is likely that we will be looking at an increase again in the coming year. Not everyone needs help but many do and we want to give them the help that they require. It is too diverse to go into details but we do our best to make sure those in need get help. The next are also one of our 3 main categories which is the Economy, The younger generation and the older generation. To deal with the younger generation. We have an ongoing battle to try and get our Schools properly funded. All parties, Councillors, the Schools themselves and our M.P's are all trying to get funding for our Schools closer to the funding of Schools in other areas. We are near the bottom when it comes to funding and how we manage to keep such a high standard in our West Sussex Schools is amazing and probably very much down to the way the Teachers and Head Teachers deal with the situation. We had great hopes for a new funding formula for Schools. I haven't got the details but I do know that it isn't giving us the finance that we had hoped for so I guess I will be giving progress reports at Parish meetings until we achieve some of our goals if not all. Perhaps a bit ambitious to aim for all but you need to aim high. The education of our young people is so very important for the future. On a moving figure which alters almost daily, we have some 680 young people in care. Another costly item which is a must and we have to try and make sure that those in care get the same advantages as any other young person. You can never be 100% successful but that's what again you aim for. No child should be excluded from the chance to have a bright future. To move to items that cause the individual Parishes concern. Highways and Transport. Pot holes are ever on the menu so I will say little about them except that we are always on the case trying to get them done when they reach the standard depth. Deep holes are particularly dangerous to cyclists and Motorbikes. I and of course yourselves can report them on the 'Love West Sussex' web site. A subject that affects some more than others although all of us either directly or in-directly is the discussion over the improvements to the A27. Now I may have to come back at meetings with different wording but it is my belief at the moment that Highways England will hold another consultation period early in 2017. I will let you know or you will see in the press when this will take place. You also have to bear in mind that it isn't just our part of the County involved it affects way out to the East Sussex and Brighton areas so it's going to be a long job. I know from my position on the South Downs National Park authority that they are not happy with the proposals in the Lewes area and the way it affects the National Park. We have had a special allocation to repair and update in some cases, our pavements within Towns and Villages. I put forward those of my Parishes that approached me and I think Wisborough Green and Fittleworth will definitely get improvements. Please let me know if you have any particular in village pavements that need some attention and I will put them forward. This is not footpaths and bridleways. That comes under rights of way. Again on the broader picture I have told you about 3SC which is our bid for Devolution in a group of West and East Sussex and Surrey. Hence the 3SC. It's another watch this space. It's difficult to know if the Government is supporting it or not but the Leader of West Sussex

Louise Goldsmith is putting a lot of time and effort into getting the Government to realise the economic size and scale of this devolution proposal. The south east is the economic power house of England and our 3SC's is a very large part of that. The Southern train service is of great concern to many in West Sussex. To those not needing to use the train it probably has little impact but for those who depend on it for their livelihood it is a complete disaster. Many Councillors from say Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex use the train to get to Chichester. This has become almost impossible. That's just for Councillors but for many of the County Staff it is disastrous. Little we can physically do but I know County Officers and members are doing all they can which is mainly lobbying at Minister Level.

