

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL'S OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE (COSC)

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9 November 2023 at Poplar Dene, Cart Lane, Chilbolton; 18:30

PRESENT: David Griffiths (DG), Moya Grove (MG), Nick Horne (NH), Mandy Denyer (MD), Julian Hudson (JH), Emma Noble (EN), Trish Heaton (TH)

1. Apologies: Terry Gilmour (TG)
2. Declaration of Interests: None
3. Approval of Minutes – Thursday 13 September 2023: These were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters Arising:

COSC were very saddened to hear of the death of Abby Purver and would like to recognise the valuable contribution she made to COSC, in particular on behalf of the horse riding community.

DG noted that a Wherwell resident has expressed an interest in the old slide and tunnel following the removal of the slide mound. NH to get in touch to find out how much he is willing to contribute before making a decision.

NH would like an amendment noted to the Chairman's Report (below). It is not TVBC who does the playground inspection, but an outside company.

5. Update report from COSC Chairman:
 1. There was no meeting of COSC last month as only 3 persons could attend, including myself.
 2. Moya Grove will report on issues concerning the Common.
 3. Fishing Rights: We have received the latest draft deed. TE and myself will consult a solicitor before responding. At first glance it looks fine.
 4. Machine Maintenance: one brush cutter is currently being repaired as drive shaft broke. Emma working it too hard! Cost about £160.
 5. West Down: as I think everyone is aware we are short of volunteers. The operator of The Beast has a full time job and is no longer available. Currently, there is no-one else as I have a bad back. There is only Emma Noble to operate a brush cutter. The rest use loppers which is slow going. I have asked Rob West, who currently cuts the area outside the enclosed area, if he will cut as much as he can in the enclosed area as well. He has agreed to do so. The approximate cost is £350. This will leave the less accessible areas for us to clear. Hampshire Conservation Volunteers are coming on 10/02/24. I can't remember how much they charge but it is not much and they do a good job. I have also been in touch with HCC as they have a group of volunteers who may well assist us. With all this I think we have a decent chance of clearing sufficient ground in the enclosed area but at a cost.

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6. CWMPF: The new play tower has been installed and looks great. Hopefully inspection by TVBC will be OK. We need to agree an opening ceremony.

7. Footpaths: The Mark Way is in a very bad state and is virtually impassable. I have been pressing HCC to clear it for months. They told me it would be cleared weeks ago but then decided that something else was more important. They now say they will cut it hard back during this winter. We have no option but to accept this but it is not good enough.

I have asked the lengths man to clear the bit of the Mark Way that runs from the Little Drove Path to the entrance to West Down plus the Whiteland's Path this month.

Mandy has written to the residents of Tuxford House asking them to clear the Grindstone Green Path. While passable the side growth needs trimming back.

Three fingers have been added to the three signs indicating the three paths from the village street that lead to the Common.

The marker post opposite the Coronation tree will be replaced as it is too short. I obtained a new post from HCC free of charge. This will indicate both the Test Way and Cow Common. Andy Bond has agreed to erect it in the next few weeks.

Other matters outstanding are: the cutting of Stocks Green; residents parking on the Common; making the CWMPF an "enclosed sports area" and blue badge parking on the Common need to be discussed by COSC at the next meeting.

6. To take questions and/or discuss and decide on any proposals within the monthly update reports as follows: -

A) Finance – Clerk

- I. Finance transactions since last COSC meeting:

Receipts since last report – Savings account interest £11.12 (£5 for Batty acc and £6.12 for WMPF Capital Acc)

Payments since last report –

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EXPENDITURE	to	Common	WD	WMPF Capital	Batty Acc	Community Projects	WMPF - Running Costs	Allotments	Greens	Footpaths & Tree Man	Machinery Costs	Misc	VAT	TOTAL
19.9.23	Your Parking Signs (Cow Common Parking) additional payment for channel fixing	38.70											7.74	46.44
4.9.23	D Griffiths (AB reimbursements - Common, Village Greens, WMPF adventure tower + salt licks and fuel)	3006.83	12.00			324.00			467.10		16.00		8.00	3833.93
25.9.23	A Bond (Common Signs, WMPF gate, WD install post)	329.50	60.50				339.00							729.00
3.10.23	Grass and Grounds (18 & 29 august)						270.00						54.00	324.00
6.10.23	A Denyer reimbursement for no horse riding discs	11.11	11.10										4.44	26.65
4.10.23	ProMow Landscaping (Frog Lane and Joys Lane ditch clearing)								198.00	396.00				594.00
16.10.23	Hampshire Conservation Volunteers (Abbots Stream)	48.00												48.00
31.10.23	The Acorn workshop (2x finger posts 'Cow Common' and 'Test Way' for Coronation Green crossing)	175.00											35.00	210.00
	Grass and Grounds (15 + 29 Sept)						270.00						54.00	324.00

NH raised a query about the entry of 4.9.23 above 'WMPF adventure tower'. It was established that this related to the payment for the digger etc for removing the slide mound / drive way / ditches.

