

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on Wednesday 17 August 2022; 19:00 at Chilbolton Village Hall
DRAFT

Present: Cllrs Tony Ewer (Chairman) (TE), David Griffiths (Vice-Chairman) (DG), Geoff Cockram (GC), Rick Franke (RF), David Hall (DH), Sue Larcombe (SL), George Marits (GM), Mandy Denyer (Clerk) (MD)
Chilbolton Open Spaces Committee (COSC) members – Julia Hudson (JH), Moya Grove (MG), Nick Horne (NH), Trish Heaton (TH) and Emma Noble (EN)
Members of Public – 34 (30 of whom indicated that they are Chilbolton residents, 2 from Wherwell, 1 from Weyhill and 1 didn't indicate place of residence).
(A form that attendees were asked to complete on entry to the meeting, showing where they are from, how often they visit the Common and for what purpose etc. is attached [here](#). Names have been redacted).

TE welcomed and thanked all for coming and outlined the purpose of this meeting.
For information purposes only, TE informed those present that it had been agreed that the football team, who use The Playing Field for training on Wednesday evenings, could open and leave open the gate to the Common this evening. A decision will be made later in the meeting if the gate is to be closed again tomorrow morning.

- 1. Apologies:** Cllr Kate Bradley (KB)
- 2. Declarations of Interest:** NONE
- 3. To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2022:** These were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 4. Report of monitoring visits to Common by Cllrs and COSC members and any reported problems:**
The [attached record](#) was circulated prior to the meeting.
TE informed that a record was being kept of any report/comment from anyone who wanted to make a report of anything that they saw on the Common. TE asked MG to report on the collation of the reports given.

MG introduced herself as a long term member of COSC that was involved in the original application to make the Common a SSSI. Her view of the Common is that we have a precious resource, an island eco-system not connected to other eco-systems to recharge it, and so we have a moral and legal duty to protect the Common. We have visitors to the Common and there is a bridleway right across the Common. Cars are not allowed on a bridleway, but we give them permission to park on the Common.
MG has kept a record of every report sent to her from 16/7/22 to 13/8 (attached above). But it is very patchy, so can't actually be used as data as there is not enough coherence in the record. However, what we have seen is that on hot sunny days, weekends and during the week (particularly Wednesday and Thursday's it seems) that 50 or more people are at Purleygig and up to 17 people downstream, all having a lovely time picnicking and paddling. Their cars, normally, are responsibly parked. But this doesn't actually show the problems that have emerged and been encountered on and off of the Common. From the reports MG has been given, most people behave reasonably.
The most important factor that comes out of this monitoring report is that, after the gate was closed (Friday 12/8 at 11pm) there were just as many visitors on the Common on Saturday 13/8 as there were the previous 2 Saturdays when the gate was open. On the morning of Saturday 13/8 there were 31 people reported on the Common, in the afternoon it was reported that there were 52 people on the Common and at 5pm there were still 52 people.
MG has received reports that on occasion there have been 15 cars parked on the Common. On some occasions there have been 20 cars. There is not enough room for 20 cars to park without blocking access.
There have been reports of inflatables in the river and even a gas BBQ being used behind a parked car, and despite being asked the person refused to put it out.
BBQs of course became a very important issue as we moved into the extraordinary fire risk last Sunday (14/8).

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Although we don't have enough data to prove anything, the data we do have actually confirms what we thought; very hot day's means there is a huge pressure on the Common.

We don't want to stop people from enjoying themselves. The Common is one of very a few places where the River Test can be accessed. The majority of the River Test is privately owned and reserved for fisherpeople. We don't want to close it and we can't close it. But we can adjust the number of visitors.

One of the points that came out the reports given to MG was that atmosphere on the Common was very nice when the number of visitors was low but got heated later. There were also lots of families with children visiting the Common and that shouldn't be discouraged.

This precious, fragile resource is only capable of recovering up to a certain point. The Common is a SSSI because not only the very large number of flora but also because of the natural banks to the Purleygig stream. Which is why we ask people not to go onto the river banks.

MG asked for any questions:-

D Foster - Is there any distinction between the number of visitors as to how many where Chilbolton residents or visitors from elsewhere. MG – No, we didn't conduct a survey of the visitors.