As your County Councillor I am vice Chairman of Rights of Way, Chief advisor to 2 Cabinet members, Residents Services were I work closely with the West Sussex Fire and Rescue but also join my Cabinet member on briefings with Library's, the Countryside, Waste etc. I also attend the LGA and in particular Rural Services Network which used to be called SPARSE. For my sins I have ended up as vice Chairman for the South East of England on this Board. Mind you there are not many on it from the SE of England which probably explains that!!! My other Chief advisor job is with the Cabinet member for Highways and Transport. I attend the roundup sessions with him and all the Highway's officers and also act as his substitute at the GATCOM meetings at, of course Gatwick Airport. I have learnt a lot about how they operate and with my other interest how they dispose of their waste. For instance all the waste food is turned into pellets with which they fire their biomass boilers. Really good stuff I think. Planning (County Planning) comes under Highways and Transport and it is likely that I will be attending the Joint Planning Coastal Board for the Cabinet member but this has to be decided formally. On Planning we have approved our new Minerals Plan and this will now go out to the communities for consultation. For 4 of my Parishes, Petworth, Tillington Ebernoe and Fittleworth I am also the District Councillor together with Eileen Lintill the other District Councillor for Petworth. I attend Council, try and sit in if not elsewhere on their Cabinet meetings. Not as often as I would like but Eileen keeps me up to speed. My other duty which I have always considered important is as a member of the Planning committee. Planning is often a very difficult issue I don't need to tell the Parishes. I have been criticized on occasion for not saying which way I will vote on an issue coming to Planning. For explanation it behoves Councillors on a Planning committee to see both sides of an issue before putting their hand in the air acting, if you like, rather like a Jury. You may well have strong views one way or another but you must review both sides of the argument. If you say throw out an application for reasons that are not good Planning reasons but let's say somewhat emotional, the applicant goes to appeal you could lose and it could cost the Council Tax payer as a whole quite a sum of money. You also lose control of conditions attached to applications when decided on appeal and this particularly affects large developments of say 500+ when not only do you need whatever money in CIL can be obtained but many conditions that are desirable locally. The best solution is a local one well thought out and fought on Planning terms. Some you please and some you don't that's always the case. I also sit on the Development and Infrastructure Plan Panel at CDC which is a continuation of the Local Plan Panel. You will know that CDC got their Local Plan through in 2015 but from that time on it has to be updated. There is no doubt that in the future we will have to find land for more not less houses and businesses. I can't say more about this. I think those involved know how it works. Grants get harder and harder but there are still small grants available at both District and County level. It depends on what the project is and sometimes which organisation can apply. I support my Parishes when I can and some of the big wins over the last 3 years have been for Coultershaw, The Real Tennis Court and the Petworth Community Gardens. Many smaller organisations have had Grants to help with Village Hall improvements and other leisure facilities. Part of my Division and all of my Petworth Ward are within the National Park. I think and hope we are all working together now. The National Park is with us. It has its purposes but is very willing to talk and work with Parishes to get outcomes to suit all parties. I sit on the South Downs National Park Authority as the West Sussex County Council representative and on the Authority I am on the Policy and Performance committee although they are happy if members turn up at other meetings like the one developing their local Plan which I often do attend. We are allowed to take part in these meetings. Just to mention that for the District Council I sit on the Wey and Arun Canal Trust and am a director of Petworth Vision. I think that's about all for 2016. Please contact me if you need help. I shall of course try and get to the Parish Council meetings. All the very best for 2017

Any issues of a County nature then please do not hesitate to contact Janet Duncton on [janet.duncton@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:janet.duncton@westsussex.gov.uk) or 01798 342528.

District Councillor Nick Thomas, following a recent cabinet meeting commended Tony Dignum, the leader of CDC for managing a well-run and highly focussed team. Despite the cuts, all services had been kept. He spoke of the County Council elections in May and supports Janet Duncton with her continued commitment going forward. He added that there was a lot going on with regard to a re-consultation for the A27 proposals.

Any queries of a District nature, please do not hesitate to contact Nick Thomas [nthomas@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:nthomas@chichester.gov.uk) or 01730 810837.

Councillor Wordsworth spoke of his great concern of the regular accidents which are occurring at the Fisher Street crossroads due to dangerous driving with cars coming down the hill at very fast speeds. It is hoped that traffic calming measures will be reassessed by WSCC Highways at this location due to the on-going concerns by the parish and the large number of accidents.

#### 5/17. Working Party Reports

- **Allotments, Village Green and Play Area:** Councillor Poste reported there were still four vacant plots at the allotments which will require twice yearly cutting in order to be kept maintained. He said he would like to also get

Adam Russell to mow the paths monthly too. All agreed this was a good idea. Councillor Poste is due to meet with CCP Groundcare to look at the ditch on Pipers lane and give a quote for making good the road verge and also repairing the potholes on the Village Green track. All agreed this should be done. Councillor Poste added that all was okay at the Play Area. The Clerk reported that the dog litter bin had now been re-sited to the top of the village green and it is hoped this will encourage dog owners to clean up after their dogs.

- **Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Ways:** Councillor Trussler reported that nothing had been reported to her as a problem. All was very wet!
- **Planning:** Councillor Markides said there was nothing to report. Concern was raised with regard to the very small amount of time given to Parish Councils to comment on planning applications once plans had been received. Clerk to highlight this to CDC/SDNP planning departments. Councillor Bell reported that there had been pre-planning advice sought for a residential development at School House Farm, the Parish Council awaited formal plans before commenting.
- **Village Hall:** Councillor Holden had nothing much to report, all was running along at the Village Hall.
- **Housing:** Councillor Holden had met with the Hyde Housing Officer, Mark Armitage who was very helpful and keen to help out with any problems. It was agreed that the open meeting to look at the different housing options led by CDC should be postponed until the Annual Parish Meeting in April.
- **Winter Plan:** Councillor Poste said the parish had plenty of grit and a snow plough to cope with the threatening cold weather spell.
- **Website:** There was nothing to report.
- **Northchapel Youth:** Councillor Bell said that the Purple Bus had finished its stint in the village and it is hoped that an exit report will be sent through shortly and that the Purple Bus will return in the not too distant future.