- II. Discuss and decide on 2024/25 budget for CPC approval (A very draft budget was circulated to COSC members as a starting point for discussions)

Regarding the 24/25 DRAFT PRECEPT ACCOUNTS Budget report:

NH pointed out that no football team has taken our playing field for the season. There may be some training and there may be a team using our pitch if Wherwell's pitch is waterlogged, but for that reason, there may not be a need to spend £700 on grass cutting this year.

MD queried whether allotment prices should be raised. COSC agreed that TG should be approached to see if current prices are in line with other allotments.

NH reported that the branch referred to as 'overhanging the pavilion' on CWMPF is actually over the container. The pavilion one has been removed. COSC considered a more reasonable price was £500 rather than £200 to cover all tree works on the CWMPF.

It was agreed that the proposed fence for the Enclosed Sports Area at the back of CWMPF is still pending. The fencing for this will be put under 'capital'. NH suggested £2000 be budgeted for the work if it does go ahead.

NH considered that reference to CCTV should be removed but MD pointed out that this budgeted £800 also includes all costs towards repairs, given the age of the playground equipment. NH indicated that Spalding will not replace the basketball backboards, the cost of this will need to be

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included in the budget. Therefore the £800 will not now include the CCTV but will need to cover the costs of the basketball court repairs.

COSC agreed that all expenses on the report down to 'Tree Management' should remain the same.

DG reported that there had been plans for volunteers to do much of the easier tree works, but all trained volunteers are now unable to do this. DG considers that £5000 will not cover the extent of the work now required. COSC agreed that this budgeted cost should be doubled.

DG reported that there were three large ash trees which had died along the right hand side of the path behind the bottle bank. MG believed that if they were on the right hand side, this was Leckford Estate land. MG to check this. DG reported that Steve White, a Utilities Surveyor had been contacted and may be able to do this work if needed.

MD noted that West Down and the Common should be self-funded and no money for their maintenance should be taken from the precept. The tree work will stretch this arrangement and precept money might need to be spent on it. This should be raised with HCC in the hope that they will agree.

George Marits has offered to go on the chain saw course which is why this cost has been included in the budget.

It was stated that 'Pavilion Enhancements' relate to putting protective paint on the rusty roof. RF was planning to do it, but as he is not able, COSC agreed the budgeted cost should be doubled to £400.

It was agreed that the CWMPF annual play area inspection budget should be increased to £100.

Regarding ditch clearance, DG considered that although much work has been done this year, the ditch alongside the track leading to the playing field might need clearing. DG to investigate whether the stream from Frog Lane does 'belong' to Bannuts Farm from a maintenance point of view. COSC agreed that the ditch clearance budget should be increased to £1000.

Regarding the Draft Ring fenced Accounts Budget:

DG raised the issue of the Sustainable Farming Initiative / Delinked payment. No members of COSC were keen to take on this job. NH will contact a member of the public he has in mind who may be able to help.

No income will be raised from CWMPF so £5000 to be removed.

MD said the grass cutting for the Common may increase. MD recommended £1200.

Tree management budget increased to £3000 for the Common.

MG to get an honorarium payment of £100 in this financial year.

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DG confirmed that the budget for Vesper on WD should be increased to £1000 as they will be cutting the enclosure as well.

COSC agreed that the budget for dragons teeth on WD should be increased to £100.

WD vegetation strimming / management reduced from £500 to £200.

WD Misc expenses reduced from £150 to £50.

Enclosing of the playing field will be added at an estimated cost of £2000.

III. To discuss and decide on the registering of interest for the RPA Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI): As above

IV. To discuss the RPA change from BPS to Delinked payments: As above

B) Allotments – Prior to the meeting TG had nothing to report.

C) Common – Prior to the meeting MG circulated the following report:

Notices - No news re WRT info notice

Access - Regarding the horse gate: HCC have agreed to pay most of the cost of supplying a gate the same as already installed on the far side. The current gate will be removed and replaced with this gate to satisfy the horse riders. Andy Bond has agreed the proposed changes with them. Unsure how much the gate will cost as Emma is looking into this. She intends to apply for a grant to cover the balance of the cost of the gate and the cost of installation.

