

Chilbolton Parish Council

Chilbolton Open Spaces Committee

DRAFT Minutes of Meeting held on 21st July 2022 at 18:30 at Poplar Dene

Present

Moya Grove (MG), David Griffiths (DG), Emma Noble (EN), Trish Heaton (TH), Julian Hudson (JH), Nick Horne (NH) and on behalf of CPC Geoff Cockram (GC), Tony Ewer (TE)

Apologies

Edward Painter (EP), Terry Gilmour (TG), Rick Frank (RF), Moya Grove (MG) apologised as she will be late

Members of the public present

None

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 9th June ([Thursday 9 June 2022](#)) were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising

Matters arising are covered under the main headings below:

Finance

A finance report was provided by the Parish Clerk ([72122 1](#))

NH questioned whether the Little Island money was still being ringfenced for the Mayfly river crossing. TE confirmed that confirmation will need to be sought from CPC, but as this project is now unlikely to go ahead this money may well be released, possibly to CWMPF. It amounts to around £5,000.

Allotments

GC confirmed that the water supply had run out following the spell of dry weather and that TG had looked into getting a stand pipe installed via Southern Water but the costs seemed prohibitive. COSC agreed that no action will be taken unless there are complaints from allotment holders.

Chilbolton Cow Common

Report provided by MG ([72122 2](#))

[Update on Wessex River Trust proposal](#)

Work is likely to start in September but there have been no further updates. Wessex River Trust will provide information boards.

Update on Common Information Boards

TE confirmed that estimates are being sought.

Update on Common ladder boards

Moya suggested 'Ground Nesting Birds – Important Habitat' could go in the gap on the current sign. Agreed by COSC.

TE confirmed that he has written to Caroline Noakes MP as the CROW Act, SSSI etc give lots of rights, but none of these give any information about how to manage or enforce them. It is hoped that she will direct the concerns to the relevant department.

Update on redesign of the Common gravel area – J Hudson

TE summarised the main issues regarding the Common car park like so: having an area where there are deliveries, parking and a through road is always going to lead to difficulties. There are also complaints being raised by Common residents regarding bin collections and where bins need to be left for collecting. MG confirmed the bin lorry doesn't go down to the cottages, the operatives go and collect the bins by hand.

Prior to the meeting TE had proposed a second gate at the bottom of Joys Lane, making use of the current equestrian access gate and sweeping round the car park to the cottages. This route would be fenced off in some way to allow access for residents, bin lorries, emergency vehicles, deliveries etc and this idea was discussed by COSC. JH provided a technical diagram of the proposed layout in line with TE's suggestions ([Revised Option for Gravel Area](#)). COSC raised concerns that converting the equestrian gate to a through road would potentially be difficult and costly because there is a spring and a ditch in that area, the road surface isn't suitable and there is overhanging growth.

COSC formulated a new plan in which the equestrian gate was not required but meaning more land may be required for the car park area. TE asked if a piece of land could be 'swapped' from the parking area and given back from the other side of the gate. MG confirmed that Natural England (NE) would not allow this and that the ex-car park land would take a long time to return to a natural state.

DG asked JH to look into whether this new plan is feasible and provide an updated diagram. If it is feasible only with additional land we would then consider whether we can obtain that land. If not, we should go back to the first plan.

MG raised concerns that laying out parking spaces suggests that that the area is a car park and NE are not in favour of this. However COSC agreed that some kind of parking indications (sleepers / posts etc) would be needed as currently not everyone parks in a herringbone fashion.

JH asked about removing the tree noted on the diagram which would allow for more parking, but COSC were not in favour of this.

DG raised the issue of shutting the new Common gate and understood that it was only to be shut in extreme circumstances. DG considers that the decision on whether or not to shut the gate should not be at the discretion of Common residents because there are not enough volunteers to man the top of Joys Lane so to shut the gate would cause traffic issues on Joys lane. Also, shutting the Common gate disadvantages people with limited mobility.

DG summarised that COSC accepted there have been problems with too many people parking on the Common, and there may be grounds for a limited gate closure when the weather is hot, on school holidays and weekends. There needs to be a clear policy on gate closure with consideration given to when it can be closed, who is to close it and with the interests of all parties considered to ensure the decision is balanced. TE confirmed that CPC will formulate a policy when they meet in a few weeks' time, COSC can second this and implement it as most of the knowledge lies with COSC members.

TE confirmed that the meeting which had been proposed on the weekend of 23rd/24th July to discuss gate closure has already been cancelled and the Common residents who were due to attend have been informed that the issue is under discussion tonight. TE conceded that there may be further complaints from Common residents until the policy is drawn up and implemented but that shutting the gate this weekend without giving notice is not an option.

DG confirmed he would be happy for Common residents to shut the two wooden gates in the evening, but permission will need to be sought from CPC if they want to lock these gates. DG will liaise with the owners of New Inn to establish if gate closure is enough, or whether they have had problems with people opening the gates and going on to cause trouble.

Update on Azolla on Common

MG reported that she found reference in some old paperwork to Azolla being present on the Common in 2012. As there has been no significant spread the risk from this species seems minimal.

