

## MINUTES OF CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 3 JUL 25

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Held on Thursday 3 July 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs Tom Blanden (Chairman), Marion Adkins, Philip Baffour, Jonathan Branton, Liz Garforth-Bles, Hannah Piet, David Rawlings, Lord Suffolk, Philip Thompson; M Bromley Gardner (Clerk); Wilts Cllr Elizabeth Threlfall; 19 members of the public.

1. Apologies. Nil.
2. Public Questions/Points. These 2 points were made later but ideally belong here:
  - The 'Not suitable for HGVs' sign at the B4040/Tetbury Lane junction restricts the view left of traffic exiting Park Street. Noted, Clerk would investigate. **Action: Clerk**
  - Broken-down walls on north side of B4040 in 'The Dip' before the junction with Noahs Ark Lane result in wall stones right up to the road edge. Charlton Park Estate asked to clear the stone a safe distance away. **Action: Lord Suffolk**
3. Declarations of Interest. Lord Suffolk declared his interest in Item 7; he would stay for all the discussion but would not vote in any vote that was called.
4. Urgent Items at Chair's Discretion. None. The Chairman announced that he would take Item 13 immediately after Item 7.
5. Last Minutes. The Minutes of the PC meeting of 15 May 25, having been circulated in advance, were approved and signed. No outstanding actions.
6. Finance. Balance: £26,143.48. The following payments were approved:
  - 2025.7.1, £144, Countrywide Grounds Maintenance, verge cut on 23 Jun.
  - 2025.7.2, £55, Clerk for 50% of SLCC subscription.
  - Also approved – the ICO mandatory annual charge had increased from £35 to £47.

Following the payments the balance would be £25,944.48.

7. Review All 3 Festivals. Shindig, Existance and Gem Festival.
  - a. Summary of all complaints.
    - Noise. Far too loud.
      - Combined with the type of music – heavy low-frequency bass, perhaps made the impact greater.
    - Timings – midnight was bad enough, but music to 4am was totally unreasonable.
    - Bad language over loudspeakers, and at great volume. Thought to be GemFest only.
    - Mobile phone coverage. With so many extra people, coverage was lost. Impact on at least one home security system. Residents lost ability to call. May explain why complainers unable to get through to organisers' response numbers.
    - Lack of response of organisers to complaints. Lack of mobile phone coverage may have added to this problem.
    - Roads and traffic:
      - Blockage caused by traffic trying to turn right at the Lodge entrance.
      - Problems at the Unleashed exit gate – traffic signs/bollards on B4040 on the road not the verge, so an obstruction for west-bound traffic who could not know that east-bound traffic also had a green light.

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- At main exit times the west-bound traffic formed a queue due to the exit being on green for lengthy periods which was a hazard for west-bound traffic approaching through the dip.
- Some cars parked on Tetbury Lane, drivers/passengers perhaps attempting to walk in without paying.
- At least one camper van parked at gate end of Park St, thought to be people sleeping there.
- People walking on road (B4040 towards Malmesbury; and in Charlton, exiting Park St) in unsafe condition – ie appeared to be under influence of alcohol, possibly even drugs.
- Drugs at festival (specifically Gem?) reported overheard being discussed in supermarket in town.

### b. PC Discussion. Various comments by Cllrs:

- Take what festivals say on first meeting with great caution.
- Volume of bass unacceptable; bad language unacceptable.
- Community should benefit in some way. (Note – Shindig free Thursday, Gem free entrance all weekend, talked of welcoming local employment and traders.)
- Accept that Estate needs to diversify, but 4am and noise level unacceptable.
- Lord Suffolk – ‘noted all comments, looking at noise levels, will not repeat 2 events same weekend.’

### c. PC Action Now. Talk to all festivals, report back to PC Sep 25. **Action: Clerk**

13. Asking Residents What They Want. The proposal was to ask residents what they wanted to PC to do for them over this 4-year PC term. The questions for the PC were: whether to ask the question (in general terms); if so, how to phrase the question/s; and how to distribute the message. Some points made were:

- Doubt that residents know enough about what PC can and can't do (because they don't come to meetings/APM, don't show any interest in normal working of PC) to be able to answer the question.
- An open question invites answers that are not in the PC's powers to do, which could cause unhappiness.
  - But we would only need to explain – which could be a good way for residents to learn about PC's powers and limitations.
- Everyone can come to meetings and make requests there.
- Knocking on doors and hand-delivering leaflets is a good way to make contact with the residents.
- We don't know how effective our communication is.
- On a show of hands: how many read the Chat – most. How many read the Facebook Community Hub – only a few.

