

# NORTHCHAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

## APPROVED Minutes of a Meeting held at Northchapel Village Hall On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

**Present:** Councillors Willie Poste (Chair), Lynda Bell, Sharon Holden, Gaye Jordan, Georgina Murphy, Paul Markides, Stephen Wordsworth and Jane Walter

**In attendance:** Mrs Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk  
County Councillor Janet Duncton  
District Councillor Philippa Hardwick

### Comments and Questions from members of the Public

There were four members of the Public present.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that the owners of Stillands address the floor. They thanked the Parish Council for the opportunity to come and speak. The owners explained how they had returned from holiday to realise the works which they had instructed had been ignored and were wrong. What was a project to merely screen off their land turned into a disaster and the hedges had all been destroyed. Realising the mistake, they paid for a new hedge. Now they have been issued with an enforcement notice from CDC which they must appeal before being able to apply for further planning permission to do remedial works. They do wish to retain some sort of bung but very much want to work with CDC, SDNPA and the Parish Council to find a solution which works with everyone and does not impinge on the SDNP. They are trying to remedy a bad situation. Councillor Bell said they are very welcome to attend the Parish Council planning meeting when the revised application comes through the system, They would be informed when this takes place. District Councillor Hardwick said she would be happy to help them and give any advice they may need.

A member of the public spoke of his concerns over the potential development site at Luffs Meadow, identified in the recent SDNPA SHLAA report. This site has been brought up several times previously as a location for prospective development and nothing has come of it. He said all residents around the area were against the suggested possible development of eight new houses. There are concerns with regard to access and the addition of more cars in an area where there are already issues with parking. Further worries regarding drainage, water and trees were highlighted. The Parish Council noted his comments and thanked him for attending.

**16. Apologies for Absence:** Parish Councillor Simon Arnold  
District Councillor Nick Thomas

### 17. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 18. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2015 were considered. A transposition error over the names of Councillors Bell and Walter was corrected under item number 6, the Planning working party report. The minutes were then approved and signed as a correct record.

### 19. Police Report

Robberies and violence had decreased in the area, however shed break-ins were once again on the increase. Please keep vigilant and report anything suspicious on 101 or email [richard.boston@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:richard.boston@sussex.pnn.police.uk)

### 20. Reports from the elected representatives of WSCC and CDC

County Councillor Janet Duncton said she had little to report. She said tomorrow at the North Chichester CLC meeting there would be a presentation by West Sussex Fire & Rescue. She said that the new proposals seemed to include a much better system despite what was being reported in the press. There would be much more co-operation between neighbouring county's fire services and attention given to preventative work. County Councillor Duncton said she was pleased to have been given the role as Deputy to the Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities. The County Council Tax element has once again been frozen for 2015/16. Any issues please contact me on [janet.duncton@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:janet.duncton@westsussex.gov.uk)

District Councillor Philippa Hardwick announced there would be a change of head at CDC with Heather Card leaving. Philippa would be standing for the Fernhurst Ward at the elections and Nick Thomas would remain for the Plaistow Ward with a lady called Denise Knightly also standing in the two Councillor ward. She said it was unlikely there would be a Council Tax rise from the District for 2015/16. CDC's local plan is now with the inspectors with the consultation having closed in February. The results of which are expected in two months. District Councillor Hardwick reported that at tomorrow's cabinet meeting a shrinking Council is being recommended for the future with a reduction in Chichester District Councillors from 48 to 35 which could possibly mean losing the two member wards. Any queries or problems, then please contact either Nick [nthomas@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:nthomas@chichester.gov.uk) or Philippa [phardwick@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:phardwick@chichester.gov.uk)

County Councillor Janet Duncton and Parish Councillor Stephen Wordsworth left the meeting at 8.30pm

## 21. Working Party Reports

**Allotments:** Councillor Poste stated that there would be one vacant allotment plot at the end of the month. Invoices for the new season would be going out later on in the month.

**Village Green and Play Area:** Councillor Poste stated that the track alongside the village green appears to be getting wider and wider, and he is unsure how to prevent further expansion. It was agreed he would keep monitoring for now before deciding upon any action. The new fencing has been erected by the play area and the mole catcher has visited.

**Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Way:** Councillor Walter said some works had been done to the parish footpaths. She added that the parish gazebo has been destroyed and therefore was no longer an asset. She also reported that the flashing school crossing lights were still not working. Clerk to report again to WSCC Highways and also to ask County Councillor Duncton to chase to ensure prompt action given the safety of the school pupils is paramount.

*UPDATE: The WSCC Local Ranger will be organising a PROW inspection over the next month or so, any problems on Rights of Way, please contact the Parish Council or WSCC direct, email [prow@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:prow@westsussex.gov.uk) or phone 01243 777620.*

**Planning:** Councillor Markides said that further to the enforcement notice discussed in public questions, there was an appeal for the refusal for the retention of the agricultural worker's mobile home for a temporary period of three years at Hillgrove Stud Farm. The Parish Council had previously sent in its objections so there was no need to act any further at this time. There were two outstanding applications which would be discussed after the meeting, tonight.

**Village Hall:** Councillor Holden reported that bookings were not too bad. There had been some trouble with boys climbing on the roof.

**Housing:** Councillor Holden reported that there had been a meeting on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January with Holly Nichols (CDC Rural Housing Officer) to discuss the current system and issues in the village. It was a good meeting and Holly has fed back some information but further issues need to be addressed.

**Website:** The Clerk said that Councillor Arnold had kindly updated the website and anyone wishing to add anything should email him on [simonarnold59@gmail.com](mailto:simonarnold59@gmail.com) with the information.

**Northchapel Youth:** Councillor Bell said she had been in contact with Dan Sneller regarding the Purple Bus returning to Northchapel possibly on Tuesday evenings this term. If this was confirmed then this would be advertised accordingly, if not then it was hoped that the Purple Bus would return for the Summer term.

## 22. Possible development sites in Northchapel

As part of the recently published SHLAA report, SDNPA had carried out site assessments by settlement (as per Appendix 2). Much land was identified in the Northchapel parish as available but not suitable. Only one site in Northchapel was identified as having potential as a future development site; that being the Old Telephone Exchange in Luffs Meadow. This is the first Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment from SDNPA and is not yet open to consultation. In September 2015, there will be an opportunity to comment on and discuss the proposed sites as part of the first draft of the Local Plan (known as the Preferred Options Consultation). Watch this space!

## 23. Traffic Speed in Village

Councillor Poste and other Councillors reported they had had various parishioners moaning about the speed of traffic in Northchapel. It was suggested that perhaps a pedestrian crossing could be sited across from the village stores to the path leading to Luffs Meadow. However concern was raised to pedestrian safety even with a crossing and suitability of the crossing due to sightlines. Clerk to contact County Councillor Duncton to raise the issue of traffic calming.

## 24. Neighbourhood Watch

The Clerk had been contacted by Elaine Brown, the current Northchapel Neighbourhood Watch representative and asked to read out the following:

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW)

I am currently the local contact for Neighbourhood Watch and will be stepping back from this role from the end of March. I'd like to ensure that the Parish Council is aware of this change. Things have moved on in the 4+ years that I have been involved in Neighbourhood Watch; messaging has improved in its speed and varying means of communication. I will notify all of my contacts and invite them to take advantage of the changes made in messaging so that timely information is still available to anyone who wishes to receive it directly from Sussex Police. I will also invite anyone who is interested in becoming involved to register their interest with the Parish Council and I will, of course, provide any information that will help. There is a sum of money associated with NHW activities that was handed to the Parish Council Chair (Willie Poste) approximately 2 years ago. The sum was in the region of £320 and I believe it is currently held as a ring-fenced amount in the Parish Council account. The Clerk confirmed there is £311.35 in the Parish Council's bank account for Neighbourhood Watch.

