

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL'S OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE (COSC)

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17 October 2024; Poplar Dene, Cart Lane, Chilbolton; 18:30

Present: Cllrs David Griffiths (Chairman) (DG)
Moya Grove (MG), Trish Heaton (TH), Emma Noble (EN)
Members of Public: None

1. Apologies: Nick Horne (NH), Terry Gilmore (TG)
2. Declaration of Interests: NONE
3. Approval of Minutes – Thursday 12 September 2024: These were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters Arising: Our thanks to Julian Hudson for his contributions and COSC are very sorry to lose him. Councillor David Hall has agreed to take over the new rural payment grants which Julian was dealing with.
5. Chairman's Report: None
6. 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 ([101024 2](#)).
 - ii. To discuss projects to be included in the 25/26 COSC Budget:
EN queried whether we should continue to pay for the hire of the village hall for the COSC meetings each month, when it is generally held at Poplar Dene. Also, the quote from Corinne for the footpath improvements on the rhubarb patch of £973, did not appear to have been mentioned in the finance reports.
 - B) Allotments – Prior to the meeting TG had nothing to report.
TH queried whether TG has managed to find a replacement volunteer to report back on allotment issues. TG to confirm.
 - C) Common – Prior to the meeting MG circulated the attached report ([101024 1](#))
 - I. Update on Purlygig Bridge:
MG reported that she has been in touch with Nick Gibbs of Enviro-Aqua. At his suggestion MG contacted Alison Graham-Smith (AG-S) of Natural England to confirm the type of gravel which is suitable. AG-S was out of the office, but it was agreed that MG should contact her colleague.

Nick Gibbs has sent the quotes which are rather high. COSC agreed that two further quotes should be sought (contractor recommendations provided by Wessex River Trust (WRT)) in order that grants can be applied for.

WRT have provided two gravel types for our temporary fix. The one with 'fines' (small particles) would be best as it will lock together better. DG will contact Rick Nightingale to chop down an ash tree for the temporary solution and MG will contact the house on the Common who may have a suitable ash tree that may need felling.

Agreed and Signed (Chairman)

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There is £4742 currently in the ringfenced fund for the Common, so it should be possible to pay for some gravel for our temporary footpath fix.

MG raised whether WRT should be asked if they would be willing to contribute to the cost of repairs. COSC agreed that MG should contact them to ask what help they could provide and what possibilities there are for grants.

MG met with Rob West to decide what areas are to be cut on the Common. He will use a light weight cutter. Adam Coutts has put the cattle collection pens on the Common and MG has contacted him to see when the cattle will be collected, because they should ideally be left out until after the cut has been done, so that the cattle have the opportunity to eat 'the arisings'. So far she has not managed to speak to him.

MG reported that Sparsholt visited on 4th October and they have provided excellent feedback. There have been 7 successful visits this year.

Regarding the French Drain at the Old Cottage, MG has provided the instructions given to BT when they did work, regarding soil replacement. This was sent to the Parish Clerk to forward on to the owners and the same advice applies to the French Drain works.

II. Update on Sleeper Bridge repair:

Work is now complete. Clerk awaiting invoice from Huttons and will then request contribution from Old Inn Cottage.

MG reported that George Marits provided an email with pictures and he will raise it at the flood advisory group because Huttons appears to have blocked up one of the gulleys underneath.

D) Machinery Maintenance: Nothing to report.

E) Parish Paths:

EN reported that the very top of the Mark Way up to Leckford has been cut back, presumably by HCC.

F) Village Greens:

DG reported that Stocks Green has now been fully cut. Also, Andy Bond has quoted to repair Rectory Green damaged by Southern Water's lorries and this bill will be forwarded on to Southern Water.

G) War Memorial Playing Fields –

I. Update on Wild Flower areas: To be decided at a later date.

II. Update on play equipment repairs following annual inspection: No information to date.

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- III. Update on communications with Vita Play re play equipment timbers: The Clerk sent communications between CPC and Vita Play regarding failed timber and all Annual Play Area Inspection Reports on 9/9/24 to Mr Burgess of Vita Play. A chasing email was sent on 3/10/24 as a response has not yet been received.
No information to date.
- IV. MG requested that any changes to the padlock number should go through the Parish Clerk.
- V. DG reported that Grass and Grounds have now been paid in full for cutting the Playing Field. Some of the grass seems to be patchy and dead. DG suggested meeting with Grass and Grounds to see if it can be rectified. DG will liaise. TH suggested that the Parish Council be asked to consider giving the football team two free games as a gesture of goodwill.
- VI. Regarding the email from Corinne the Countryside Ranger for repairs to the rhubarb / butterbur area, DG will forward this to the Parish Clerk indicating that COSC recommend approving the estimate she has given.
- VII. DG will liaise with Rick Nightingale to see if 30% or so can be removed of the ash tree above the container, rather than the whole tree.
- VIII. Regarding the damage to the basketball hoop, DG will contact a tradesman who has helped make a gate for us in the past to see whether he can make a metal basketball hoop.

H) West Down:

- I. MG reported that Rob West is awaiting confirmation of what needs doing as he would like to do the Common and West Down at the same time.
- II. DG reported that Simon Martin has cut back side growth along the concrete road and in the West Down Car Park.
- III. DG has contacted all the various people who have been volunteering in the past for the working party, but most are unavailable or only occasionally available, so it is may not worth continuing. EN will cut the banks in her own time if a brush cutter can be made available. DG proposes that the bulk of the work previously done by volunteers should be done by Simon Martin / Rick Nightingale. Simon Martin has a mulching machine. The machines probably can't cut the banks. Also the vegetation along the fence needs cutting back to prevent climbing plants pulling the fencing over. EN raised that the note should be taken out of the Parish Magazine if the working party is to cease. MG will contact the U3A group to see if there are any volunteers.
- IV. DG reported that Southern Water has taken responsibility for removal of the barrier to Test Valley Farm and will pay for a replacement. A replacement will be arranged once it has been confirmed that HCC agree that it is not a right of way. This is currently under discussion at HCC.

I) Tree Warden report: Nothing to report.

- 7. To Discuss and decide on Lengths Man tasks for the following month (to include number of hours allocated per task): All funds have now been allocated. New funds will be available in May 2025, if HCC renew scheme.

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8. Correspondence:
8/9/24 - Wherwell Resident proposal for repair to Test Way/Purlygig Bridge ([71024_4](#)) – See Common report
11/9/24 - WRT re Problems with the restoration on Chilbolton Common ([71024_5](#))
18/9/24 - SW response re West Down barrier ([71024_8](#)) – Payment yet to be received
24/9/24 - HCC email to DD re Chilbolton Cow Common Purlygig bridge ([71024_9](#))
9. Questions from Public: None
10. Any Other Business – For information only:
11. Items for the next agenda: To discuss 2025/26 budget for CPC approval
12. Date of the next meeting – Scheduled date is Thursday 14 November 2024 at Poplar Dene, Village Street.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 7:51