

MINUTES OF CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 6 NOV 25

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL **Held on Thursday 6 November 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs David Rawlings (Chairman), Philip Baffour, Jonathan Branton, Liz Garforth-Bles, Lord Suffolk, Philip Thompson; M Bromley Gardner (Clerk); Wilts Cllr Elizabeth Threlfall; 10 members of the public.

1. Apologies. Cllrs Tom Blanden, Marion Adkins, Hannah Piet.
2. Public Questions/Points. None.
3. Declarations of Interest. Lord Suffolk declared his interest in Item 7.
4. Urgent Items at Chair's Discretion. A premises licence application for Little Lype Farm had arrived after the agenda had been published, with a response date for any representations of 1 Dec 25. This would be taken after Item 6.
5. Last Minutes. The Minutes of the PC meeting of 4 Sep 25, having been circulated in advance, were approved and signed.
6. Finance. Balance: £25,746. The following payments were approved:
 - 2025.11.1, £422, Adam Neal, repair to War Memorial wall.
 - 2025.11.2, £370, Wiltshire Council, cost of uncontested PC election.
 - 2025.11.3, £15562.94, CRCC, Village Hall insurance.
 - 2025.11.4, £300, Sam Shelford, cutting War Memorial grass throughout 2025.
 - 2025.11.5, £1000, to Charlton PCC, annual grant, churchyard upkeep.

Following the payments the balance would be £22,109.60.

7a. Premises Licence Application – Little Lype Farm. George and Alison Withers, the applicants, explained the application; their intent was to continue to run a family-oriented café and children's play area with occasional family-friendly events, and to work with the local community to address any concerns. The gist of various Cllrs' questions, and those of some residents, was that while this current intent wasn't doubted, the licence conditions would allow much more and noisier activities, which in the future either temptation or finances might cause to result. The applicants resisted suggestions that they might amend their application to be time-limited, to allow confidence while they proved how it worked, due to the considerable cost of the applications. On a vote, the PC then had no objections.

Action: Clerk

7b. Review of Festivals - Update. The last PC meeting had decided to seek a review of Shindig's licence. This meeting now accepted the Clerk's recommendation that we did not have enough hard evidence, ie contemporary written complaints, to succeed (we had only about 4 written complaints, and only 19 residents had attended the PC meeting which reviewed the festivals). Lord Suffolk told the PC that he couldn't change their timings for this year as they had already advertised and sold tickets; but Shindig had changed their layout to reduce the sound volumes. The PC decided instead to write to Shindig along the lines of the Clerk's draft asking them to work with us to reduce the complaints; he would now finalize the draft and re-circulate to Cllrs.

Action: Clerk

Chairman

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Turning to Gem Festival, the organizer had asked if he could come to speak to the PC before their new licence application was sent in. The PC decided not to do this, but to ask Gem Festival to attend the May 2026 PC meeting in order that the event and its effect on residents could be discussed very soon before the festival took place. Instead the PC would write now to Gem on the same lines as the letter to Shindig. **Action: Clerk**

8. 'Next 4 Years'. The PC had asked residents 'what do you want the PC to do for you over the next 4 years' (ie for the life of this PC). Only one response had been received. From a Stonehill resident, this had been mainly about the B4040 at Stonehill:

- a weight limit to reduce the number of heavy lorries driving past their houses;
- 'Stonehill' signs on 'white gates' between Upper Stonehill Cottage and Beulah;
- a 40mph speed limit between the signs;
- and double whitelines in that area;
- also verge trimming at PC expense, to improve the look and help with sightlines from driveways;
- and a lay-by with some form of commemoration of the WW2 role of this area in the lead-up to D-Day.

The PC decided that all this would depend on the result of the speed review of the B4040, so we should wait for the report.

