

MINUTES OF CHARLTON ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 15 MAY 25

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL **Held on Thursday 15 May 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall**

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

1. Election of Chair. Cllr Tom Blanden was willing to stand; there were no other nominations and he was elected.
2. Apologies. Cllrs Hannah Piet and Lord Suffolk. At this point the PC voted to allow both to sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office before or at the next PC meeting.
3. Public Questions/Receipt of Petitions. A recommendation to get more people involved in the village clean-up; perhaps bring in a competitive element.
4. Declarations of Interest. None.
5. Urgent Items at Chair's Discretion. B4040 Speed Limit review, to be taken after Item 16.
6. Election of Deputy Chair. David Rawlings was nominated and elected.
7. Co-option. Philip Baffour, who had intended to stand for election but something had gone wrong with his paperwork, was co-opted back onto the PC.
8. Minutes of Last Meeting. The Minutes of the PC meetings of 6 Mar 25 and 2 May 25, having been circulated in advance, were approved and signed. No outstanding actions.
9. Exemption from External Audit. In accordance with Sect 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, the PC declared that the PC was exempt external audit, since both gross annual income and gross annual expenditure were below £25,000.
10. Approval of 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement. Marion Adkins as RFO took the PC through the Annual Governance Statement, after which the PC decided that all points had been covered and that the Chairman should sign it (which he did).
11. Approval of 2024/25 Accounts. The RFO took the PC through the accounts. The Internal Audit had been successfully completed. Cllrs had no questions on the details of the accounts and the PC approved the accounts. The Accounting Statement was signed.
12. Finance. There was currently £26,404 in the account, the Precept having been received. The following payments were authorized, after which the balance would be £25,550:
 - Payment reference 2025.5.2, £162, Community Heartbeat Trust, annual support.
 - 2025.5.3, £207.30, to WALC, annual subscription.
 - 2025.5.4, £36, to WALC, Cllr training course (Tom Blanden).
 - 2025.5.5, £144, to Countrywide Grounds Maintenance, verge cut on 12 May.
 - 2025.5.6, £268.39, to Community First Trading Ltd for annual insurance.

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- 2025.5.7, £36, Cllr training course (Jonathan Branton). The PC noted that he had been at short notice unable to attend (but the course had still to be paid for).

The bank account had just been changed by Lloyds Bank Ltd to a Community Account, charging £4.25 per month. The PC approved the monthly payment.

The PC, being the first meeting of a new 4-year term, also approved the following monthly Direct Debit charges:

- Hugo Fox Ltd, monthly website hosting fee £11.99.
- Information Commissioners Office, data protection mandatory annual charge, £35.

13. Portfolios.

- RFO – Marion Adkins
- Recreation Centre – decision deferred, need to find out latest legal status of Village Hall trustees.
- Rights of Way – Liz Garforth-Bles, vice Philip Thompson (with Roy Evans as the non-Cllr leader of the Footpaths Group).
- Patients Group/PCT – Janet Thompson (non-Cllr).
- Area Board – Tom Blanden
- Parish magazine link – Marion Adkins
- Traffic and Highways – Clerk
- SID – David Rawlings
- Community Speedwatch – Anne Hodgkins (non-Cllr).
- Book Exchange – Hannah Piet
- Noticeboards – Philip Baffour
- Climate Strategy – Philip Baffour
- Community Emergency Contacts – Chairman, Clerk, Philip Thompson
- Emergency Plan – Tom Blanden

14. Planning Application – PL/2025/02618, Turnpike Cottage. The neighbour to the east was present in the Hall and was invited by the Chairman to address the PC. The PC decision was to object, on the grounds of the resultant loss of sunlight to the neighbour to the east. Additionally the PC, while content that Highways had already said that entry and exit from the proposed car parking area must be in a forward gear and had requested a detailed plan to show all the relevant measurements, decided to point out that traffic turning north on Tetbury Lane tended to do so at some speed and, if coming from the east, tended to cut the corner thus reducing their reaction time here. **Action: Clerk**