The messaging alerts can now be sent to you directly via you signing up this is Sussex Police's Community Messaging site. Please do sign up to receive timely alerts. <http://www.sussex.police.uk/policing-in-sussex/your-community/community-messaging>

## **25. Dark Skies in the SDNP**

The Clerk had received a letter from SDNPA regarding the launch of a project to get International Dark Sky Reserve Status for parts of the South Downs National Park and requesting support from individual parishes. Just submitting an application to the International Dark-Skies Association (IDA) to designate parts of the park as a Dark Sky Reserve would be a huge achievement considering the challenges of a protected landscape in the south east. Although specific planning control will be needed to protect it, a Dark Sky Reserve is not a legal designation but a declaration that the people of the South Down National Park want to protect their dark skies. Many other National Parks, both domestic and abroad, have or are in the process of gaining similar status and we hope that the South Downs National Park and its residents can copy this achievement. To do this we need to tackle the light pollution causing the deterioration of our night skies. Many parishes have already offered their support and the SDNPA is hoping you will join them in taking local action to protect your skies by adopting lighting policies in your Neighbourhood or Village plans. The National Park contains some of the darkest places in the South East -some of them are of such high quality they are considered a national asset both for us and the wildlife that lives there. However they want to protect and enhance all of the night skies in the South Downs, including those in your parish. Reducing light pollution at a domestic level is relatively easy. It can be as simple as: angling a security light so that it shines straight down; using timers; or just reducing illumination levels to the a minimum brightness. These small changes could make a huge difference. The SDNPA has no desire to ban of lighting; that would be impractical, unenforceable, dangerous and inconsistent with UK planning law. We do not want parishes to sign up to any extra planning enforcement. What they are asking, is for your Parish to acknowledge the issue and consider the impacts of lighting and take personal responsibility in future planning. All agreed to back the project. Clerk to write a letter of support.

## **26. Parish Council Elections**

The Parish Council Elections will be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May. Nominations packs will be available from the Clerk. She will deliver these to all existing Councillors if they still wish to stand. Clerk to put an article in the Parish Magazine and on the notice boards to advertise the elections together with eligibility criteria and deadlines once notified for becoming a Parish Council. There will also be District Council and a General Elections on the same day.

## **27. Annual Parish Meeting**

It was agreed to have the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May on the same day but prior to the Parish Council AGM. The Clerk invited suggestions for speakers. Councillor Walter proposed getting a speaker to update the parish on the Oil/Gas Exploration proposal at Wisborough Green. All agreed this was a good idea. Clerk to contact the person who had offered to visit and give an outline on the proposal.

*UPDATE: Since the meeting, Celtique Energie has withdrawn its application at Wisborough Green and isn't going to appeal the decision at Fernhurst. However Dr Jill Sutcliffe is still coming along to talk as there is an Exploration oil/gas drilling well permitted at Broadford Bridge.*

## **28. Financial Matters**

- The Council's current financial position @ £34,267 was noted.
- The Bank reconciliation as at Appendix 4 was noted.
- The schedule of accounts submitted for payment at Appendix 5 was noted and cheques approved for WSCC (Clerk's Jan & Feb 15 Salary) @ £852.74, St Michael's Church (Parish News) @ £160, Straight Line Fencing (Village green fencing) @ £474.92 and Mrs H E Cruikshank (General Exps Q4 14/15) @ £80.23
- The VAT return had finally been received at £1,758
- The PWLB Loan Payment is due on 23rd March 2015 @ £1372.53. The outstanding balance is £34,160.49

- Donation thank you letters had kindly been received from Home Start, Petworth & District Over 60's Club, Petworth Cottage Nursing Home, Northchapel Primary School and St Michael's Church.

**29. Clerks report**

Clerk reported there is a North Chichester CLC meeting tomorrow on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at 7pm at Lodsworth Village Hall. There would also be a chance to see the new fire trucks and meet with WSCC Fire and Rescue service representatives from 5.30pm. Councillors Poste and Holden kindly offered to attend.

Clerk had received a reply from SSE following her enquiry to whether the Central Path to Valentines Lea could somehow have an additional light added onto the current system, as raised by a concerned resident. SSE said that WSCC would not add it onto their inventory as it does not form part of a recognisable system of lighting nor is it on an adopted highway, so this leaves the question, who would be responsible for it. Furthermore trenching work would also be involved and an odd light like this would have to be parish owned which SSE estimates would cost £2000. Given the Parish Council had just agreed to support the SDNP Dark Skies Reserve Status; it did not feel this was something they could pursue.

**30. Items to be included on the next agenda**

BT Kiosk

**31. Date of next meeting** - Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at 7.30pm (Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council AGM)

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Signed..... Dated.....