



Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Clapham Parish Council
held at Clapham and Patching Village Hall, Long Furlong, Clapham, BN13 3UT
On Thursday 15th December 2022, commenced 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: Sheila Holmes, Terry Gale and Mike Monger.

In attendance: Sarah Linfield BSc (Hons), CiLCA (Parish Clerk/RFO/Proper Officer)

One member of the public

68. Declarations of Interest.

None declared.

69. Public Participation

A representative of the 2022 Platinum Jubilee Working Party spoke to clarify that community groups across Clapham parish had been engaged in organising the event, with the possibility of a joint venture with Patching also explored. Unfortunately, the Chair of Patching Parish Council had been away, with arrangements for Clapham already in place by the time of their return. The Platinum Jubilee celebration, attended by the local MP, had of course also combined the delayed play park opening and official planting of the tree for the Queen's Green Canopy. This free event had proved very popular, evidenced by attendance levels on the day and also the number of thank you cards, flowers and other compliments received.

Members acknowledged the importance of the Recreation Ground as the focus for parish events and of supporting The Junction as a community asset. A celebration of the Coronation in 2023 was subsequently discussed by members under agenda item 13 (v), minute 80 (v) refers.

70. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Councillors Dodd and England and
It was **Resolved** – to approve the reasons for absence.

71. Position of Vice Chair to the Parish Council

The decision on any appointment was deferred to the next meeting.

72. Minutes from the Extraordinary Council Meeting Held on 6th December 2022

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

73. Chair's Report

There were no matters to report beyond that covered elsewhere in the agenda.

74. West Sussex County Council (WSSC) Matters

Deborah Urquhart, West Sussex County Councillor had sent her apologies.

75. Arun District Council (ADC) Matters

There was no representation on this occasion although, in response to an enquiry made of Arun District Councillor Bicknell at the Council's October meeting, the Clerk advised that grants were now available from Arun District Council to community groups to open up their venues as warm spaces for those struggling with high energy costs.
<https://www.arun.gov.uk/warm-spaces-fund>

The member of the public left the meeting.

76. Finance Reports

i. Budget Setting

It was **Resolved** - to approve

- The forecast expenditure for 2023/24 of £14061.
- The precept for the financial year 2023/24 at £14061 to meet the budget set out for 2023/24.
- Local Band D Charge for 2023/24 of £99.72 (i.e. £14061 divided by 141, Tax Base advised by ADC. This represents a weekly increase of £0.19 for a Local Band D Charge when compared to 2022/23.
- General Reserves – projected at circa £7000 - 8000 (to cover unforeseen expenses and maintain services on an emergency basis).
- Earmarked Reserves
 - Existing
 - Election Costs which have been building at an annual rate of £750 from 2019 until the next elections in 2023 to meet the costs of a contested election.
 - VAT reclaimed on Pocket Parks grant, CPR donation and CIL spend.
 - Residue of Pocket Parks Award at £13.37 and National Lottery Award £257.
 - Proposed
 - Playground Fund building at a rate of £500 per annum.
 - Defibrillator Fund building at a rate of £25 per annum.

ii. Payment Schedule

It was **Resolved** - to note/approve receipts/payments on schedule (Annex A) to authorise sign off by Councillor Gale as at 31.10.2022 and 30.11.22, with sign off by a second member, Councillor Dodd, to be undertaken outside the meeting.

iii. **Bank Account Reconciliation**

It was **Resolved** - to authorise sign off by Councillor Gale as at 31.10.2022 and 30.11.2022, with sign off by a second member, Councillor Dodd, to be undertaken outside the meeting. Councillor Monger had completed the independent quarterly sign off as at 30.9.2022.

iv. **General Reserves and Earmarked Reserves**

The Clerk had received confirmation from the National Lottery Team that the grant residue of £257 could be used towards the costs of the Platinum Jubilee event and It was **Resolved** – to transfer £257 from Earmarked to General Reserves.

v. **Budget Review at 30.11.2022**

It was **Resolved** - to note actuals to budget and that the residue of the National Lottery Grant would offset the Platinum Jubilee event overspend.

