



## Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Clapham Parish Council

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

Held remotely using Zoom software  
under

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (Regulation 5)

**Present: Councillors:** Stuart Ray (Chairman), Terry Gale, Emily Dodd and John Kelly.

**In attendance:**

Sarah Linfield, BSc (Hons), CiLCA (Parish Clerk/RFO).  
West Sussex County Councillor – Deborah Urquhart  
Members of the public – none

Minutes are to be prefixed by/relate to 20.21.

**101. Declarations of Interest**

None

**102. Public Participation**

None

**103. Apologies for Absence**

N/A – all Council members present.

**104. Minutes from the Council Meeting Held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020.**

It was **Resolved** – to approve the minutes as a true record of the decisions of that meeting and the Chairman be authorised to sign them.

(Proposed by Councillor Ray, seconded by Councillor Gale and by unanimous agreement of all present)

**105. Chairman's Report**

Councillor Ray spoke regarding the 'Value for Money Review' of the Surrey and Sussex Association of Local Councils, being organised by the Board of the West Sussex Association of Local Councils, and of the tensions this had created as members had not been consulted first. He had taken a walk around the parish and expressed surprise at the amount of litter along the A27.

**106. West Sussex Council Matters**

Councillor Urquhart spoke regarding -



- i. The COVID-19 vaccination roll-out, continuing at pace with the Brighton Centre now also being used for this.
- ii. Budget for 2021/22 – an increase in council tax of 1.99% plus an additional 3% for adult social care is proposed, to go to Full Council for approval in February.
- iii. Census 2021 – National Census Day is Sunday 21 March 2021 and will be conducted mostly online.
- iv. Elections – Mayor and Local elections still scheduled to go ahead on 6 May 2021.
- v. Pollination Event, 18 February 2021 – with over a hundred people signed up to join, encouraging communities to adopt verges and fields, to support biodiversity.

Councillor Urquhart left the meeting.

#### **107. Arun District Council Matters**

There was no representation on this occasion.

#### **108. Playground Inspections and Maintenance Programme**

- i. The new adult gym equipment sign is ready to be installed, while the gate design and grass under the matting will continue to be monitored. The suggestion of a hard standing area by the gate, which is quite muddy, is under review, with a contractor asked to provide an opinion and an estimate of cost. Councillor Gale and the Clerk shared the outcome of January check undertaken that day, with a report to be circulated later. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the tree surgeon to undertake the annual assessment of the Horse Chestnut tree and follow up on the quote sought to replace the old circular seat which had been removed and make repairs to the seat just inside the main park entrance.

Councillor Kelly reported an incident with the swing, although there was no evidence of any issue with the equipment itself which had been checked just hours before. It seems it was an unfortunate mishap, with the child taken to A&E as a precautionary measure.

- ii. Training Session  
Provisional dates on offer for training are Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and members opted for the latter, although it would of course be dependent on easing of lockdown restrictions.

#### **109. Recreation Ground**

- i. A resident had enquired whether there were any plans to replace the boundary fencing; the Council confirmed they had none, with any future work to be undertaken on a like-for-like basis.
- ii. The contractor appointed to install the path had advised that a period of 7-10 days dry weather was needed before work could start.



There being no members of public or press present, no resolution was required to exclude them in respect of point (iii).

iii. Grass cutting

It was **Resolved** – to continue the existing arrangement with Charlie Smithers, who had already confirmed he was happy to do so, with the Council paying to service his mower.

(Proposed by Councillor Ray, seconded by Councillor Gale and by unanimous agreement of all present).

**110. Parish Design Statement**

The Council acknowledged both the work and time invested by the working party in producing the document – informed most recently by feedback from the parish survey – and how important it would be when considering future planning applications and ensuring adherence by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). The material had already been circulated to Council members for overview and

It was **Resolved** – to approve the revised policies (Proposed by Councillor Ray, seconded by Councillor Gale and by unanimous agreement of all present) and authorise the working party to finalise the full Clapham Parish Design statement, for submission to the SDNPA (Proposed by Councillor Ray, seconded by Councillor Dodd and by unanimous agreement of all present).

**111. Risk Governance**

i. **Risk assessment (existing)**

It was **Resolved** - to authorise the quarterly sign off incorporating actions taken to ensure risk is managed effectively.

ii. **Risk assessment (new)**

One for mowing was in progress with some further work required to ensure the controls in place met with the requirements of its insurer.

iii. **Pension Regulator**

The Clerk explained the Council's responsibilities regarding re-enrolment (deadline date 30 September 2021) and re-declaration of compliance and of its ongoing duty to monitor the age of staff and amounts paid to them, to determine whether any needed to be put into the scheme. No employee currently qualifies for auto-enrolment but could ask to be enrolled, subject to meeting qualifying criteria.