Where were people parked when the gate was closed – There was no record kept of this, but DG confirmed that there were a lot parked along Village Street (which incidentally reduced traffic speeds and may have contributed to the village shop being busy (as confirmed to DG by N Bond)). Others at the meeting reported that 3 or 4 cars were seen parked at the entrance on the West Down (WD) drive to the WD car park.

Was there any monitoring of cars parked at WD? – No, there was no monitoring of WD car park. It was reported at this meeting that at least 8 cars were seen parked there on Sunday (14/8). GC reported that there were more cars parked at WD then prior to the gate closure on the Common.

DG asked if anyone at the meeting had access to their properties obstructed after the gate was closed? There was no response.

DG informed that there are no parking restrictions on Village Street and therefore it is legal to park there. But it is unlawful to park in such a way to obstruct the highway.

A James - in his opinion, the Common is not in excessive risk of wild fire, the Met Office warning is a general warning over a certain area. The Common is a water meadow and the proximity of the river and the nature of the soil means that the water content of the soil is high across the whole Common. This can be observed by feeling it and the fact that there is green growth at ground level across the whole Common. Growing vegetation is quite difficult to ignite, even when it has been cut and left for a week in the sun. He is of the opinion that the Common is not a high fire risk site.

Another member of the public reported 2 vans and a car parked at the bottom of Joys Lane on Saturday morning, when the gate was closed. The drivers were having a debate about the fact the chain had gone and there was now a substantial gate, so they couldn't force the chain off and gain access. They discussed leaving their vehicles there. But thankfully they didn't.

DG – Joys Lane is a public highway, to block or obstruct the highway is an offense and should be reported to the Police. The Police may not come, but the more reports they get the more likely they will attend.

DG reported that a motorcycle had been parked in front of the horse access gate. CPC will need to put a notice on the Joys Lane side of the gate asking that the access gate be kept clear (there is already a notice on the Common side of the gate).

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The signage at the top of Joys Lane doesn't point out that there is nowhere to turn if the gate is closed. Also, visitors think that 'resident access only' means residents of Chilbolton and not just Joys Lane and the Common residents. It was suggested that 'NO TURNING' be added to notices and that 'resident access only' be removed. Cllrs noted this point and would consider this on further notices.

TE ended this discussion and moved onto the next item of the agenda.

5. Discuss and decide on improvements to permit easy access for horses onto and off of Common:

Prior to the meeting Cllr Griffiths notes of a meeting held on 7/8/22, with horse riders and a representative from the British Horse Society (BHS), were circulated ([5922_25c](#) and [photo 25d](#)).

DG reported that he met various persons at the cattle grid on Sunday the 7/8 having received an email from C Lane. She wanted to meet with DG to discuss various problems that horse riders are having exercising their right to use the bridleway across the Common. Present was also a representative, Gail Johnson, from the BHS, as well as other local horse riders. C Lane was mounted on her horse and was therefore able to demonstrate the various problems.

The first problem was that CPC have hung the new gate on the left hand side of the cattle grid and this makes it less easy for horse riders. This is a simple matter that we can rectify ourselves, at no cost to the parish, by repositioning the gate on the opposite side.

The handle of the horse access gate is too short, if about a foot of metal is welding on, riders what be able to operate the gate easily without having to dismount.

The litter bin and other obstructions have been removed. The problem now is that cars park so close to the new gate that it is difficult to get a horse through. We propose to put in dragons teeth to prevent cars parking in a way that obstructs access to horse riders.

Moving onto the Purleygig bridge – DG had removed some of the Willow tree that had blown down in one of the recent storms that was obstructing the bridge but part of the tree is still blocking the bridleway. COSC can and will remove this obstruction.

Moving onto the bridleway gate by the Long Bridge – There is a weight on this gate. The reason being is that people going in and out of that gate to access the river leave the gate open and cattle could escape. The weight does its job but equally it makes it difficult for horse riders when they are trying to open the gate when mounted. What the solution appears to be is to remove the gate and replace it with a wider gate (the width of which is yet to be determined). That will of course be a cost to that and quotes will be obtained.

There is foliage overhanging the bridleway above the river. This can be cleared.

As demonstrated by one of the attendees at the meeting who was on a large electric bicycle, it is difficult to get a bicycle through or over the kissing gate at the end of the Long Bridge that give access to the Common. At the moment we are not sure what to do about that, but some thought will be given to a solution.

