

NORTHCHAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of a Meeting held at Northchapel Village Hall, On Monday 6th July 2015

Present: Councillors Mr Willie Poste (Chairman), Mrs Lynda Bell, Mrs Sharon Holden, Mrs Gaye Jordan and Mr Paul Markides.

In attendance: Mrs Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk
County Councillor Janet Duncton

There were seven members of the public present.

Comments and Questions from the members of the public:

A member of the public spoke about the recent housing situation which has occurred in Northchapel. Several parishioners had also raised their concerns with CDC directly. A couple had recently been removed from the social housing register by CDC due to the fact that together they earn too much money to be eligible for a one bedroom property. Upset had been triggered as at no point prior to this had they been means tested and had been allowed to happily continue to bid on properties. They are a hard working couple who earn too much to qualify for social housing but don't earn enough to buy a house in the area and there are no suitable privately owned rentals within budget. The community is being ripped apart as youngsters who were born and bred in the parish and want to stay, cannot and are forced to leave the village. CDC said the figures had been set by the Parish Council. The Parish Council had no knowledge of this!

Councillor Poste said that the Parish Council needed to organise a meeting with CDC representatives (Holly Nicholls and Rob Dunmore) and the housing associations to understand the allocation process and enquire what if anything can be done to help parishioners. It is essential now that a housing needs survey be carried out to find out what the need is in Northchapel. Councillor Holden said the problem is effecting all youngsters who have grown up in the village and want to stay and continue to live in Northchapel. Many cannot afford the private rents and are not eligible for social housing. The worry is Northchapel will become a dead village.

There will never be enough social housing as more people want them.

- 1. Apologies for absence:** District Councillor Denise Knightley
Parish Councillor Georgina Murphy
District Councillor Nick Thomas
Parish Councillor Stephen Wordsworth
- 2. Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.
- 3. Co-option of Councillors:** Mrs Daphne Trussler and Mrs Jan Glover were co-opted as Parish Councillors. The Chairman welcomed them to the Parish Council. The Clerk would liaise and send through all the necessary forms and information.
- 4. Minutes:** The Minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 18th May 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed.
- 5. Police report:** There was no Police in attendance.
- 6. Reports from representatives of WSCC and CDC**

There was no District Councillor report.

County Councillor Duncton said that her involvement with Sussex Fire & Rescue had been keeping her very busy. Ten retained fire fighters have recently passed out. Midhurst is about to get its new vehicle. There is now much co-operation cross borders between West Sussex, East Sussex and Surrey fire services. County Councillor Duncton

also continues to work with "Looked after children" and said there is much help available from WSCC for carers of the elderly and vulnerable.

County Councillor Duncton said the District Councillors have done a lot of work with HOME group and Hyde Martlet. CDC ultimately holds the housing list. Local connection means within a 5 mile radius and often the local connection is very loose. In the case of St Michael's Close (an exception site), if no-one with a local connection bids on a property then CDC looks elsewhere. Information regarding allocation and the relevant local connection is highly confidential. She said Rob Dunmore at CDC is a good contact to speak with.

Councillor Poste stated that the road sign (30mph and camera warning sign by the allotments entrance) had been knocked over by a car and previously reported. The post and concrete base were still lying in the ditch. County Councillor Duncton said she would chase.

7. Working Party Reports

- **Allotments, Village Green and Play Area:** Councillor Poste said there were currently two vacant allotments. The notice board, village sign and parish well have all been re-stained and the village green is looking good. The steel rope apparatus is now out of order at the play area. The Parish Council is waiting for the ROSPA report which may highlight any other equipment requiring repair and once determined, all will receive attention. Clerk added that BT are due to install a broadband cabinet alongside the noticeboard on the village green.
- **Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Ways:** The Clerk reported that Jane Walter kindly had asked the local ranger, Nick Scott to look into the poor state of the footpaths in Wet Wood (footpath 559 and connecting ones). Lots of forestry work had caused deep ruts in pathways and she had also received complaints about horse riders not sticking to bridleways. Nick is investigating. Councillor Trussler has offered to take over the responsibility of Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Way.
- **Planning:** Councillor Markides said there was
- **Village Hall:** Councillor Holden said the Village Hall had recently been broken into but fortunately and somewhat strangely nothing had been stolen.
- **Housing:** Councillor Holden said there wasn't much more to say than what had already been discussed under public question time. She said it appeared given recent contact and conflicting advice that CDC and Hyde Martlet do not communicate. She said it was imperative that they work with the Parish Council. Concern was raised regarding a potential three way swap occurring in the village. Clerk to organise a closed meeting with CDC, Hyde Martlet and Home to discuss the recent issues.
- **Winter Plan:** Councillor Poste said there was nothing to report.
- **Northchapel Youth:** The Purple Bus has now finished its stint for the summer term. Councillor Bell said she would contact Dan Sneller for an update and exit report.