15. Planning Application – PL/2025/02586 and 02796, Little Lype Farm. The applicants were present and answered PC questions. The subject of the access track shown in both applications (and in an application in 2024) but not yet in use was raised by the PC; the applicants' response that this was a very expensive bit of work but that they hoped to have it done before the end of this summer was noted by the PC. The PC decision was for No Objection. **Action: Clerk**

16. Noah's Ark Junction. A Lea resident had reported that saloon car traffic waiting at the Noah's Ark junction to join the B4040 eastward could not see oncoming saloon car traffic until they were about 75 metres away – yet the required visual distance for a 50 mph area was 160 metres. The Clerk had checked this and had found it to be true. He had reported this to Highways and had been told it must be raised to LHFIF. LHFIF

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issues carried a 30% financial contribution by the PC, so he sought PC approval to raise it to LHFIG. The PC agreed.

Action: Clerk

16a. B4040 Speed Limit Review. LHFIG had asked whether Charlton wished to join in a speed limit review of the B4040 requested by Leigh and Minety PCs, at a cost to the PC of £320 (but the PC noted that if Aston Keynes did not also join then the cost could be £425). The PC decided to join in, thinking particularly about the speed limit between the Noah's Ark junction and the existing 30mph limit, and the Upper Stonehill area.

Action: Clerk

17. Footpaths – LHFIG Request by Footpaths Group. The Footpaths Group leader had requested PC support for an LHFIG bid for a self-closing gate on footpath CHAR 3 where there had been a gate and stile but the stile had disappeared and the gate, when cattle were in the field, was very securely tied shut. The farmer was worried about walkers leaving the gate open but would accept a self-closing walkers' gate. The PC agreed.

Action: Clerk

18. CSW – Request for Funding. Anne Hodgkins, CSW team leader, had requested PC funding thought to be about £35 for a 150-copy colour-printed flier to be delivered to all houses in the village, seeking more recruits to the CSW team. The PC agreed.

Action: Clerk

19. Emergency Plan. Item deferred.

20. Highways Update. Horse and rider signs – now in Priority One in LHFIG, but detailed plan not yet seen. FP CHAR 7 – still with Rights of Way officer. Charlton Bridge, report of possible evidence of further vehicle strikes and gaps at base of wall made to Highways – referred by Highways to Structures/Bridges team. Bullocks Horn signs still outstanding. Clerk reported LHFIG agenda starting to see some 20mph speed limit requests locally.

21. Leaving Gift for Cllr. Jenny Walker had stood down at the election after 38 years as a Parish Cllr. PC decided to send her a letter from the Chairman, and to buy a present out of PC funds, costing up to about £75, with the aim of presenting it at the June Village Hall coffee morning. [Chairman to ask her what she would like.]

22. Planning. Report on Planning Applications:

- Considered by the PC since the last meeting:
 - Lype Fields Farm, rural worker's dwelling – Support.
 - Land near Minety Substation, Certificate of Lawfulness – no objection.
 - 60 Bisley Cottages, rear extension to property – no objection.
- Decided by Wilts Council since the last meeting:
 - 60 Bisley, holiday let shepherd's hut – approved.
 - 1 and 2 South Lodges, gas tanks and associated works – approved.
 - Bambury Hill Farm, replace door and windows LBC – approved.
- Current applications:
 - Turnpike Cottage; Little Lype Farm x2; Land Adjacent Upper Stonehill Cottage – change of use of parcel of land; Bisley House – extension to permitted garage to form viewing room.
- Not yet decided: Land to East and South of Minety Substation (grid connection cable).
- Appeals.
 - 22/05504, 4th BESS south of Substation – permitted on appeal.

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

- Reminder to Cllrs to complete their report of election expenses.
- Charlton Park weekly events forecast – anyone can sign up to receive it by email, by clicking the button on the Estate website.

24. Dates of Next Meetings. 3 Jul, 4 Sep, 6 Nov.

The meeting closed at about 9.20 pm.