

# CHIPPENHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

## DRAFT MINUTES

### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held at 7.30pm  
The Pavilion, Allington Fields, Frogwell, Chippenham SN14 0YZ

**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023**

Present: Cllr. M Brinkworth, Cllr S Eades and Cllr H Ham, Wiltshire Councillor H Greenman and Mr V Vines Clerk of the Council.

**MIN 1. Apologies:** Cllr C Harford.

**MIN 2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 2022:**

Draft Minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022 were circulated to those in attendance and had been available online.

**Cllr H Ham proposed, Cllr S Eades seconded and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to receive, approve and sign as a true record the Minutes from the above Meeting. The Parish Meeting Chairman, Cllr H Ham duly signed the Minutes.

**MIN 3. Matter arising from the Annual Parish Meeting 2022:**

There were none that were not included as later Agenda items.

**MIN 4. Chairman's Report:**

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr H Ham, reported on the Parish Council activities for the year and his opening remarks reminded all that it had been a busy year as the Parish came back to normal after the Pandemic. Sadly two Council Members had resigned during the year and one vacancy had been filled with the co-option of Cllr Malcolm Brinkworth. There remained a need to fill the other vacancy and it would be nice if someone came forward from the south of the A420 in the Sheldon area.

During the year to celebrate the Late Queen's Platinum Jubilee the Council had installed a Commemorative Jubilee bench and a new notice board.

As usual the Council had responded to planning applications in the Parish, lately commenting on the Chippenham Rugby Football Club A350 access proposal. The Council had supported this subject to caveats that must protect the Parish from further development. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had made much progress during the year in preparing the Draft Plan and following the completion of the Regulation 16 stage the Plan was now with the appointed Inspector and hopefully the Referendum would be conducted during the next year.

The Parish had faced possible changes under a Wiltshire Council Governance Review where a neighbouring Parish had proposed boundary changes that would have resulted in the Parish losing land and buildings abutting Yatton Keynell. The Parish Council had successfully fought this proposal and the recommendation coming forward was that there should be no changes.

From a highways point of view this had been a difficult year. All had experienced the numerous potholes that had been and needed to be constantly filled. The Council needed to report these as

soon as they arose with the Parish Steward but also everyone should report issues using the Wiltshire MyApp reporting system so that issues are logged. The Council had a good working relationship with the Parish Steward. In addition to the roads the Council had continued to keep an eye on Rights of Way throughout the Parish, with regular checks to ensure that they are well marked and remained clear. The Council was making efforts to improve the Rights of Way but, sadly, Wiltshire Council were lacking in staff to assist but the hope was that links with nearby Chippenham can be approved to attract more users. The lack of staff at Wiltshire Council had also delayed the Council's Parish Entrance Gates project. The gates were made and ready to install on the verges, but highway approval had still to be given before work can commence. Some months had passed since approval was requested. And talking about verges the Chairman reported of the Council had requested that a length of Allington Lane should be left uncut during the spring to allow natural flowers and bulbs to grow and this trial could become an exemplar to others. Finally on highway matters the Council had financially supported a A420 highway survey from Bumpers Farm roundabout to the Yatton Keynell B4039 junction to support a speed limit reduction to improve safety at the junction and Allington crossroads. Initial survey results suggested that there was no action required, but the Council continued to pursue this.

Volunteer activities in the Parish included a "Spring Clean" of Allington Lane and some of Fowlswick Lane. It would be nice if volunteers did a similar thing in the Sheldon and Lanhill areas. At long last the concept of a quarterly Parish Newsletter was being explored and it was hoped the inaugural issue will soon be delivered to every household.

The Chairman highlighted three future projects. The Tree Nursery Scheme that would promote the idea of everyone potting on tree seedlings to the planting stage, the Longstone renovation where much needed maintenance was required and Neighbourhood Plan Projects to include a Historical Society and Biodiversity Programme.

In closing all Council Members were thanked for their work during the year.

#### **MIN 5. Parish Council's Budget 2023-2024:**

The Clerk circulated the Parish Council's Budget and Precept Requirement for the year 2023/2024.

The Council had considered proposals for Year 2023/2024, together with background advice from Wiltshire Council and future Capital and Revenue spending requirements at their November 2022 Council Meeting.

The Council had been advised of their Band D Tax Base, being (89.94). As usual the Band D property charge would result from the Council's Precept divided by the Tax Base. The previous year the Tax Base had been (89.58) with Precept £12,000.00 resulting in a £133.96 Band D property charge.

The Council had increased their budget in 2021/2022 to £12,000.00 and retained that figure for the year 2022/2023 to accommodate rising revenue costs and potential capital spending, without using any of the existing capital funds held. The Council had agreed that the Precept for Year 2023/2024 should remain at £12,000.00.

#### **MIN 6. Report from Wiltshire Council Representative:**

Wiltshire Councillor Howard Greenman was pleased to attend and advised that it was good to be able to report on this, his 14th Annual Parish Report.

He commented that we seemed to be gradually emerging from the grip of Covid19 although there could be no doubt a dark era that has left its' mark. That together with the continuing war in the Ukraine and recent industrial unrest had faced Wiltshire Council with some challenges on

a number of fronts. He would deal with a couple of them; the first one coming with an invitation too.

