

MINUTES OF CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 11 JUL 24

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL

Held on Thursday 11 May 2024 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Tom Blanden (Chairman), Marion Adkins, Philip Baffour, Liz Garforth-Bles, David Rawlings, Philip Thompson, Jenny Walker; M Bromley Gardner (Clerk); Wilts Cllr Elizabeth Threlfall; 7 members of the public.

1. Apologies. Cllrs Lord Suffolk, Hannah Piet.
2. Public Questions/Receipt of Petitions. None.
3. Declarations of Interest. None.
4. Urgent Items at Chairman's Discretion. None.
5. Minutes of Last Meeting. The Minutes of the PC meeting of 23 May 24, having been circulated in advance, were approved and signed.
6. Finance. The following payments were authorized:
 - cheque 584, £135, Countrywide Grounds Maintenance, for verge cutting.
 - 585, £80, S Shelford, war memorial grass cutting.
 - 586, £56, Clerk, 50% of SLCC subscription.

After these payments the balance would be £25,477.

7. On-Line Banking. The PC agreed that the PC should move to on-line banking.
Action: RFO
8. Planning Application – PL/2024/05031 – Land Along Pond Lane/B4040. This was the Pond Lane ('Milou') BESS cable route, Part 2. PC decision: No Objection.
Action: Clerk
9. Planning Application – PL/2024/05563 – Minety Solar Farm. Variation of Condition 21, which requires every inverter to have a noise limiter fitted, rather than just the 3 identified by the applicants. PC decision: No Objection.
Action: Clerk
10. Planning – Somerford Farm BESS - Appeal. This appeal will be a hearing. The question was whether the PC needed to add anything to its written objection to the planning application (which would be seen by the Inspector) or to request a speaking role in the hearing. The answer to both was no.
11. Licence Application Andover House. Vanessa Williams, PA to Lord Suffolk, spoke in Lord Suffolk's absence about the premises licence application and answered questions from Cllrs and from the public: it would not be marketed as 'a wedding venue', there would be no music festivals nor stag parties. The house was intended to be let as an exclusive, very high-end, short-term holiday rental, and the licence would be attached to the house. The licence was just 'covering all bases', just in case. After discussion the PC's decision was No Objection.
Action: Clerk
12. Lost Bridlepath. Hankerton PC had asked for Charlton PC's view about the prospect of applying for a bridlepath right of way along the north edge of The Down based

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on at least 20 years use. The PC decision was 'not interested' due to the availability of the correct route very close by.

Action: Clerk

13. WOMAD Noise. The Chairman reported on a meeting he and the Clerk had had with Chris Smith, Director of WOMAD Ltd. He had acknowledged our complaints on behalf of residents and had said there had been other similar noise complaints made to the licensing authority last year. As a result changes had already been planned to the 'Molly's Bar' layout and audio systems which should reduce the noise. Also Public Protection would be monitoring this year.

14. Existence Festival. The Chairman had closely monitored the noise from this Festival, working with the festival sound engineer. The latter had phoned in to the festival to reduce the sound volume whenever he had found a reading exceeding the allowed volume. It turned out that there had been another event, a 'rave', close by, in woodland just west of Crudwell, acting under a TEN. This would have corrupted the Existence sound monitoring and may well have caused more complaints than Existence deserved. The Chairman also reported that the festival's road signage had been atrocious.

15. War Memorial Grass Cutting. Sam Shelford who had recently arrived in the village had taken on the grass-cutting, cutting every 2 weeks and charging £20 per cut. Cllrs were very happy with what was happening.

16. New Arrivals Letter. Marion Adkins who had drafted the New Arrivals Welcome letter questioned the PC decision of Mar 24 that the letter should be included in every issue of the Chat. She had not been able to discuss it with the editor but she had discovered that almost all of it was already able to be found in the Chat. The Mar 24 decision was reversed. Options for delivery now were through the Chat deliverers or by individual Cllrs, who could all have a small stock and could pass a copy to any new arrival in 'their area' (it would be best if they told other Cllrs when they had done it to avoid multi deliveries). It was suggested it should be on brightly-coloured paper, and the Chairman might re-format it into a more attractive-looking document.

Action: All Cllrs, and Chairman

17. Emergency Contact Hubs. Wiltshire & Swindon Prepared (Local Resilience Forum) were promoting the Emergency Contact Hubs scheme. This scheme is part of the Government's renewed focus on whole societal resilience and puts the community at the centre of local Emergency response. The PC agreed that the Village Hall should be the Hub but that all costs should fall to the PC and not the Village Hall.

Action: Clerk

18. SID. David Rawlings briefed on problems with the SID. The batteries had been tested as OK and he was in touch with Evolis.

19. Best Kept Village. Charlton's 2nd place this year (to Hankerton in 1st, of just 2 entries) was mentioned. Of the negative comments, the 2 concerning the church had already been in hand by the church but just not completed in time before the inspection; and the cracked Perspex on the bus timetable was something perhaps we could put right. The comment about private gardens was unusual as private gardens were not usually judged; but the same comment had been made about Hankerton so clearly it had had no effect on the result. Tom Blanden said he hoped someone else would take on the coord role next year.

20. Risk Register. The Risk Register was reviewed, with no amendments needed.

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21. Highways Updates. The Clerk reported:

- 2nd SID – still no socket so not yet bought.
- Western white gates and yellow backing to speed sign – had come up at LHFIG, the Roads Policy advisor had not been keen on the idea (partly because it was a slightly problematic area for white gates – risk of hindering the vision to the left of a vehicle driving out of ‘Coltsacre’, and limited space on the north side of the road), suggested ‘gateway treatment’ which means lines painted on the road instead. He would visit the site and make his formal recommendation later.
- The B4040 verges on both sides of the village had been done once. Possibly needed again now, a little unclear. For next year a tractor and slasher would do the job better, and Durnford Landscapes had the equipment and had done Hankerton’s verges and might be worth approaching. The Clerk had also emailed Highways about the possibility of the Highways tractor doing the job when cutting junction sightlines earlier in the year.

22. Planning. Report on planning applications:

- Considered by PC since last meeting:
 - Old Well House, retention of gate and pillars, no objection.
 - Village Farmhouse, extensive external and internal work, Listed Building Consent, no objection.
 - Lyles, The Street, 2-storey side extension, no objection.
 - 20 Park St, loft conversion, internal renovation, no objection.
- Decided by Wilts Council since the last meeting:
 - Old Well House – refused.
 - Land at Stonehill (Needham BESS #4) – refused. The Clerk briefed that the landowner had expressed deep upset about this and had said that the applicants (Penso Power) would definitely appeal.
 - Lyles, The Street – approved.
- Current applications: Items 8 and 9; Land West of Bullocks Horn Lane, permitted development, convert barn to residence.
- Not yet decided: Purlieus House (removal of Agricultural Occupancy restriction), Land North of Queen Street, Land to East and South of Minety Substation (grid connection cable), Minety Sub-station extension/expansion, Land South of Substation (Pond Lane Bess cable route Part 1).

23. Councillors’ Observations/Points for the Next Meeting.

- Marion Adkins – signage at Stonehill.

24. Dates of Next Meetings. 5 Sep, 7 Nov.

The meeting closed at 9.27pm.

Chairman