The BHS rep provided DG with an email address of a contact for a new access grant scheme put in place by HCC Countryside Access Parish Access Partnership. Apparently you can get up to £5000 un-matched funding to improve public rights of way. CPC will be making an application to this fund, and any other funds that we find available, to help fund what we regard as sensible and appropriate improvements to the bridleway across the Common.

DG asked for any questions: -

Was there any mention at this meeting (7/8) about the barbed wire wrapped around the Private sign and a section close to the gate that horses use by the Long Bridge? DG – no this wasn't mentioned, but DG will investigate.

TE asked if there were any objections to CPC proceeding with these improvements as recommended by COSC. There were no objections from the members of the public or from Cllrs present.

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C Lane asked when will the new gate be repositioned? She understood that the replacement gate by Long Bridge will take some time, but until the new gate by the cattle grid is moved she is not able to use the Common bridleway. DG informed that RF has agreed to do this as soon as possible. (J Rowles has agreed the use of an extension lead to his property so that power tools may be used).

TE thanked DG, and the people that have helped DG, in preparing these proposals put forward this evening.

6. To discuss and decide on the redesign of the Common gravel area where cars park:

Prior to the meeting two draft designs were circulated ([plan one](#)/V3R2 and [plan two](#)/V5)

TE explained that CPC have been thinking long and hard about what to do about parking on the Common. CPC own the land. It doesn't fall under police control because it is private land, although public have access to it. Natural England (NE) doesn't want any parking on a SSSI site. We traditionally have allowed parking there but TE's interpretation of NE's rules and regulations is that they tend not to discourage parking if it is for disabled access. But the problem is that CPC has no way of enforcing who parks there. And if they park badly, there is no point in calling the police and CPC has no authority to do very much about it. So what CPC propose to do is improve the physical layout of the gravel area to prevent cars being parked irresponsibly. CPC has to take into consideration that those who live on the Common have a right of access across the Common to their properties.

TE asked JH, who has been working hard on the designs, to explain the two plans that are being considered this evening.

JH introduced himself as a member of COSC. His day job is a Transport Planning and Highways Engineering consultant.

The two plans being considered this evening are Version 3, Revision 2 (V3R2 -plan one above) and Version 5 (V5 - plan two above).

V3R2 is the latest version of the layout that has previously been discussed (and agreed in principal) at the CPC meeting held on 10 January '22 and this is version of the plan is the preferred and proposed plan of COSC.

This is broadly the same as the current layout but there are several key changes which are: -

The new gate will be moved to the opposite side and dragons teeth will be installed on the Common behind the horse access gate placed at 2 metres apart to improve access for horse riders.

The parking spaces shown on the plan are broadly the same as what is there now and are at an angle to allow room for manoeuvring. The spaces will not be physically marked out because it is a gravelled area, so instead a railway sleeper has been shown at the rear of each space as a guideline as to where you are supposed to park.

The railway sleepers will not be intrusive and could be removed easily if necessary.

The design uses a tracking diagram to show that a refuse vehicle that is 11.2 metres long (which is currently the largest refuse vehicle that you will find) can enter that space, turn the vehicle and leave in a forward gear.

The gate to The Old Inn and other properties at that side of the Common has been moved forward. And alterations have been made to the posts to the east of that gate so that pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders can get through there.

The hatched brown area on the design indicates areas that can be returned to their nature state over time.

V5 – With this plan the cattle grid gate has been positioned further into the Common and a low fence will be erected around the parking area.

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Whilst this will guarantee access to properties on the Common, to ensure access for a refuse vehicle or any other large vehicle through the gate, there is a problem with encroachment on to the edge of the Common. Which is one of the main reasons why this not the favoured option of COSC.

The gate will also need to be much bigger (5.3 metres, as shown on the plan). This is because a large vehicle will require more width to be able to swing around. This will make the new, already installed, gate redundant. There will be larger potential for tree planting etc in the long term with this plan, but plan V3R2 will retain the existing protected area in its entirety.

A member of the public asked how many parking spaces will there be with these options? JH – there are 7 parking spaces on each plan.

Is that the same as what is there now? JH – No. At present the maximum number of cars is around 15. Any more cars parking there means that they will have parked irresponsibly.