8. BT Kiosk at Fisher Street

Clerk had met Tim from Ralph Restorations and explained that the Parish Council would like a price for making good the kiosk. He called her this evening prior to the meeting to say that the biggest problem is the flooding issue. He is happy to provide a detailed report/quotation for options to repair the kiosk but this could be a waste of time and money if the flooding issue cannot be resolved. Tim said he thought the flooding problem was a highways drainage problem. Clerk to contact WSCC Highways and report the problem and see if they can send out a civil engineer to look into it.

9. Emergency Planning

Clerk had received an email from Michael Rowland the new emergency planning officer for CDC. He is offering to meet with parishes to discuss and work together to provide emergency planning services. All agreed that the village would pull together in an emergency and that a full plan was not a necessity. Northchapel do already have an emergency response plan/form from 2010 which was agreed should be updated.

10. Electoral Review of West Sussex

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has formally commenced an electoral review (total no of councillors elected, number of electoral divisions, no of councillors representing each division, division boundaries and number of electoral divisions) of WSCC. They are seeking views on future electoral division boundaries for the council. Public consultation closes on 31st August 2015. Contact details can be found on the notice board, website or at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

11. Diddlesfold Farm

Councillors Bell and Poste had met with two directors and the company secretary from Northchapel Ltd who have recently bought Diddlesfold Farm. Councillor Bell reported that the purchase has not yet been completed on all the

land. The land agents are Strutt and Parker in Guildford. Land will be continued to be managed as a farm, the current tenant will retain grazing rights, the woodland will be managed and there are no plans to retain the shoot. The two cottages have an agricultural tie but will look to rent if possible. Having read the Northchapel Parish Plan, Northchapel Ltd are keen to engage with the Parish Council re: possibility of developing a small housing site, south of Valentines Lea of approximately 8 affordable units and 2 market plots accessed through the estate. This could be a rural exception site. It was stressed that this would only be done in cooperation with the Parish Council. Councillors Bell and Paste raised concerns to Northchapel Ltd regarding the lack of infrastructure to support additional housing i.e. school at capacity, sewerage works at capacity and no regular transport nor local employment. They also added that the current social housing in St Michael's Close struggled to find tenants with a local connection to the village. Northchapel Ltd were unsure of the way forward with the redundant farm buildings and asked the Councillors' thoughts on holiday lets or a small industrial unit. Concern was raised over additional noise and traffic which might result from this change of use.

Councillor Bell said it was essential that the Parish Council needs to establish what the housing need is in the parish. Northchapel will evidently have to have a small amount of housing as per the SDNPA SHLAA report. The Housing Needs Survey would be put on the next agenda and advice sought from Holly Nichols at CDC.

12. New Homes Bonus 2015/16

Clerk has asked the swimming pool committee if there is anything which they need funding for which the Parish Council could apply to the CDC New Homes Bonus.

13. Financial Matters

- The Council's current financial position @ £41,422 was noted.
- The Bank reconciliation as at 15th June 2015 at Appendix 2 was noted.
- The schedule of accounts submitted for payment at Appendix 3 was noted and approved including CCP Groundcare @ £1488, Mrs Helen Cruikshank (Clerk's General Exps Q1 2015/16) @ £91.95, WSCC (Clerk's May 2015 Salary @£427.28) and Southern Water (Allotment Water 22/4-19/6) @ £10.18

14. Clerks Report

The Clerk had received an email regarding the North parishes joining the Chichester District Association of Local Councils (CDALC). The next meeting is on Monday 27th July at 7pm at Boxgrove Village Hall. She also said there was a Neighbourhood Panel meeting on Thursday 23rd July at 7pm at Petworth Police Station.

15. Items to be included on the next agenda

BT Kiosk

16. Date of next meeting

MONDAY 7th September 2015 at 8PM at the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm

Signed

Date