After much discussion the PC agreed yes to the first question, but that the answers to the other 2 questions needed to be worked up by email discussions between now and the next PC meeting with the decision finalized at the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

8. Planning Application – PL/2025/05074, Land at Stonehill ('Needham 4'). Application for Variation of Conditions, to extend the 30-year life to 40 years. Three objecting Cllrs explained their reasons, but the vote was 6-3 for No Objection. **Action: Clerk**

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9. PC Rep on Village Hall Committee. With little discussion the PC were quick to decide that the PC had no reason to have a rep on the Village Hall/Recreation Centre committee. But the PC agreed there should be a MOU between the 2, to be worked up between now and the next meeting and to be agreed at the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

10. Standing Orders (SO). It was accepted that our current SO are very thin, but also seemed to be accepted that the full NALC Model SO are much too long. The Chairman said that he had heard from WALC that the Government was about to impose SO on all PCs. If this was the case then any work we did would be wasted. Therefore the Chairman was asked urgently to clarify exactly what WALC had said and meant. **Action: Chairman** Meanwhile the Clerk was asked to start work on proposing new appropriate SO and to start a discussion, at the next meeting, on what policies the PC should have.

**Action: Clerk**

11. Insurance. The question was the insurance of the telephone/book exchange kiosk. It was insured for £3500 being the cost of a replacement K6 kiosk, but that would not cover the possible additional costs of delivery of a replacement, labour to clear away a destroyed kiosk and putting in place a replacement, an electrician for re-wiring and replacement shelving. A Cllr warned against being under-insured causing the insurers to apply average on the claim. Another Cllr suggested insuring for £10K. After brief discussion the decision was to research more including the insurance premium cost and bring back to the Sep PC.

12. Risk Register Annual Review. The following points needed updating:

- Insurance of 2<sup>nd</sup> SID.
- Updating of 2.2 to reflect on-line banking – ie 'payments' rather than 'cheques'.
- Defibrillator – updated to reflect 2<sup>nd</sup> defib.

**Action: Clerk**

13. See after Item 7 above.

14. Emergency Plan. Deferred to next meeting – Chairman to meet and discuss with Chairman Recreation Centre.

**Action: Chairman**

15. Highways Update.

- Junction B4040/Noahs Ark Lane – submitted to LHFIG, meanwhile today there had been exactly the sort of accident the LHFIG Issue predicted – a Morgan westbound on the B4040 and a saloon car joining the B4040 eastbound from that junction had collided. The Clerk would pass this information to LHFIG.
- Horse and rider signs – a detailed plan (costing £1500 including traffic control, thus £300 to the PC) had been sent by Wilts Council with just 2 signs, at the 2 outer extremities of the are in question, but the Clerk had pointed out that 3 lanes join the B4040 inside the signed area so would need their own signs.
- FP CHAR 7 – Rights of Way officer Stephen Leonard had made a plan to re-route FP7 to the correct route which he judged would be higher and therefore less boggy, and would do the work on his own budget thus t no cost to the PC.
- FP CHAR 3, self-closing gate – awaiting next LHFIG.
- B4040 speed limit review – Ashton Keynes PC had signed up, but nothing seen yet from Minety or Leigh PCs.
- Next LHFIG 15 Jul.

16. Planning. Report on Planning Applications:

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- Current applications:
  - Purlieus House – variation of conditions – alteration to balcony – due by 3 Jul.
  - 6 Park St – retrospective, single-storey rear extension – due by 4 Jul.
  - Land at Stonehill (Item 8 above).
  - Charlton Park Estate – demolition of some existing barns, erection of 2nd car storage building.
- Considered by the PC since the last meeting:
  - Little Lype Farm, change of use, existing yard to B8 storage of caravans and existing agri building to commercial units B2/B8. No objection.
  - Little Lype Farm, change of use of 2 buildings to commercial storage (B2 and B8). No objection.
  - Turnpike Cottage, 2-storey rear extension, space for 2 cars. Objection.
  - Upper Stonehill Cottage, change of use of parcel of land, agricultural to residential. No objection.
  - Bisley House, extension to permitted replacement garage to form viewing room. No objection.
- Decided by Wilts Council since the last meeting: (all approved)
  - Land Near Minety Substation, certificate of lawfulness, work started in time.
  - 60 Bisley Cottages, rear extension.
- Not yet decided:
  - Land to East and South of Minety Substation (grid connection cable); Lype Fields Farm rural workers dwelling.

### 23. Councillors' Observations/Points for the Next Meeting.

- Clerk reported – war memorial wall needs serious repair – he will get quotes.

### 24. Dates of Next Meetings. 4 Sep, 6 Nov.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.