Do the 7 spaces include disable parking? JH -the 7 spaces does include disabled spaces. Because it is a gravel area we cannot formally park them out. But we can provide a little more space so that in either option there are 2 disabled parked spaces. We can place a sign on the railway sleeper, or on a post, to show that the space is for disabled parking. However, we would not be able to enforce this and would have to reply on people not parking in that space.

JH asked if there were any more questions: -

J Rowles had an overall management proposal to put forward to CPC. In brief this proposal was as follows: -

1. To leave the car parking area open at all times, except in set circumstances.
2. To arrange a professional contractor/agent to manage the parking area.
3. Issue passes for disabled specifically for the Common having been vetted by CPC, in addition to the blue badge scheme.
4. In Joys Lane, install 10mph speed limit and install a flashing sign that shows the vehicles speed to the driver.
5. Put traffic calming bumps in Joys Lane.
6. To invite BT and the Abbots Mitre into any discussions about professional management of the parking area, as they may be able to benefit from such a scheme. The Abbots Mitre have issues with parking and BT has one space available to them on Joys Lane.
7. Use the Chalk Pit (Allotments) for car parking.
8. Remove the various signage scattered around the Common parking area and replace with one new decent sign.

TE thanked JH and COSC for all their hard work in discussing various options over several months leading to the proposals put forward this evening.

CPC hopes that with a change to the physical layout of the area, a bad situation can be made better.

CPC will consider J Rowles proposal at a later date. The first phase will be to improve the physical layout and then CPC may have to consider a way to manage the area.

COSC have proposed V3R2 for simplicity, low cost and less impact on the SSSI. V5 will be more expensive, and at this stage TE believes that it will not achieve any more than V3R2. To proceed with COSC recommendation we would like to make a decision this evening.

TE asked the members of the public if anyone would be against this plan.

NH said that without any indication of the cost, and knowing that CPC has to be careful with Parish funds, he thinks it only fair to everyone to have some indication of the costs involved before any exercise like this is undertaken.

DG – CPC are proposing to use a local contractor (G Whitefield (GW)) who has proved himself time and time again with work he has undertaken for CPC on the Common and on WD and his labour has always been cheaper

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than other bigger contractors. Unfortunately, GW doesn't provide any quotes, but DG will ask him for an estimate to how much he thinks the plans will cost. That said, DG guesses that plan V3R2 will be in the region of £250 and V5 considerably more as a new larger gate and fencing will need to be installed.

DH – There are ringfenced funds for use on the Common and CPC and COSC have a lot of experience of making sure that these funds are used wisely and sensibly controlled. Plan V3R2 is affordable and within the funds purely dedicated for the Common.

P Hatter - as a relative new comer, moving to the village about a year ago, what struck him most about the Common was that the signage looks very 'Mickey Mouse'. So outsider coming in will think that this is just a bunch of people putting up signs to stop you having a good time. If, within this proposal, proper highway grade signs are installed, that make the signage look more important, people may take it more seriously. He also said if you are going to do this and spend some money, in his experience CCTV is a really good deterrent. It might be worth putting in strategically placed CCTV, which signage to say that this is for Health and Safety of visitors and the environment. CCTV will also allow CPC to collect data as to how many cars are parked etc etc.

GC – Although plan V5 is more expensive, it does give a more formal designation of the parking area and provides a clear access route to all 4 properties on the Common. CPC must be aware that it has a duty to protect the access to those properties.

F Rabeneck – His concern with plan V3R2 is that the parking area is not particularly designated. At the moment parking on the Common can be pretty chaotic. V5 does demarcate the spaces much more clearly.

A James – on V5, I'm not sure how pedestrians and certainly horses will be able to access the Common when the gate is shut and when cars will park close to the barriers. JH – in plan V5, there will be a gap in the low fence in roughly the portion of the culvert to allow pedestrians and horses to access the Common. There could be more gaps, there doesn't need to be a continuous fence around the parking area. These gaps will be wide enough for horses to pass through but not vehicles.

A member of the public asked if the gate in plan V5 will be closed/locked and will horses etc be able to access the Common through it? TE – the gate will be closed and can be opened by residents of the Common, refuge vehicles and emergency vehicles to allow access. There will be gaps in the low fencing to allow horses and pedestrians access to the Common.

