

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL'S OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE (COSC)

DRAFT – Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16 May 2024; Poplar Dene, Cart Lane, Chilbolton; 18:30

PRESENT: Trish Heaton (TH), Julian Hudson (JH), David Griffiths (DG), Emma Noble (EN)

1. Apologies: Nick Horne (NH), Rick Frank (RF), Terry Gilmour (TG), Moya Grove (MG)
2. Declaration of Interests: NONE
3. Approval of Minutes – Thursday 11 April 2024: These were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters Arising:
5. COSC agreed that DG should remain as Chair for 2024-2025. However, DG indicated that this would be his last year as chair. He said he would like to remain a member of COSC responsible for West Down. West Down needed someone to concentrate upon its management.
6. To take questions and/or discuss and decide on any proposals within the monthly update reports as follows: -
 - A) Finance: Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated the attached report ([5924 1](#)). COSC would like to pass thanks to Mandy Denyer (MD). Report noted with no additional comment.
 - B) Allotments: Prior to the meeting TG had nothing to report. Nothing further raised today.
 - C) Common: Prior to the meeting MG circulated the attached report ([5924 2](#))
 - I. Update on Fishing Rights: Cllr Ewer has chased Strutt and Parker for the return of the signed Deed of Grant. DG confirmed a response is awaited from the Church of England Commissioners.
 - II. Discussion on extension of Purlygig Bridge: DG believes that the river level has reduced significantly and there is no longer a strong 'pull' from the current when walking through the area where the river has overflowed. Comments from local members of the public were discussed. DG considered that the boarding planks should not be replaced immediately. Rather, we should wait until the river flow subsides and review. JH favoured a more natural solution to planks. The committee considered that the river would probably have flowed over and around the planks anyway. Regarding the safety issue when wading through the water installing a post and rope handrail was considered. COSC felt that any risk was obvious and plus the strength of the flow has decreased quite substantially. The decision of COSC was to leave the situation as it is for the time being. No action will be taken as we continue to wait for the river levels to subside. The medium term plan is for HCC to extend the bridge. MG is going to discuss this with HCC and Sparsholt College who have agreed to carry out work if materials are provided.
 - III. DG confirmed that the small tree which fell across the upper part of the Purleygig stream was actually quite a big job and was dealt with by Rick Nightingale. He also dealt with the bank repairs. COSC would like to pass on their thanks.
 - IV. DG received an email from a local resident who is concerned about the state of the sleeper bridge and track leading to Test Haven, The Old Inn and The Old Inn Cottage. The very wet weather is partly responsible but works lorries and vans from building work at the Old Inn Cottage have caused substantial additional damage to the gravel road and particularly to the sleeper bridge. COSC agreed

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that this track, and the one to the Old Cottage and WMPF, will be repaired when everything has dried out. Andy Bond has said he could do this at the same time as the work to the sleeper bridge, as he will already have hired the necessary plant.

- V. DG reported on the sleeper bridge. A quote was received from Andy Bond for the repair which included the purchase of tropical hardwood which is so dense it doesn't absorb much water and is ideal for the job. Total cost was £5695. JH raised concerns that CPC might have this work done at significant expense only to find there has been further damage. DG suggested that the Clerk be asked to draft a letter to the owners of The Old Inn Cottage saying that we think their building works have materially contributed to the extra damage to the sleeper bridge and gravel drive, and bearing in mind the extra cost Council Tax payers and other residents, could they make an extra contribution towards the repairs. Thought was given to getting a second quote, but professional advice has been sought by JH from his colleagues in the industry who confirmed that these sleepers are the most robust solution, albeit expensive, and are likely to save money in the long run. In view of the relative urgency COSC agreed that Andy's quote should be accepted. A request should be made to Andy to provide a quote for repairing the track (and replacing the dragons teeth where they have rotted) at the same time. DG to follow up with Andy.
- VI. Regarding alterations to the horse gate at the entrance to the Common at the bottom of Joys Lane, COSC are supportive of the suggested work to replace the existing gate with a safer gate, but the grant from HCC has been delayed. Corinne Davis-Cooke (CD-C), the Community Engagement Ranger advised that the funds haven't yet been decided / released.
- VII. COSC discussed the issue of cars blocking the pedestrian gate at the bottom of Joys Lane (photographs seen). JH said that he suggested dragons teeth to prevent this in the original plans. JH is going to provide the sketch plan showing where additional dragons teeth could be placed to prevent the sort of parking shown in the photograph.
- VIII. COSC agreed that the previous grazing agreement can be reviewed, amended and signed by MD.
- IX. Cllr Ewer asked that COSC urgently consider closing the Joys Lane gate whenever fine weather is forecast at the weekend. COSC discussed. DG reported firstly, that CPC policy says all practical measures will be taken to give advanced notice. Secondly, someone has to collect the A boards on Friday evening and place them in position as well as closing the gate and then opening it again on Sunday evening and removing the A boards. COSC consider that there are, at present, insufficient persons willing to do this at short notice. Ad hoc closures may also cause chaos in Joys Lane. COSC's strongly recommend to CPC is that, despite the parking problems that may arise, closure be normally be restricted to times when advance warning can be given, that is to say, bank holidays and school summer holidays. Advance warning could be issued now for these times. However, COSC did not rule out ad hoc closure in exceptional circumstances.
- X. DG will seek out and give to JH the smart lock and he will consider it's possibilities.