To discuss recommendation for Monkey Flower found on Common

MG reported that there were no serious issues with monkey flower.

To discuss and decide on people metal detecting on Common

NH raised a point that the metal detecting permits already issued are in perpetuity as no end date is given (to Mrs D Hudson). COSC and CPC agree that metal detecting should not be permitted on the Common except in cases where there is a good reason eg to recover recent loss of jewellery. Permits should be given with a time limit and a stipulation of no digging.

Educational Access

MG reported that there was a successful visit by Rookwood School to the Common, but Wherwell School have pulled out. Sparsholt College have three visits booked in but if these do not take place we may not qualify for the Higher Level Stewardship Countryside Grant. MG confirmed she has sent many letters but there have been few replies and many have pulled out.

Machinery Maintenance

It was noted that the clutch was left on on the beast, which can lead to the clutch getting stuck on, and the only resolution to this is to take it apart. This was noted for reference only as currently no members of COSC operate the beast.

Parish Paths

TH reported that the Mark Way has been cut back very well, including further up past the flint store. A thank you will be sent by DG to HCC.

DG reported that Ian Daubney was very quick to respond to his request to cut back Whitelands path and he did some other areas as well.

A MOP tripped and cut themselves badly on the Purleygig Bridge on a protruding nail. RF went and hammered some of the nails in. Abbey Sullivan at HCC has arranged for some minor repairs to be done imminently and they have the longer term larger repairs in hand. CPC are not responsible for maintaining this bridge.

Village Greens

Nothing to report.

War Memorial Playing Field

Report provided by NH ([72122 3](#))

NH reported that the container lighting has come away from the ceiling. He has met with Ed Treadwell and they have devised a repair which should avoid having to get an electrician in. DG confirmed he was happy for wood to be purchased for battening.

NH confirmed there are also plans to repair the gates to stop them from binding. In the absence of any evidence of rabbit damage the netting at the bottom will be removed but with a temporary wire arrangement available which can be hung on quickly if rabbits appear.

NH considers that the pavilion roof looks like it may need work in future but a proper inspection is required.

TH reported that four companies have been approached to quote for the Adventure Tower. The average cost is around £15,000 for two towers or £22,000 for three towers including installation flooring etc. The Development Group will now be looking to get representatives from these companies out for more detailed quotes and recommendations.

TH also reported that we will approach EP or George Whitfield to ask for their help to move the mound and hopefully the slide can be salvaged, although there will be a period without a slide. DG to liaise with George Whitfield to see whether he will consider helping with the moving of the mound.

TH confirmed that we have £15,000 available for the Adventure Tower project from Little Island Productions and we are hopeful we can again double this with the Community Asset Fund. As with the table tennis table (TTT), CPC will have to pay the full amount and then 50% will be credited back by the Community Asset Fund.

After the Adventure Tower project is complete funds will need to be found to complete further CWMPF proposed improvements. TH will draft a report to be given to CPC regarding the current proposals for the Adventure Tower.

EN provided some posters relating to hire of bats and balls for the TTT which the Parish Clerk has laminated and COSC were shown. One is for the shop the other to be positioned near to the TTT. NH has ordered bats and balls and the signs will go up once these have been delivered.

DG would like to congratulate NH and TH on the installation of the TTT.

West Down

DG reported that the dragons teeth are yet to be installed. Glynn Evans has a report showing that the electricity cables are on the bottle bank side. It was discussed whether the Lengthsman could do this work. DG is going to ask the Lengthsman.

There was a ragwort pull arranged for the 9th / 10th July but the Hampshire Conservation Volunteers pulled out. Only DG attended on the Saturday and only he and one other volunteer attended on the Sunday. Since then volunteers have been doing some in their own time. EN reported that it had mainly been done now. MG asked if we wanted to request Hampshire Conservation Volunteers as this needed actioning in September. COSC agreed that we should request them.

MG noted that David Hall is a governor at Test Valley School and last year they discussed the possibility of students on the Countryside Management Course doing volunteer work in the village. DG would like to know what work children can do due to the school hours and whether they are allowed to use sharp implements etc. COSC agreed it was a good idea and David Hall should approach the school.

To discuss and decide on tasks for the Lengthsman to be carried out in August (inc. time to complete task/s)

As above, if possible he could do the dragons teeth on the opposite side of the road to the bottle bank. DG will liaise with the Parish Clerk to see if she has anything outstanding.

Bowden Tree Survey

Glynn Evans has provided a report and considers that much of the tree work can be done by villagers. There is no urgent work required, but some of the work that cannot be managed by volunteers will be costly.

Correspondence

NH wanted to raise an objection to the letter sent to David Saunders ([11722 2](#), [6622 12 A](#), [6622 12 B](#) [6622 12 South Corner](#)) and considers that CPC should not be making recommendations as to the boundary of the CWMPF using a map printed from the internet and without taking legal advice. NH does not agree that the boundary is as indicated in the letter. The land is a village asset and legal and COSC advice should have been sought before the letter was sent. NH is going to circulate an email for COSC to consider and present to CPC.

Questions from Public

None

Any other Business

none

Items for the next Agenda

Date of the next meeting

Scheduled date is 11th August at Poplar Dene, Village Street, Chilbolton.