Finance reports are posted separately to the Parish Council Website as Monthly Reports under the Finance and Risk section.

77. Recreation Ground

i. **Tree Survey**

The insurer's requirements to follow the recommendations in the 2022 survey were noted i.e. an annual ground level inspection and full report in May 2025. The Clerk undertook to share a copy of the survey with Councillor Monger.

ii. **Play and Adult Gym Inspections (ADC checks and Annual Inspection).**

ADC's play inspection programme had temporarily changed to quarterly checks from 4 -weekly ones due to staffing issues, the last one completed in week 48 (November 29th) identifying a missing nut cap on the exercise bike which was being replaced. The Clerk would ensure that the Parish Council were correctly billed only for those checks undertaken and weekly Recreation Ground checks continue to be logged by Councillor Gale to evidence due diligence.

The Play Inspection Company had been instructed to undertake the annual checks at a cost of £135 + VAT, due to take place within 10-12 weeks of the order date.

iii. **Path**

Councillor Monger undertook to speak with his contact at Balfour Beatty regarding their kind offer of possible help with an improved surface. Charlie Smithers had confirmed he would concrete the manhole cover as previously invoiced.

iv. **Noticeboards**

The two Platinum Jubilee plates had now been received and John Kelly had kindly offered to install them.

v. **Grass Cutting**

Charlie Smithers had kindly offered to continue the existing arrangement of cutting the Recreation Ground, in consideration for which the Council pay for his annual mower service and petrol, and this would be added to the next Council meeting agenda for approval.

78. Insurance, Risk and Governance Matters

i. Civility and Respect Pledge.

It was **Resolved** – to sign up to the sector’s pledge for civil and respectful conduct and adopt a ‘Dignity at Work’ policy.

ii. Unity Bank

The delay in adding Councillor England as a signatory was attributed to staff sickness in the organisation and assurances given that this request would be prioritised.

iii. Gov.uk Email Addresses

The quote had not been received so it was agreed to delay this matter to the next meeting.

iv. Council Policies

a. New

It was **Resolved** – to adopt the new Tree Policy.

b. Existing (Financial Regulations and Internet Banking Policy)

Financial Regulation 6.5 revised to reflect model version removing reference to a payment stamp and future consideration would also be given to a revised minimum value for estimates specified under 11.1 (h), having regard to the difficulty often experienced in sourcing these.

It was **Resolved** – to revise Financial Regulation 6.5 and that in the interests of efficiency invoices be checked to payment schedule and bank statements before the meeting, with the Clerk to email the bank statements out each month.

v. Freedom of Information Request/Survey

The Clerk had responded to a Freedom of Information request/survey sent to all councils in Arun District about their membership and work with the outcome available online.

<https://jancosgrove1945.medium.com/report-on-the-state-of-parish-councils-in-the-arun-district-west-sussex-90b17657ecad>

Councillors agreed that the report and its conclusion made interesting reading and acknowledged the issues raised by the responses. Clapham Parish Council had itself experienced some difficulty in attracting and retaining members in recent times but it continued to publicise the opportunity to join the Council and had made provision in its budget for a contested election in May 2023 – refer Annex B for the report’s conclusion.

79. Consultations

i. Rampion 2

The consultation documents had been sent to a previous Clerk’s address in error so the deadline for the Council’s response had been revised to 22 December 2022.

It was **Resolved** – to approve and submit its response (Annex C).

ii. Boundary Commission England Review

It was **Resolved** – to ratify the response submitted under its scheme of delegation to meet the December 5th 2022 deadline (Annex D).

80. Clerk's Update

i. Assets of Community Value

No further update provided by Arun District Council.

ii. South Downs Local Plan review

The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) had advised that there was no requirement for a review of the Neighbourhood Plan unless the Parish Council positively chose to do so.