#### **6/17. Bus Shelter**

Councillor Bell had been approached by the current owners of Central House to ask permission to demolish the old bus shelter base next to their garage so there is additional parking space for the property. Clerk had looked into this and had found some information in an old file, including a letter from 1994 containing the history of the bus shelter. It stated that the shelter was erected in 1945 out of public funds in memory of Laura Pemberton. The letter stated that the land was given as a deed of gift, specifically for a bus shelter for the parish. At some point between 1976-1978 the bus shelter was pulled down due to vandalism and teenagers meeting there following parishioners complaints.

The Parish Council agreed the bus shelter should not be demolished as the land was a gift to the parish and should be used for that purpose. It is part of village history. Clerk to contact Land Registry for further information.

*Since the meeting, the Clerk has found a conveyance document relating to the land from 6<sup>th</sup> January 1947. All information has now been passed to the Parish Council's solicitors to look more formally into the matter.*

#### **7/17. Northchapel, Petworth and Tillington Almshouses Charity**

The Clerk had received a letter from Savills asking whether the Parish Council might continue to nominate Mrs Nona Baker to act as a Trustee to the Northchapel, Petworth and Tillington Almshouses Charity for a further four year term. All agreed to this nomination. Clerk to sign on behalf of the Parish Council.

#### **8/17. Erection of gates in Valentines Lea**

Councillor Bell stated that prior to Christmas, hedging was removed and gates erected at the bottom of Valentines Lea leading into the fields behind. The land in question relates to a pre-application request which CDC had received for an infill for a rural exception site for 8 x 3 bed houses. Enforcement has been informed and due to the extended Christmas break they are only due to investigate this week. Clerk to update Councillors as soon as she hears back from CDC enforcement.

#### **9/17. Approved Budget/Precept 2017/18**

Clerk had previously circulated the budget figures for 2017/18 (Appendix 2) to include £2,000 for assisting with maintenance of the church yard. All approved this.

#### **10/17. Financial Matters**

- The Council's current financial position @ £43,967 was noted.
- The Bank reconciliation as at 4<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at Appendix 3 was noted.
- The schedule of accounts submitted for payment at Appendix 4 was noted and approved including Chichester District Council (re-siting of dog litter bin @ £92), Southern Water (Allotment water @ £15), Northchapel Village Hall (Annual Donation 2016/17 @ £500), Northchapel Primary School @ £3,300 (Annual Donation 2016/17 @ £300, Little Oaks Pre-School grant @ £500 and £2,500 grant for the school outdoor project (£1000 pledged from 2014/15 and £1,500 from 2016/17)). The Clerk said the grant for the Little Oaks pre-school was in fact for outdoor play equipment not yoga classes as she had wrongly informed the Parish Council at the Finance meeting in December. Parish Council approved the £500 nonetheless. Other annual donations and grants 2016/17 for Petworth Over 60's Club (£50), Petworth

Cottage Nursing Home (£100), Citizens Advice Bureau (£100), Rother Valley Together (£100), West Sussex Rural Mobile Youth Trust- Purple Bus (£1,000) and Community Mini Bus Association (£100).

- Clerk said she had heard back from Home-Start Chichester who had two families waiting for support in Northchapel, it was hoped that they would find a suitable match by March. It was agreed the donation for 2016/17 be held until 2017/18. The Village Hall request was no longer required as the committee had decided to fund it out of their own budget.

**11/17.Clerks Report**

Clerk reported on future meetings:

- All Parishes meeting instead of the next North East Parishes Forum is on 5<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm at East Pallant House.
- North Chichester CLC meeting - Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March - Venue to be confirmed.

It was suggested having the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm and to include the normal speakers from the various groups in the parish together with the housing information event. Clerk to check Holly Nichols (CDC Rural Housing Officer) can attend this date before confirming and advertising the meeting.

Councillor Poste added he had met with Tim Ralph with regard to repairing the broken fingerboard on the A283 junction to Lurgashall. The quote is to be sent to the Clerk who will inform all Councillors when she has received it.

**12/17.Items to be included on the next agenda**

Northchapel Post Office & Stores

Please inform the Clerk of any other items to go on the agenda by Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017

**13/17.Date of next meeting - Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 8pm**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm

Signed .....

Date .....