MG – In Plan V5, the new gate will be moved forward onto the Common, which will mean the existing gate that has just been installed will be redundant. The new one will be positioned on the far side of the parking area. So you go down Joys Lane and into the parking area and if people want to go onto the Common access will be through that gate. There are 3 problems with this. Firstly, it makes the new gate redundant. Secondly, if the gate is openable for residents, deliveries, horses and refuse lorry etc it will be openable to all who may wish to park beyond the gate. And thirdly, although the Common at that point appears to be only scrub, we are not allowed to intrude any further onto the Common at all. So these are some of the issues with plan V5 and this is why COSC are recommending plan V3R2.

DG – plus plan V3R2 will be significantly cheaper.

TE – For various reasons COSC are proposing V3R2. TE added that this is an evolving project and will go on for years until we have finally come up with a solution that works for all. But for the time being, V3R2 will provide a big improvement to what we have already got.

TE asked members of the public for their support to proceed with plan V3R2.

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Some members of the public had said that they haven't seen plan V3R2, so TE suspended the meeting and asked those that have a copy of the plan (that was available on entering the meeting) to pass them to those who haven't seen the plan.

During this break C Lane approached TE with a plan that she would like considered. TE informed that CPC have been discussing plans for over a year and there have been a number of public meetings on the matter. Unfortunately, CPC cannot consider her plan, at this time, because firstly, it would not have been properly considered by COSC or CPC and secondly, if new ideas keep coming, a decision and improvements will never be made. Therefore, at this meeting this evening the two plans (V3R2 and V5) are being discussed and plan V3R2 is the proposed way forward.

After the brief break the meeting resumed.

TE asked that COSC consider the management issues (and the costs involved) raised by J Rowles and to report back to CPC.

F Barrie – With regards to the Joys Lane highway proposals, as the former Chair of CPC, she had discussed highways matters (such as that that J Rowles is proposing). HCC highways have nil funding in their budget to do anything in the village. Any physical changes to Joys Lane would have to be done by HCC Highways, including any new highways signage. So anything proposed for Joys Lane is not going to be agreed by HCC Highways.

DG recapped on the proposal put to CPC at this meeting by J Rowles.

Item 2 (to use a professional parking management scheme) would incur costs, it would not be done for free.

Item 3 (to issue disabled parking permits) – during the break, a member of the public suggested that the area be for disabled parking only. This can be considered by COSC, but DG pointed out that consideration will also have to be made to those families with younger children.

Item 4 (speed indicator signage) – COSC and CPC have considered this previously, however these are very expensive.

Item 5 (traffic calming bumps) – this was addressed by F Barrie. HCC Highways would have to agree and they don't.

Item 6 (invite BT and Abbots Mitre into discussions about using a professional parking management scheme. COSC can consider this.

Item 7 (use Allotments as parking area) – is an interesting idea, but beyond the remit of this evening's meeting. But COSC can consider this.

Item 8 (parking signage) – When the signs were put up 2 years ago they looked nice and bright, but of course they have faded and are now looking tatty. We can and will consider, as pointed out by P Hatter, using better more professional looking signage.

TE asked that the meeting continued as on the agenda.

After all the discussion's TE summarised the position of CPC with regards to this project.

CPC are trying to improve the gravel area, in an affordable way, so that it is easier to control parking in difficult times and access to the properties on the Common are obstructed less (hopefully not at all). CPC may have to introduce management measures in the future.

The first step to achieving this is to go ahead with plan V3R2.

The second step will be for COSC to look into management of the area. This should also include investigating the proposal to restrict the area to disabled parking only. As pointed out earlier, the problem with that is that visitors to the Common with young children/babies will also need access. There will also be others that will require access that will need to be considered.

TE asked if there was any good reason why a decision cannot be made this evening to proceed with the physical work in implementing plan V3R2? There is no response.

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TE asked members of the public, by show of hands, who is in support of plan V3R2 – The majority raised their hand.

TE asked members of the public, by show of hands, who is against plan V3R2 – one person raised their hand.

TE asked Cllrs to vote to proceed to plan V3R2 – all Cllrs present voted unanimously that work to implement plan V3R2 should go ahead.