It was **Resolved** - that the Parish Council follow the SDNPA's proposal to work collaboratively on the Local Plan Review rather than review the Neighbourhood Plan.

iii. Parish/Village Design Statement.

This had been adopted by the South Downs National Park at its Planning Committee meeting, November 10th 2022, and its members commended those who had contributed for their efforts and flexible approach in producing this supplementary planning document. The Parish Council also acknowledged the work of all involved.

iv. Winter Gritting

Sussex Manures had now updated its records to include the Clerk and two Councillors (Monger and Gale) as contacts for alerts to recommended gritting of roads. The possibility of obtaining photo confirmation was suggested to track this activity in The Street and Clapham Common and the Clerk undertook to explore this with the contractor.

v. Celebration of the Coronation in 2023

Clapham and Patching Parish Councils had each received details of a community-led event covering both parishes and the minutes of their committee's first meeting 8.12.2022. The Clerk had also received an initial enquiry regarding grant funding for the event for which Patching Parish Council had apparently set aside £500. Clapham Parish Council had now budgeted £500 for community events in 2023/24 with several different ones usually held each year. Councillor Gale clarified that he had expressed personal support for some form of celebration of the Coronation, with Council members agreeing it was important that those living in Clapham were consulted on their preferences and the Clerk was tasked to create a survey for this purpose.

vi. Quarterly Newsletter

This would be reinstated in January 2023 now that the Parish Council were at full strength with the opportunity to introduce its new members.

vii. Councillor contact details to appear on website

Councillors Holmes and Monger confirmed their email addresses could be added.

viii. Meeting Dates

Next year's dates to be added to the website (held bi-monthly, ordinarily the last Thursday of that month, except for the December budget meeting and for some alternative requirements due to the four yearly parish council elections) and hall bookings made.

81. South Downs National Park

i. Planning Applications

Previous applications with outcome

SDNP/22/03525/FUL | The relocation of Lansdowne Nursery from Ferring including the erection of glasshouses and agricultural workers dwelling | Gravel Pit Long Furlong Clapham West Sussex – **REFUSED**.

The Clerk had attended in person to deliver the Parish Council's response during the public session of the South Downs National Park Authority's Planning Committee Meeting, 8th December 2022. Some subsequent activity in the field, possibly surveyors, had been reported and it was noted that if an Appeal was lodged an extraordinary Parish Council meeting might be required.

82. Date of Next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 23rd February 2023.

The meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Dated

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Clapham Parish Council 15th December 2022

Annex A – Minute 76 (ii) - Receipts and Payments Schedule (online payments as authorised by Cllrs Gale and Dodd)

