

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL'S OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE (COSC)

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13 June 2024; Poplar Dene, Cart Lane, Chilbolton; 18:30

PRESENT:

1. Apologies: Rick Franke (RF), Terry Gilmour (TG), Moya Grove (MG)
2. Declaration of Interests: NONE
3. Approval of Minutes – Thursday 16 May 2024; These were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters Arising:
5. To take questions and/or discuss and decide on any proposals within the monthly update reports as follows: -
 - A) Finance –
 - i. Finance transactions since last COSC meeting: Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated the attached report ([13724 1](#)).
 - B) Allotments – TG had nothing to report prior to the meeting.
 - I. Regarding the vacant plots, TH suggested re-advertising and emphasising that they are available to Chilbolton and non-Chilbolton residents alike. EN suggested putting a note in the shop for people who do not read the magazine.
 - II. COSC agreed that Ian Daubney will cut back the vacant plots, then they will be treated with RoundUp and then covered with weed control fabric or carpet.
 - C) Common: Due to MG's recent operation a Common report was not circulated prior to the meeting.
 - I. Update on Fishing Rights: Cllr Ewer informed Cllrs at the 3/6/24 CPC meeting that the Grant of Deed is yet to be signed by the Church Commissioners. DG confirmed that as yet nothing has been heard from the Church Commissioners.
 - II. Discussion on extension of Purlygig Bridge: DG to confirm that MG is happy to progress this. There is still water in front of the Purlygig Bridge, but there is no 'pull' from it which could potentially be dangerous to children. DG reported that he has bashed down the spikes that had appeared in the overflow area. These had been reported by a member of the public.
 - III. Sleeper Bridge: At the CPC meeting held on 3/6/24 an additional budget of £5695 was agreed for this project, which included £510 for the track repairs. COSC considers that the damage to the track and sleeper bridge was accelerated by building work at Old Inn Cottage. A letter has been sent to the resident at Old Inn Cottage to say that the cost of track repairs is usually shared equally but that it is not considered fair given the heavy traffic from the building work. There is also direct evidence that the contractors and heavy vehicles have caused damage to the sleeper bridge. The resident at Old Inn Cottage has said he feels that the quote is excessive. He has asked his builders to provide a more favourable quote. NH suggested asking the other two owners for a contribution for the repair of the sleeper bridge as well the track as it all forms part of the road. COSC agreed with this suggestion.
 - IV. EN reported that the horse gate has been ordered and is arriving tomorrow. A grant has been obtained which will contribute to the cost. Andy Bond is going to do the work at the same time as

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the track and bridge repairs, hopefully next month. COSC felt that, where reasonable, local contractors from within the village and surrounding areas should be supported.

- V. DG reported that Adam Coutts, the grazier, put cows on the Common yesterday. Both he and MG were satisfied that the ground had dried enough.
- VI. DG reported that a resident at the Old Cottage has requested that the ditch which runs alongside his house be dug out. CPC have already agreed to this and it is being organised by George Marits as part of flood protection.
- VII. DG reported that the fallen ash tree on the far side of the Common which is resting on the fence is to be looked at by Rick Nightingale to ascertain whether the ground has dried out.
- VIII. It has been agreed that the Common parking area barrier will be closed for the whole of the school holidays. This policy has been agreed by CPC.
- IX. JH has created a new plan showing where dragons teeth are required to prevent inconsiderate parking in front of the pedestrian gate by the cattle grid. The plan needs amending slightly to fit in with the design of the new horse gate and associated fencing.

D) Machinery Maintenance:

EN reported that The Beast is pulling to one side and the trailer needs a new light board. EN will ask Ed Treadwell about these items.

Rick Nightingale has suggested to DG using a mulching mower instead of The Beast which would chop up the arisings into tiny bits making the onerous task of raking up unnecessary. COSC agreed to recommend hiring one of these to see if it is suitable on West Down and The Common.

E) Parish Paths – Cllr Griffiths:

- I. A complaint has been received about the state of footpaths 15 and 16. DG is going to ask Ian Daubney to cut them if they can not be done by the Lengths Man.
- II. EN reported clearing the bottom of the Mark Way to allow horse access, as well as running the beast up and down the top part of the Mark Way. The furthest part of the Mark Way to Leckford is so overgrown it is barely passable, so nothing was attempted there. Emma was thanked for her hard work. DG indicated that in future investment may need to be made in better equipment (see above). NH suggested Andy Smith be considered for jobs in future as well.

F) Village Greens:

DG reported that Jenny Hamilton has said that there are bee and pyramid orchids on Stocks Green. Mowing will continue around the edge.

DG will ask FAG to contact Southern Water to repair the areas where the tanker lorries have caused damage. These are the verge adjacent to the pump house and Rectory Green.

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G) War Memorial Playing Fields : -

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

NH reported that there is still a plan to pull up the rubber mat and plant some grass seed. This is in hand.

The opening ceremony won't be considered until the grass is sorted. A date is still to be selected for this.

DG confirmed that Grass and Grounds may now cut the 'wild flower' area. EN and TH have tidied round the new hedge so that it is obvious for Grass and Grounds and does not get mowed accidentally.