Public Spaces Protection order No decision. CPC to follow through.

Educational Access - Evaluation sheets submitted to Clerk

Cows - Likely to be removed mid-November MG to clarify with Adam Coutts

Jasper tells me that since we put down salt licks the cows have done less damage but still some damage is occurring. He wants to speak to Adam Coutts .

Visitors - No issues; weather very changeable and wet

Management - No activity this month DG and MG surveying boundary needs. We need to schedule scrub clearance from boundary as per the management plan **Decide date and personnel.**

Autumn cut to be during the week beginning 6th November Rob West of Vespers Conservation. MG to meet him to select areas to be cut.

Autumn Stream Clearance - Very successful effort on the part of Sparsholt College, Hampshire Conservation Volunteers and a family from the village working with Emma Noble

Residents parking on the Common - DG has drafted a letter for Mandy to send the residents of the Common re parking on the Common. A resident asked for time to consult and respond; nothing received at this time.

[Note from Clerk: 3 of the 4 properties have responded to say that they are willing to enter an agreement. One resident commented that properties may need, on occasion, permission for more than 2 vehicles such as when contractors are working on their properties.

I. Update on Fishing Rights – See Chairman report DG confirmed that the paperwork had been taken to a solicitor in Andover and the outcome is awaited.

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- II. To discuss and decide on whether to stipulate a number of cattle to be grazed on the Common at any one time: On the advice of MG, COSC has agreed that a maximum of 30 cows can be grazed.
- III. To discuss and decide on Agreement for Common residents parking – see Common report. A letter was sent to common residents giving them permission to park 2 cars on Common land. One member asked about tradesmen. DG suggested an addition along the lines of 'Tradesman parking temporarily for the purpose of carrying out work'. MG suggested 'if necessary' at the end, in case the property has additional parking within its own curtilage.
- IV. To discuss and decide on criteria for allowing Common gate code to be released to blue badge holders: This has been previously decided on.
- V. EN raised that Andy Bond had looked the Joy's Lane horse gate and offered some suggestions to remedy the obstruction caused by the security gate. HCC have said they will fund 75%, although it's not quite clear if that means 75% of the whole work, or just the gate cost. EN provided 3 gate options from HCC's preferred supplier. COSC agreed that the a metal gate would be acceptable. EN to submit the grant application to HCC.

D) Machinery Maintenance – see chairman report

E) Parish Paths – see chairman report

F) Village Greens - To discuss and decide on proposal to CPC re Cutting of Stock Green Policy :**COPY report from JHAMILTON**

G) War Memorial Playing Fields –

- I. Discuss and Decide on proposal to CPC re enclosing the WMPF to be able to apply for an 'Enclosed Sports Area' under the TVBC Public Spaces Protection Order: MG to confirm whether Chilbolton is covered by the Order before progressing.
- II. COSC offered their thanks to the Development Group for the Adventure Tower.
- III. Regarding payment for the Adventure Tower prior to all 'snagging' items being addressed, COSC agreed that a 75% payment is reasonable. This has been submitted to CPC already. NH suggested that the Development Group should negotiate with Caledonia Play to avoid souring the relationship. The Development Group will reply to Caledonia Play about the bullet points mentioned in their letter, assuming the 75% payment is agreed by CPC.
- IV. Regarding CPC's suggestion of a 2nd village survey on the future plans for CWMPF, the Development Group would like to first address the issues with the Adventure Tower, then look to complete the Pump Track. Once complete, they will look at the issue of the survey

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and will get together to consider the next steps, depending on whether money is available.
DG agreed and confirmed that the CPC want to know what is planned after the Pump Track.

H) West Down – see Chairman report

I) Correspondence:

10/9/23 - Complaint re Common parking (21023_2). Further response and reply (21023_2a)

12/9/23 - HCC explanation re cutting of the Mark Way (21023_4)

19/9/23 - Slow Ways walking network invitation (21023_6)

28/9/23 – Hedgehog Highway Project (21023_16)

12/10/23 - HCC re Letters for Parish and Town Councils regarding overgrown vegetation and ditch clearance (61123_6)

20/10/23 - River Test Pollution (61123_11)

31/10/23 - RPA re Delinked Payments Information Statements are coming soon (61123_18) – to be discussed under Finance 6Avi

V. Questions from Public:

VI. Any Other Business – For information only:

VII. Items for the next agenda:

VIII. Date of the next meeting – Scheduled date is Thursday 14 December 2023 at Poplar Dene, Village Street.

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