Additionally the Clerk asked if Cllrs might be interested in trying to move the main bus stop in the village – there having recently been comment on Facebook about the position it is in. Cllrs asked for this to be listed for discussion in the next PC meeting. **Action: Clerk**

9. Assertion 10 - Clarification. In the last PC meeting the Clerk had briefed about 'Assertion 10' and the problem of Cllrs using private email accounts for PC business. He now clarified that there was no legislation or regulation that directly outlawed this; instead it was the PC's legal duty, under GDPR and Data Protection legislation, to safeguard its data that meant that this practice was unsafe. Also the use by Cllrs of private computers was seen by some as problematic, so that many PCs larger than us, and Town Councils, bought laptops for their Cllrs. And the same went for the Clerk working on a private computer. Obviously these thoughts would have significant implications for the precept if adopted here. There was no need for any decision now.

Action: Clerk

10. Clerk's Computer Replacement. As all probably knew, Windows 10 was no longer supported. But the Clerk's computer wouldn't run Windows 11. The Clerk proposed that the PC, along with Hankerton PC and himself, should each contribute 1/3rd of the cost of a new desk-top computer (costing about £500-£600) for him; Hankerton PC had agreed. Additionally each PC should buy a hard-drive for their own documents and emails to be stored on and backed up, and which would be passed on on handover of Clerks. The PC agreed. **Action: Clerk**

11. Village Hall Request for Grant. The Village Hall was about to have all lights replaced and then to be repainted. Estimated cost £8500. £5000 already sourced from 2 Area Board grants. The Village Hall was asking for £1000-£1500. The PC agreed to £1500.

Action: RFO

12. Emergency Plan. Not covered in PC Chairman's absence.

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13. SOs and Policies. No progress to report yet.
14. Poppy Appeal. The PC agreed that the Chairman should lay a wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday, and that the PC should make a donation of £175 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. **Action: RFO, Chairman**
15. Highways Update. The horse and rider warning signs had been approved by LHFIG. An invoice for the 30% contribution would arrive in due course. Liz GB reported that the first sign had already arrived in the area of her gate. **Action: RFO**
16. 'Oaks at 80'. A project of the Great Western Community Forest (GWCF), this was a proposal that PCs might plant an oak tree to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of WW2 (oaks were traditionally associated with 80-year milestones). This would be at no cost to PCs – GWCF would offer £80 which was expected to cover the cost. The PC were keen to join this; the Clerk was to ask the Recreation Centre if they would agree to 'host' the tree. **Action: Clerk**
17. Precept 2026 – 1st Look. Cllrs were given a 2-page 1st draft of next year's budget to illustrate the sort of decision that would be needed in the next meeting, in January, when the precept had to be decided. If they wanted to raise any idea of a project in the coming year they should do so now if funding would be needed. **Action: all Cllrs**
18. Planning. Report on Planning Applications:
- Current applications: 7 and 10 Park St, retrospective LBC replacement of windows.
 - Considered by the PC since the last meeting: Nil.
 - Decided by Wilts Council since the last meeting: (all approved)
 - 6 Park St – retrospective, single-storey rear extension
 - 34 Vicarage Lane.
 - Upper Stonehill Cottage, change of use of parcel of land, agricultural to residential.
 - Not yet decided at Wilts Council:
 - Land to East and South of Minety Substation (grid connection cable).
 - Lype Fields Farm rural workers dwelling.
 - Little Lype Farm, change of use, existing yard to B8 storage of caravans and existing agricultural building to commercial units B2/B8.
 - Little Lype Farm, change of use, 2 buildings, to commercial storage (B2/B8).
 - Turnpike Cottage, 2-storey rear extension, space for 2 cars. **Note: Conservation objection – historic significance of building.**
 - Charlton Park Estate – demolition of some existing barns, erection of 2nd car storage building. **Note: Ecology objection for BNG submission.**
 - Land off Pond Lane – variation of condition for BESS.
19. Councillors' Observations/Points for the Next Meeting. The Clerk mentioned his planning application which would appear soon and how he would handle it.
20. Dates of Next Meetings. 22 Jan, 5 Mar, 7 May, 2 Jul, 3 Sep, 5 Nov.

The meeting closed at 9.23 pm.

Chairman