NH reported that Grass and Grounds have sourced a machine that can cut the long grass on the football pitch. Rick Nightingale suggested that only machinery with grass wheels should be used. DG pointed out that it might not matter about us using tractor tyres if the football team are not using it. NH said that consideration will need to be given to raking up the grass around the play equipment. EN may have a contact who might be interested in hay making but the grass is being cut next week and, the weather is due to be bad, so this may not be an option.

II. Update on the proposal to enclosing the WMPF to be able to apply for an 'Enclosed Sports Area' under the TVBC Public Spaces Protection:

DG confirmed that diverting the footpath is not viable due to the work involved; the boggy nature of the ground and the legal difficulties in diverting a footpath.

Simon Martin is going to be asked to provide an additional quote for fencing off of the sports field. DG has spoken to the Animal Welfare Officer at TVBC who has said that if it was enclosed it would probably meet the criteria for a Public Spaces Protection Order.

NH raised the issue of the boggy nature of the path as it enters the WMPF from the Whitelands Path. As this is part of the Test Way DG has contacted HCC about this problem. Andy Bond has quoted for providing a scalping path enclosed with planks. HCC have said they would consider paying for the materials if CPC agree to carry out the work to their specifications and follow the path of the Test Way exactly.

III. EN reported that the pavilion will be cleaned next month in anticipation of a visit by Rookwood School. NH confirmed that the pallets in the pavilion are his and these can be moved into the shower block.

IV. Regarding the basketball hoops no action has been taken for some time. Similarly, Vitaplay have said that rotten wood issues were reported three months after the 10 year guarantee period had expired. DG will ask a former colleague whether, if the failure began during the period of the guarantee and only

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became apparent after it had expired, it would still be covered by the guarantee. NH suggested drafting a letter to Vitaplay if it should be covered by the guarantee.

- V. COSC agreed to replacing the basket swing seats and noted that CPC had already approved the cost of this. It was raised again in the most recent play area inspection report. NH is going to look into this further.
- VI. NH reported that practically it will not work having a football team using CWMPF regularly with the gate due to be locked all summer. Teams would need to use the pitch for training and pre-season friendlies. Clatford are interested but it is impossible to find a way forward with the locked gate. COSC agreed with regret.
- VII. NH reported that one of the showers has broken. NH will have a look in the next week or two with a view to arranging a repair.
- VIII. The owner of Broxton House has contacted CPC to say that three trees have fallen from the playing field onto his deer fence. Rick Nightingale will be dealing with these. There is a further tree that has fallen over the fence into the playing field which COSC will ask Rick Nightingale to deal with.
- IX. DG reported that he has looked into our insurance policy and it may be possible to claim on the insurance for the branch overhanging the container with a view to getting it removed as it is a potential risk. Rick has been asked to give his opinion.
- X. NH reported that there is lots of soil for the pump track but still not quite enough. Andy Bond recently added some more. Soil collection continues.

H) 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): prior to the meeting the Clerk informed COSC that she is awaiting a response from the applicant to the two location options.

COSC understands that Mr Budd wants to replace the bench overlooking the butterfly bank / recycling area. COSC are happy for Mr Budd to provide a selection of his benches and COSC will then review them. COSC would prefer a choice that involved minimal maintenance such as a durable recycled plastic bench. Mr Budd will be need to take the old wooden bench away. We would consider allowing concrete footings if needed.

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- II. JH reported that he is still looking into a scheme for villages to 'adopt-a-bench' as well as ways of increasing the number of volunteers.
 - III. Regarding the damage to the new barrier blocking the opening to Test Valley Farm, DG reported that Southern Water have recently repaired a manhole there which means they may have been responsible for the damage. DG has drafted a letter to be sent to Southern Water. Michael Hardy (MH) at HCC has confirmed that there is definitely no right of way. He came and looked and also confirmed that it appeared that someone on Station Road may have been encroaching onto West Down's land. HCC are going to bring their surveyor to check. DG will arrange to join MH.
 - IV. DG confirmed the dates of the ragwort pull are 13th July and 14th July.
6. To Discuss and decide on Lengths Man tasks for the following month (to include number of hours allocated per task):
EN suggested the top part (southern) of the Mark Way to the Leckford Road. The Brockley Warren footpath was also suggested.
7. Correspondence:
12/5/24 - Resident email re Common track and Bridge repair ([3624 11](#))
28/4/24 - R Nightingale re Tree Warden ([3624 13](#)) – MD has requested information from Insurers
28/5/24 - Resident report of Spikes in Purlygig river ([3624 25](#))
30/5/24 - HCC Update on Seasonal Vegetation Management on Public Rights of Way ([3624 26](#))
4/6/24 - Resident email re overgrown vegetation on WD ([1724 3](#))
5/6/24 – Query from Allotment Plot holder ' –Are there any plans to tackle the weeds in the unoccupied allotments? The one behind mine is in risk of taking my allotment over! There are stacks of brambles etc which are coming over...I suspect other people are having similar issues'. – Forwarded to TG for response
8. Questions from Public:
9. Any Other Business – For information only:
NH reported that Andy Smith would be someone COSC could possibly approach in future with a view to joining COSC. DG reported that Hampshire Rural Management who are doing the fencing on West Down are also keen to be considered for any other similar work needing doing.
10. Items for the next agenda:
11. Date of the next meeting – Scheduled date is Thursday 11 July 2024 at Poplar Dene, Village Street.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 20:10

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