It was **Resolved** – that the Clerk complete the return online confirming no current requirement to put staff into a pension scheme. (Proposed by Councillor Ray, seconded by Councillor Dodd and by unanimous agreement of all present).

**112. Bank Account Mandate Changes**

Councillor Dodd confirmed that she now had the paperwork ready to send back.



### 113. Clerk's Update

- i. **Quarterly Parish Council Newsletter** – a reminder of the upcoming March issue, and to invite contributions.
- ii. **Gigabit Voucher Scheme for rural broadband** – the Clerk and Councillors Ray and Gale had joined a meeting with members of Patching Parish Council, who are at an advanced stage in negotiations with Openreach, the offer to join extending to Clapham and even some Angmering residents. The Clerk had produced a draft flier - incorporating an 'expression of interest' and form of consent to share information - to establish if there was any further interest in Clapham, and reported that a resident had kindly offered to support the project. Councillor Kelly queried the 'Along the Furlong' entry referencing an 'expectation' to take up faster broadband whilst elsewhere this was a specified 'requirement'. The Clerk undertook to research this aspect and offered to get the flier printed for distribution once the Council were satisfied with its content.
- iii. **Anti-social driving near Clapham** – unfortunately several residents had continued to report issues with drivers circling the two roundabouts by the A27 often late at night and creating noise nuisance. The PCSO had suggested police notices but it was felt this was unlikely to deter the offenders and Councillor Kelly said he might try to record events, although his own safety must come first.
- iv. **Neighbourhood Issues** – the Clerk had exchanged emails with the PA to the Chief Executive at Arun District Council, being reassured that although it might appear that nothing was happening, with lockdown and staff numbers impacting, the position is being monitored and a full response and update will be provided.
- v. **West Sussex Association of Local Councils** – the date of the AGM had yet to be announced.
- vi. **Winter Gritting Arrangements** – whilst a parishioner had queried the cost of gritting on one occasion – arranged in response to a Met Office Level 3 Cold Weather Alert – several residents had specifically requested this action, and the Councillors felt that the arrangement worked well and there was a balance between cost and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of residents.
- vii. **The 'Pocket Parks' Evaluation Report** – must be completed by the end of March and the Clerk and Councillor Dodd, who would be co-ordinating the official opening, felt that youngsters might be invited to enter a competition to express what the new park means to them. The Clerk would also be inviting other contributions to ensure the report included the Community's views and full details would be circulated in the Parish Council Newsletter due out at the beginning of March.



viii. **Assets of Community Value** –the nominations were submitted in September 2020, although Arun District Council had subsequently responded in November seeking information that had either already been provided, including maps, or had not been required for the original submission. This was highlighted to the team and an update is awaited.

**114. Precept Calculation for 2021/22**

The Clerk had provided an email confirmation of the Council’s precept requirement which had been confirmed to Arun District Council. Councillors acknowledged receipt and

It was **Resolved** – that the Chairman and the Clerk as RFO sign a copy of the relevant paperwork.

(Proposed by Councillor Gale, seconded by Councillor Ray and by unanimous agreement of all present)

**115. Finance Reports**

i. **Bank Reconciliation**

It was **Resolved** – to note the reconciliation at 31 December and budget monitor which had been authorised for sign off outside the meeting, and to authorise the next sign off as at 31 January 2021, prior to and subject to presentation at the next Council meeting.

ii. **Payments**

It was **Resolved** - to approve the payment schedule and issue of cheques, to be signed outside the remote meeting due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

iii. **Earmarked Reserves**

The Clerk advised that she had written to HMRC regarding eligibility to claim VAT on the Government’s Pocket Parks (PP) grant spend.

It was proposed that the VAT was ringfenced separately for each source of funding -

CIL – VAT on spend (to date)	£3251.35 (Community Infrastructure Levy)
CPR – VAT on spend	£1017.45 (Clapham Playground Restoration)
PP – VAT on spend	<u>£4167.04</u> (Pocket Parks Funding)
	£8435.84

(Proposed by Councillor Gale, seconded by Councillor Ray and by unanimous agreement of all present)

The monthly finance and budget reports can be found on the Council website under ‘Finance and Risk’.

**116. Planning Matters**

SDNP/21/00250/TPO

North House, The Street Clapham Worthing West Sussex BN13 3UU

T1 (Magnolia) - Reduce crown by 1m

T2 (Buddleia) - Reduce by 2m

T3 (Holly) - Reduce height by 1m and remove dead wood.



Council members wished to inspect the trees and a response would be provided under its 'Scheme of Delegation' before Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**117. Date of the Next Ordinary Meeting -**

The next ordinary meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

The meeting ended at 20.52 p.m.

Signed as a true record of the meeting.

Chairman

Dated

DRAFT