- 7. To discuss factors to be taken into account for the closing of the Common cattle grid gate/barrier and**
- 8. To decide on Policy for the closing of the Common cattle grid gate/barrier**

TE informed that the gate to the Common was closed at 11pm on Friday 12/8 after COSC had recommended its closure due to the Met Offices’ warning of exceptional fire risk over the weekend.

A decision now needs to be made, now that the gate is installed, under what circumstances it should be closed without the need of a special meeting that would require the statutory notice period and a published agenda.

CPC don’t really want to close the gate at all and appreciate that closing the gate causes problems for residents not only those that live on the Common but also elsewhere in the village, but hopefully we can improve this over time.

TE asked for any comments as to when the gate should be closed.

GM – The original reason for the gate being installed was so that CPC can do work on the Common without being hindered by parked vehicles. We have to maintain the gravel area (and at the same time maintain the access tracks to the properties on the Common – for which the residents make a contribution towards to costs).

There have been occasions when tree works have been undertaken. And closing the gravel area also makes it easier to move cattle on and off of the Common.

The gate is a lot easier to manage than the chain and padlock that had been used previously.

Another considerations for closing the gate should be to prevent the Common being overtaken by travellers and extreme weather conditions and fire risk, such as that that we had last weekend.

DG - CPC do get notice if travellers are on the move and in the area. Closing the gate, when such notice is given within time, will make it more difficult for them to access the Common.

The Common residents have a legal right to access their properties and CPC has a responsibility to do it’s best to ensure that access.

The fire risk to properties is very real and emergency services may need access. In the past one of the properties on the Common was virtually destroyed by fire. It was only the prompt action of the fire brigade that prevented the neighbouring property also been damaged by the fire, as the fire brigade where able to pump water onto the house to prevent the fire from spreading. 3 of the 4 properties on the Common are thatched, and this makes them at greater risk to fire. So it is vital that the emergency services have unobstructed access to the properties. At least one of the residents of the Common is in very poor health, and the son of this person has expressed deep concern that an ambulance will not be able to get to the property in time because the access is being obstructed.

CPC have put up notices asking people not to park in certain places (it was noted that these signs are now tatty and need to be replaced) but when the weather is fine and there are holidays (e.g. Bank holidays and school holidays) the pressure on the Common increases and there are some people will ignore all sensible considerations and park in a very selfish way that blocks access for people living on the Common and blocks access of the emergency services.

The gate should not be shut ‘willy-nilly’. It should only be shut as a last resort.

There are situations when we can foresee that there is likely to be pressure on the Common (last weekend being an example). CPC should take these situations into account and need to be alert to when it is likely that there will be increased parking pressures on the Common. CPC should then close the gate. But it should be done very

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sparingly and after careful consideration, bearing in mind that some people will be adversely affected by such a decision.

There are plenty of other places around the village and on WD where people can park legally (provided they don't obstruct the highway).

He is very aware that disabled people would be adversely affected by the closing of the gate, but CPC has a duty to do all it can to preserve the safety and right of access for those living on the Common.

DH – Agreed with DG, that the gate should only be closed in extreme circumstances and CPC should take due consideration but should have the flexibility to act when these circumstances occur.

Another factor that needs consideration, is the sustained periods of anti-social behaviour (particularly during lockdown, fortunately less so this year). Consideration needs to be given to closing the gate at night time if we should experience this sort of behaviour again.

P Collis – confirmed that vehicles have been seen going down Joys Lane around 10pm and not leaving until around 2am.

F Rabeneck – One of the issues with the gate being closed is the uncertainty, is it opened or closed? Could CPC consider that the gate will be closed on certain dates such as summer Bank Holidays, when we all know that if the weather is fine there will be huge pressure on the Common and in the parking area. CPC could then advertise those dates well in advance?

TE asked if there are any other factors that CPC should take into account? There was no response. Although one person did suggest getting in touch with a friendly tractor driver that could move vehicles that are causing an obstruction. Doing this could be classed as criminal damage.

TE summarised that the feeling in the room was that there are a number of circumstances that should be taken into account by CPC and when the gate should be closed.

TE informed that a list of the factors for closing the gate that were discussed at this evening, will be included in the minutes of this meeting and how these will be implemented.

In brief those reasons are: -

If there is an emergency of some kind,

If travellers are in the area,

Sustained night-time anti-social behaviour,

Safety and working on the Common,

When we know there is going to be pressure on the Common due to nice weather during holidays.