TYPE	Number	DATE OF INVOICE	DATE OF ISSUE (CHEQUES) DATE PAYMENT SET UP (ONLINE)	BENEFICIARY	DESCRIPTION	Total Cost Inc. VAT	VAT	Statute Under Which Payment Made	Authorised (including relevant minute)
Faster Payment	54	N/A	31.10.22	HMRC	Tax on clerk's salary - period 7	£ 105.40	£ -	LGA 1972 s 111	Per contract and budget
Direct Debit	N/A	N/A	17.10.22	Lloyds Bank	Monthly statement DD - covering the following items	£ 8.80	£ -	LGA 1972 s 111	Per budget
Corporate card statement entry	N/A	N/A	3.10.22	Lloyds Bank Corporate Multipay card	Monthly fee	£ 3.00	£ -	LGA 1972 s 111	Per budget
Corporate card statement entry	N/A	8.9.22	8.9.22	Amazon	Push pins for noticeboards	£ 5.80	£ 0.96	LGA 1972 s 111	Per budget
Standing Order	N/A	N/A	31.10.22	Sarah Linfield	Clerk's salary - tax period 7	£ 422.40	£ -	LGA 1972 s 111	Per contract and budget
Faster Payment	55	10.11.22	10.11.22	Mulberry & Co	Councillor Training 16.11.22	£ 60.00	£ 10.00	LGA 1972 s 175	Per budget
Faster Payment	56	10.11.22	10.11.22	Clapham & Patching Village Hall	Hall hire 27.10.22	£ 15.00	£ -	LGA 1972 s 134	Per budget
Faster Payment	57	N/A	15.11.22	Sarah Linfield	Backdated pay award 1.4 -30.11.22	£ 194.08	£ -	LGA 1972 s 111	Per contract
Faster Payment	58	N/A	22.11.22	Yvette Fisher/The Junction	Room hire 15.11.22	£ 20.00	£ -	LGA 1972 s 134	Per budget
Standing Order	N/A	N/A	30.11.22	Sarah Linfield	Clerk's salary - tax period 8	£ 422.40	£ -	LGA 1972 s 111	Per contract and budget
Direct Debit	N/A	N/A	16.11.22	Lloyds Bank Corporate Multipay card	Monthly fee	£ 3.00	£ -	LGA 1972 s 111	Per budget
Receipts	Reason	Amount	Account						
None	N/A	N/A	Current						
None	N/A	N/A	Instant Access					Faster Payments Authorised online by Cllrs Gale and Dodd	

Annex B – Conclusion for Survey for Arun District Parishes Councils – minute 78 (v).

“This Survey has given a snapshot of the current situation re parishing arrangements, Parish Councils, their funding and activities. What has emerged is a mixed-picture of useful services, dedicated work by councillors, staff etc but a less-than-healthy picture of public engagement and voted-for representation. As with all human institutions there is much scope for improvement, and the case for fully representative, voted-for Parish Councils in Arun is strongly made.

Those currently engaged in these bodies surely must work to address the issues raised by this Survey, their undoubted excellent service to the communities of the District area is not doubted, but major changes may lie ahead if the system is to regain public confidence.”

Annex C - Rampion Response – minute 79 (i)

Clapham Parish Council continues to recognise the importance of wind farms as an important and alternative source of energy, this view being reinforced by the events of this year.

However, in noting the possible A280 route across Lee Farm, it is concerned to ensure that the environmental impacts are fully understood, considered and acceptable and appropriate mitigations put in place before being chosen as a route. This is a particularly sensitive choice of routes with the area lying within the South Downs National Park and there is concern to ensure that there is no lasting environmental damage and any impacts are only temporary, with restoration to its previous state.

Whilst it appreciates that the routing of the cable will have temporary impacts for traffic in any of the chosen locations, Long Furlong is already heavily congested at peak travel times and it is difficult to envisage how this aspect can be successfully managed to avoid potential gridlock during the work.

The Parish Council is also mindful that works on the new Arundel A27 bypass if approved could start in 2024-25, and of the potential overlap with the Rampion 2 works starting in 2026.

Annex D - Boundary Commission England – minute 79 (ii) – Reference BCE-115533

Clapham Parish Council previously expressed reservations about the original proposal, specifically that rural parishes might find themselves in constituencies with an urban centre, and rural issues might then not receive the same representation in Parliament.

It is concerned therefore that the latest proposal would now see its parish move from the rural community representation of Arundel and South Downs into the more urban Worthing West constituency, rather than that of Arundel and Littlehampton (the original proposal).

The parish is a small rural community, with an electorate of just 254, lying within the South Downs National Park and facing challenges similar to other rural communities including development, access to improved broadband and anti-social road-users in terms of speed and noise. In 2020 the future of the village school was secured with the support of our current MP Andrew Griffith who champions rural communities and understands the type of challenges that face communities such as our own. There is grave concern that this level of understanding and engagement will be lost under the revised proposal to the detriment of the electorate.

Members share the concerns of neighbouring Angmering Parish Council, which would also move into Worthing West under the revised proposal and urge you to reconsider your proposal.