

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL'S OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE (COSC)

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 February 2024 at Poplar Dene, Cart Lane, Chilbolton; 18:30

PRESENT: Cllr David Griffith (DG)(Chair), Moya Grove (MG), Trish Heaton(TH), Julian Hudson (JH)

1. Apologies: Cllr Rick Franke, Terry Gilmour (TG), Nick Horne (NH), Emma Noble (EN)
2. Declaration of Interests: Nil
3. Approval of Minutes – Thursday 11 January 2024: EN was added to ‘apologies’ and they were then agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters Arising: discussed under the items below
5. To take questions and/or discuss and decide on any proposals within the monthly update reports as follows: -
 - A) Finance: The Clerk provided an update on finance transactions since the last COSC meeting ([2824 1](#)). COSC had no comment on the transactions.
The Precept accounts and Ringfenced accounts were noted
 - B) Allotments: TG had nothing to report.
 - C) Common: Prior to the meeting MG circulated the attached report including an update on Fishing Rights ([2824 3](#)).

Fishing Rights. DG advised that the Deed of Grant had been signed on behalf of CPC and sent to the Church Commissioners’ solicitors for signature.

Delinked Payments. DG, MG, EN and JH had met with the Land Agent for Savills Winchester on the Common. It was a successful meeting and an email detailing the results of the discussions had been sent to those attending ([2824 4](#)). JH was thanked for agreeing to take the lead on this matter.

Ash tree over the fence boundary. This would be dealt with by Rick Nightingale as soon as ground conditions allowed. CPC had accepted the quote for tree works on the Common. Unfortunately, the work over the container would need a cherry picker to reach the branches. DG would enquire whether one might be borrowed.

Flood hazard. Over pumping had been cancelled by Southern Water. MG had sent note a to Alison Graham-Smith (AG-S)(Natural England) to see if she had been aware of the decision to over pump. AG-S had not been consulted by Southern Water nor by the Environment Agency. AG-S would get in touch with these bodies to see how Natural England could better cooperate and be aware of the Infiltration Reduction Plan (IRP) process. MG had written articles for the village website and the Village Webmaster. COSC complimented MG on the clarity of these articles. She would be producing an updated article for the March Parish magazine. Water levels were down but the river was still flowing outside the bridge. DG agreed to contact HCC to see if the length of the bridge could be extended. Wessex River Trust would visit to assess the matter of the gravel which has been washed away.

Agreed and Signed (Chairman)

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Sleeper bridge. DG had contacted Andy Bond and Rick Nightingale to see about repairs.

Residents parking. COSC agreed the draft letter to residents.

EN was seeking quotes for the modifications to the horse gate at the entrance to the Common.

D) Machinery Maintenance: Nil.

E) Parish Paths:

After discussion on the resident request re Whitelands Path ([2524 8](#)), it was agreed that DG would speak to HCC about finding a solution to the flooding on this part of the Test Way.

The Mark Way had been cut but a section of about 200 metres south of the path leading from Little Drove Road was still very narrow and not wide enough for horses. It would soon grow again and become impassable. DG had written to HCC but they are very short of funds. DG has arranged for the lengthsman to work 1/2 day on this section.

DG had not walked the parish paths south of the A30 recently but would do so when he could.

F) Village Greens: It was noted that the pipework placed on Grindstone Green and the vehicles reversing around the area of Rectory Green were doing damage to the greens. The vehicles were also knocking the posts over. The Parish Clerk will make contact with Southern Water to ask for the pipework etc to be removed. She will also warn them of our future claim for remedying the damage to posts and verges in due course.

G) War Memorial Playing Fields: Prior to the meeting NH circulated the attached report ([2824 2](#)).

I. Update on WMPF Development Group and Adventure Tower update: TH updated COSC on the latest conversations with Caledonia Play about snagging identified by the Safety Inspector. Caledonia Play was insistent it would not be doing any work which had not been identified as a safety issue. The Delivery Group had sought a last piece of advice from the Inspector about the concrete securing various activities/poles into the ground. Caledonia Play had submitted an invoice for final payment so it was important to decide very soon on what to do about this latest issue and the snagging points. CPC had decided at their meeting on 5 February that COSC would make the final decision about payment. The Delivery Group would provide a briefing note to COSC soonest on these matters.

II. The TVBC Animal Welfare Officer had recommended enclosure of the children's play area in addition to the proposal to fence off the Test Way. TH reminded COSC that enclosure of the children's play area had been considered a few years ago but rejected because of the impact this would have by increasing the cost of grass cutting. If this was taken forward, the plan to increase the amount of play facilities would need to be reviewed so all appropriate equipment

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would be included the enclosure. DG had confirmed that the WMPF would be eligible for the Public Spaces Order to be applied and was obtaining costs.

III. TH commented that there was a gift of more soil for the pump track which should become available this month, but no progress could be made on this amenity until the weather improved. COSC agreed that the barbed wire on the fence adjacent to the pump track could be replaced with single strand wire as part of this project.

H) West Down – in response to the Stop Chilbolton Overdevelopment groups (SCO) concerns re Status of Improvised Track from West Down concrete road to Test Valley Farm (TVF) ([2524 22](#)), COSC sported the view of CPC that there was no right of access from West Down and would write to HCC DG would also inspect the loose sewage cover on the track.

The grazier had agreed to bring cattle onto West Down this year and had been sent the licence for signature. DG would speak to him about access to TVF.

CPC had accepted the quote for tree works on West Down. The oak tree in Station Road Wood would need minimal work.

DG expressed his thanks to those who had turned up to clear the brambles etc in the enclosure. Hampshire Conservation Volunteers would work in the enclosure on 10th February and Rob West would be on site with brush cutters on either 22nd or 23rd February (CPC had agreed the cost of up to £1700).

COSC agreed in principle that a plaque could be added to the seat on West Down overlooking the valley and a long-lasting native tree could be planted in memory of Abby Purver. COSC would like to be advised of the proposed type of tree.

HCC had advised that they do not have sufficient funds at present to repair the barrier on the concrete road.

6. Correspondence:

18/1/24 - Resident email re Whitelands Path and WD barrier ([2524 8](#))

19/1/24 - Mike Blackmore, WRT, report re The Chilbolton carrier ([2524 9](#)) 22/1/24 further info from Mike re Water Situation Report for December, compiled by the area Environment Agency hydrology team ([2524 9a](#))

23/1/24 - Sothorn Water re Chilbolton Groundwater Management ([2524 10](#)) (Chilbolton IRP Sep '21 V2.2 EN approved overpumping plan ([2524 10b](#)) and generic appendix ([2524 10c](#)))

24/1/24 - HCC Local Nature Recovery Strategy workshop for Test Valley ([2524 12](#))

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25/1/24 - Chilbolton resident email re Discharge of Untreated Sewage into the Test at Chilbolton Common ([2524 14](#))

26/1/24 - TVAPTC Update re Houghton River Pollution Working Group ([2524 15](#)) – to be discussed at CPC 5/2/24 meeting

27/1/24 - resident email re SW Chilbolton Groundwater Management ([2524 19](#))

7. Questions from Public: Nil

8. Any Other Business – For information only:

9. Items for the next agenda: Nil

10. Date of the next meeting – Scheduled date is Thursday 14 March 2024 at Poplar Dene, Village Street.