When possible, CPC need to inform people in plenty of time that the gravel area is to be closed and there needs to be signage at the top of Joys Lane informing people the gravel area is closed and there is nowhere to turn on Joys Lane.

TE asked if members of the public were happy with what has been discussed – this was agreed.

TE asked if Cllrs agree to the factors for closing the gate as discussed this evening and with the policy in handling any closure – All Cllrs present agreed unanimously.

[POST MEETING – [Draft Policy \(V4\)](#) for the closure of the gravel area on the Common. To be discussed, amended (if necessary) and formally adopted at the 5/9/22 CPC meeting]

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Mandy Denyer (Clerk)

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on Wednesday 17 August 2022; 19:00 at Chilbolton Village Hall
DRAFT**

10. Public participation (3 minutes each):

J Rowles apologised for putting his proposal to CPC at such a late stage, but in his opinion, his proposal to use a professional parking management scheme would eliminate all the issues that have been discussed this evening. For CPC to employ a professional parking management agency, the whole village need to agree. Therefore, as there are so many people present this evening, J Rowles asked that those present could be asked for their opinion on the matter.

Although this proposal is not part of this evening's agenda and therefore no vote would formally recognised, TE agreed to ask those present for their opinion. If it could be done, would you support appointing a parking agent that would fine those that have parked in contravention to displayed parking rules?

By a show of hands, the majority of those present this evening were against such a scheme.

By a show of hands, only a couple of people agreed to such a scheme. E Painter added that CPC should consider this proposal if all else fails.

F Barrie – There is one query with such a proposal in that it is not just the villager's decision, NE would also have to agree. And they have very strong views that there should be no parking on the Common. If you have such a scheme, then the area will become a formal car park and NE will not support this. If NE is not in support of the SSSI status, it is important to remember that the grant funding that goes along with that status will no longer be available.

MG confirmed F Barrie's comments. The reason being, as soon as you get to the cattle grid you are on a bridleway and bridleways don't carry vehicular traffic. So by allowing cars onto the Common into the gravel area we are actually taking them onto the bridleway illegally. They don't have a legal right to be there at all.

Someone mentioned that on some maps there is a 'P' marked on the Common – MG informed that COSC and CPC have tried to get these removed. In fact, Google Maps have now removed the 'P'. There are other maps that do show a 'P' and we have been unable to get it removed.

TE asked if there were any more questions: -

Could any closure of the gate be advertised on social media? – TE informed that the recent closure was advertised on Facebook, but CPC will see if more social media advertising can be done.

One of the issues with using a professional management agency would be that they will want to make a profit. They would, surely, be unhappy that the currently available 15 spaces or so will be reduced to 7. 2 of which will undoubtedly be free because they will be reserved for disabled. And do we really want someone making money from our Common? JR – Professional management agency will not charge for parking, they will only fine those who have broken the parking rules and that would be a very big incentive to make people park responsibly.

TE – It is fairly clear from this discussion that there are legal reasons and practical reasons that a professional management agency should not be used.

TE again asked if anyone had any more comments.

On a slightly different matter, A James pointed out that on a recent agenda pack for a COSC meeting, the Common handout/leaflet said there was a BBQ area on WD. MG – this was an old version of the leaflet. MD said that it was her mistake that this version that had been linked.

There were no more questions from the public.

GC reminded TE that a decision was needed as to whether the Common gate should be closed again tomorrow morning.

TE – from the discussions this evening he thought it was pretty clear that the decision would be that the gate should remain open. Did anyone have any objections to that?

Signed and Agreed (Chairman)

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F Barrie asked what is the current fire risk lever from the Met Office? MD – as per the Met Office’s Fire Severity Index website ([Fsi - Met Office](#)) the risk level in Chilbolton is low.

There were no other questions on this matter. Therefore, TE asked the Cllrs to vote if the gate should remain open. All Cllrs present agreed unanimously.

DG informed that he would remove the barrier and signs at the top of Joys Lane on his home this evening.

TE asked P Collis to consider and report to COSC what he thought the signage at the top pf Joys Lane should say when the Common gate is closed.

There being no further business to discuss, TE thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20:50.

Signed and Agreed (Chairman)

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