D) Machinery Maintenance: Nothing to report.

E) Parish Paths: TH reported that HCC have filled in the rainwater channels which had appeared on Whitelands path.

F) Village Greens: Stocks Green has had the edge mowed, but not the main part due to the orchids.

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G) TH requested that 'jobs for the lengths man' be returned to the agenda.

H) War Memorial Playing Field–

I. Update on WMPF Development Group and Adventure Tower update:

COSC discussed the opening ceremony for the Adventure Tower. It was agreed that it should be arranged for the summer. The development group will discuss this at their next meeting and get a date and suggested attendees.

TH confirmed that the development group still plans to level out the mats where the soil has come through.

TH confirmed that NH has liaised with Vitaplay to get the scramble net repaired, but it is getting to the stage where assistance from CPC may need to be sought. Work ongoing.

TH reported that a quote had been received for the replacement of the basket swing seats of £233 per seat. COSC agreed that two can be ordered.

TH discussed the pump track and that thoughts had been given to seeking advice from a professional company. However for now, soil will continue to be collected when available and if sufficient volunteers are available, the work should be possible without professional involvement.

An offer of £200 for the slide has been received. DG advised that this offer should be accepted.

II. CPC update on the proposal to enclose the WMPF to be able to apply for an 'Enclosed Sports Area' under the TVBC Public Spaces Protection: Agreed that this item will be discussed at the next meeting. A quote for the fencing has been agreed.

I) West Down –

- i. To discuss and decide on request for memorial plaque on a WD bench (or installation of a new bench with memorial plaque): COSC recommend that Mr Budd's family be asked if they would like to replace either the wooden bench in Dobbs Field or the wooden bench overlooking the Butterfly bank / bottle bank.
- ii. DG reported that he has obtained three quotes for the fencing work on West Down: Contour fencing £1800 - £2000 + vat, Kiwi fencing £2665 +vat and Hampshire Rural Management Ltd £2298 (not vat registered). DG recommended the latter as they are a local company, it is the cheapest quote and they have advised they may be able to carry out the work in three weeks. COSC agree with this recommendation. DG reported that CPC may be able to claim back the VAT on materials. COSC recommend MD seeks approval from CPC ASAP due to imminent arrival of cows.
- iii. George Whitfield has installed the bridleway posts but CD-C has said HCC signage cannot be used for the markers. COSC agreed that finger posts should be arranged and EN and DG will agree a time to do a walk round and look to put up some 'to the Mark Way' and 'to the Test Way' signs.
- iv. There are some benches around the village that need rubbing down and re-painting. DG suggested an advert be placed in the parish magazine seeing if anyone would like to 'adopt a bench'. JH will arrange this.

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- v. The Chairman of COSC has to provide a report to the Annual Parish Meeting and a summary has been written up by DG. TH offered to condense this and put a summary in the village magazine.
- vi. TH suggested that a diary date be agreed for the ragwort pull. DG will discuss with MG.
- vii. DG reported that regarding the new fence which prevented access to West Down from Test Valley Farm, which was installed, and shortly after removed by persons unknown, there is a suggestion that Southern Water may have done it. Pending further enquiries.
- viii. DG has made enquiries with HCC about the broken overhead barrier but so far has had no reply.

7. Correspondence:

10/5/24 - Wessex River Trust email to MG re Flooding around Purlygig Bridge ([3624 5](#), [5a](#), [5b](#))

12/5/24 - Resident email re car blocking pedestrian gate on Common ([3624 6](#))

1/5/24 - resident email re Common and vacant property on Joys Lane, responses and follow up emails ([3624 8](#))

14/5/24 - Letter to A Coutts (Common Grazier) ([3624 7](#)) (the 2024 grazing agreement was also sent to A Coutts)

8. Questions from Public:

None

9. Any Other Business – For information only:

10. Items for the next agenda:

See above

11. Date of the next meeting – Scheduled date is Thursday 13 June 2024 at 18:30 at Poplar Dene, Village Street,

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 08:37