There was little doubt that the NHS had experienced considerable pressures on their capacity and waiting times across the spectrum of health provision had suffered as a consequence. One area in which necessary support could be given was that of providing a safe environment for those well enough to leave hospital, but not yet ready to return home. This may be because they were waiting for adaptations to be made for their home, or simply because they need time to recover or gain confidence. Wiltshire Council were working closely with the NHS then to launch a new service, the 'Shared Lives Home from Hospital Service'. Wiltshire Council were looking for Shared Lives Carers to help deliver this very important service for periods of up to 12 weeks. Shared Lives Carers were paid £850 per week per person, for the Home from Hospital service. Carers were self-employed and eligible for tax breaks and could claim mileage and have access to a range of other Wiltshire Council benefits.

He posed the questions. Could you help ensure that our hospitals run more efficiently and that our doctors and nurses were not run ragged, and additionally that patients were able to recuperate well? More information was available at 'Becoming a carer-Wiltshire Council'. Thank you.

He advised that Wiltshire Council's budgets were under pressure too although happily Wiltshire Council were not suffering the budgetary difficulties some neighbouring authorities were, with external auditors and responsible finance officers alike refusing to sign off the budgets. There was no room for complacency though, although their budget of £465m was well placed to ensure a balanced operating budget for the next few years. Budgetary spend and increases of particular note were;

- Whole Life pathway (mental health, autism, learning disabilities) £96m, an increase of £11m.
- Living and Ageing well (adult care) £83m, an increase of £15m.
- Families and Children, £63m, an increase of £2m.
- Environment, which includes waste and recycling, £48m, an increase of £4m.
- Highways and Transport £41m, an increase of £3m.
- Education and skills £29m, an increase of £6m.

On another note he had received a number of emails reference waste and recycling over the last year and was conscious of some areas of concern and in fact complaint too. It had been suggested to him that Wiltshire Council needed to be more focused on food waste recycling and he agreed, although it was an expensive service to implement. He was hopeful though that by his next report Wiltshire Council will have a food recycling program in place. In the meantime he asked for people to please note that Wiltshire Council were offering discounted food composters called a Green Johanna for £60 (normally £129.99). More information was online at 'Reducing your waste and composting- Wiltshire Council.'

There had been some complaints too about refuse collectors investigating the contents of bins to ensure the contents were in the correct bin. Wiltshire Council received £2.24m in the first six months of this year for recycling commodity. However this sum was very much reduced if there was contamination so by way of reminder, he asked people to please note the following:

- Only recyclables are put in blue bins, not general waste or nappies.
- Flexible or soft plastics such as bread bags and packaging film or carrier bags should be placed in residual waste.
- Polystyrene and non-paper wrapping paper to be put into residual waste.
- Scrap metals such as biscuit tins can be recycled but car parts cannot.

And finally, Wiltshire Council had now introduced a kerbside battery collection service. Batteries such as DC, AA, AAA, 9V and button-type batteries could now be recycled. Please put them in a sealed transparent plastic bag on top of the blue lined bin.

On a personal note he continued to serve on the Health Select Committee hence his passion for the Shared Lives Home from Hospital service above, and he remained Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee which had seen a number of challenges from planning applications over the last year from Waste Incinerators and Solar Farms to large scale house build programs.

As an authority they continued to be under the cosh with an apparent shortfall in the five-year housing land supply, which was a government set target for housing delivery. He had made a number of representations to central government including writing directly to Michael Gove MP over this unfair metric, which did force in his view house build programs in communities where it would be inappropriate. Correspondence he had received from The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities assured him that planning policy was changing in this regard. However, what it also made clear was the continued need to have a Neighbourhood Plan in place. He was pleased to report that although greater weight had been given in the past to Neighbourhood Plans of less than two years old, that would be dispensed with, and more authority given to the decision maker, that being Wiltshire Council. In his view then Neighbourhood Plan Teams have everything to play for and must continue to secure their own Neighbourhood Plan for their own communities particularly where there was not one in place at the present time.

In conclusion he thanked all once again for their time and support too over the last year. The Parishes he represented once again had proved a delight to work with and made his job a lot easier and more pleasant in the process. Should anyone need his help or advice please contact him on his Wiltshire Council email address.

The Chairman of the Meeting thanked Councillor Greenman for his advice, continued involvement and assistance during the past year.

**MIN 7. Reports from Local Organisations:**

There were no Reports.

**MIN 8. Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan:**

Stephen Eades reported on tremendous progress throughout the year, that the Draft Neighbourhood Plan had completed the Regulation 16 stage and was now being considered by the appointed examiner.

There was an intention to hold a consultation event in the Parish in order to ensure a good response when the Referendum was held. It was likely that voters at the Referendum would need ID cards in order to vote.

The Chairman of the Meeting thanked Stephen and other Steering Group members for their work throughout the year.

**MIN 9. Closure of Meeting:**

The Chairman of the Meeting thanked all those who had attended the Annual Parish Meeting and closed the Meeting at 8.10pm.

Signed:

Councillor:

Date: