

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Clapham Parish Council 31st August 2023



Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Clapham Parish Council
Held at Clapham and Patching Village Hall, Long Furlong, Clapham, BN13 3UT
On Thursday 31st August 2023 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: Chair Terry Gale, Mike Monger, David England and Jaci England.

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

4 members of the public.

45. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations.

None.

46. Public Participation

Yvette Fisher, current owner of The Junction café and shop, advised that discussions on its future were progressing and the developments were positive although at this stage in the negotiations no further detail could be shared.

47. Apologies for absence

Councillor Holmes had sent her apologies and
It was **Resolved** – to approve the reason for absence.

48. Minutes from the Council Meetings Held on 29th June 2023 and 24th August 2023

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

The order of the agenda items 5 and 6 was reversed at the discretion of the Chair, minuted under 49 and 50.

49. Chair's Report

Councillor Gale spoke

- Of the planning appeal in respect of the Old Gravel Pit and of those who had attended the Council's extraordinary meeting the previous week, opposing the development. The Clerk had submitted the Council's representations to the Planning Inspectorate's portal for both appeals, the re-location to Clapham site and the linked development of the Lansdowne Nursery.
- To confirm that existing arrangement for cutting the grass on the Recreation Ground would cease in October, acknowledging the sterling work that Charlie Smithers had done for the benefit of the parish over a number of years and at minimal cost, and extending heartfelt thanks.

50. Dog Bins for Clapham Woods

The Parish Council had received representations from residents, both for and against the possibility of a dog bin at the entry to the woods near the church. A member of the public spoke in support, of the mess which they clear up each day, and, subsequent to the Council's decision, of canvassing local opinion.

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It was **Resolved** – not to proceed based on cost to the Parish (emptying of its existing four bins will be circa £1200 per annum from 2024), reservations as to whether it would solve the issue and that it was on private land, in use by the wider communities but the cost of which would fall to Clapham.

51. West Sussex County Council (WSSC) and Arun District Council (ADC) Matters

- i. Deborah Urquhart, West Sussex County Councillor, had sent her apologies and a report that was shared with those present (Annex C).
- ii. There was no representation from Arun District Councillors.

52. Grants and Donations

It was **Resolved** – to donate £20 to Arun Counselling Centre, a charity based in Littlehampton, worthy of support although they did not meet the grant award criteria.

53. Finance Reports

i. Payment Schedule

It was **Resolved** - to note/approve payments listing (Annex A).

ii. Bank Account Reconciliation

It was **Resolved** - to authorise sign off as at 30th June and 31st July 2023. An independent check of the accounts by a non-bank signatory (Councillor Monger) for the quarter to 30th June was authorised.

iii. General Reserves and Earmarked Reserves

The current allocation was noted.

iv. Budget at 31.7.2023

It was **Resolved** - to note actuals to budget.

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

54. Recreation Ground

i. Tree Survey

The English elm had now been identified by the adjoining landowner as the responsibility of West Sussex County Council and a report had been submitted via their online portal to highlight the remedial work recommended.

ii. Play and Adult Gym Inspections.

Foster Playscapes had been asked to quote to adjust the timing of the gate closure as identified in the annual inspection report. Arun District Council's inspection 1st August 2023 raised no issues.

iii. Path Surface

There had been no further contact from Balfour Beatty. The Clerk had written to enquire of progress and Councillor Monger would follow up too, although his contact may now work elsewhere.

iv. New Commemorative Benches

Damien from Omnifence had provided a risk assessment and copy of his insurance policy, planning to install the seats over the weekend of the 2nd and 3rd of September. An additional cost of up to £200, which is covered by the National Lottery grant, may be necessary to remove and make good the foundations when the existing seats are replaced as they are set in concrete. Men In Sheds would be making use of the iron ends from the seats that are being removed.

v. Fence (southern boundary)

Plans to meet with a Trustee to discuss this matter had been delayed.

55. Insurance, Risk and Governance

i. Bank Mandate

Councillor Holmes had been added as a signatory.

ii. Lloyds Multipay Card

The changes to administrators had not been confirmed and a prompt would be sent to Unity Trust Bank.

iii. Financial Services Compensation Scheme Review

Confirmation of eligibility submitted to and acknowledged by Unity Bank.

iv. Secure email systems/dedicated council email accounts

JNR Computer Services had confirmed the cost at £342 net of VAT including cyber mailbox protection and within the sum of £400 net of VAT previously delegated to the Clerk. Log on details to be provided to the Parish Council shortly.

v. Councillor Training

Training through Mulberry & Co had been booked for Councillor D England at a cost of £90 net of VAT for two sessions.

vi. Asset Register

It was **Resolved** – to note the revised register on acquisition of the two benches and insurance in place.

vii. Records Retention

Documents including minutes for the year to 31.3.23 and ad hoc governance records had been deposited with West Sussex Records Office for archiving.

viii. Policy and Procedures

It was **Resolved** – to re-adopt those falling due for review in July 2023.

56. South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) – Local Plan

i. Parish Priority Statement

There had only been about 20 responses to the Parish questionnaire, which might in part reflect the existing Neighbourhood Plan, and the more recent 2022 Parish Design Statement. A first draft of the document was circulated at the meeting and, whilst the final document was due to be submitted by October 20th, the South Downs National Park Authority had offered some flexibility on this date, so the Parish Council could approve the final submission at its October 26th meeting. Contributions to the survey were still welcome.

ii. Unimplemented Neighbourhood Plan Allocations

The SDNPA had sought an update on the land at Travis Perkins Builders' Yard, identified within Clapham's Neighbourhood Plan (Policy HD3) and the Parish Council had clarified that this was still occupied.

57. Clerk's Update

i. Assets of Community Value (ACV)

The nomination for the school had been successful, evidencing that the property furthered the social wellbeing and interests of the local community and it was realistic to think that it could continue to do so in the future, whether or not in the same way.

The nomination for the Church had been unsuccessful based on a legal case, which found that the use of a building as a place of religion, such as a church, does not fall within the scope of the uses which "further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community." An

argument to this effect was accepted by the First-Tier Tribunal in General Conference of The New Church V Bristol City Council (CR/2014/0013).

The nomination for The Junction had been unsuccessful on the following grounds.

“Some support was provided during the pandemic to the community by the owners of the premises, despite The Junction being closed. However, this support was co-ordinated from the owner’s home and not The Junction Café building. Therefore, this work and the support it received is insufficient evidence to support the nomination of the building as an ACV, as the building was not required for providing this support and could have been actioned from anywhere. Since re-opening post COVID-19, the property has been open on a limited basis, requiring the help from volunteers to assist with running the café. The evidence appears to show that the requested help has not been forthcoming. This shows an apparent lack of support from the community.”

ii. Coronation Celebrations /Delegated Spend

A total of £456.77 had been spent under the Clerk’s delegated power of £500. This comprised Worthing Steel Band £150, food £137.64, celebration cake £35, venue hire £50, £29.13 for sundries, £25 Amazon gift voucher plus £30 had now been reimbursed to The Junction for the winners of a meal for two on Sussex Day.

iii. Lighting at the West Sussex Depot

It was **Resolved** – to submit the complaint via the West Sussex County Council website, Patching Parish Council having now confirmed its support (Annex B).

iv. Winter Gritting arrangements

Clapham’s severe weather event salt stock is held at WSCC’s depot in Clapham. This is separate to the winter gritting arrangement through Sussex Manures.

v. Anti-social behaviour /Other concerns

The issue with cars racing around the two roundabouts near Clapham had raised its head again and the Clerk had highlighted the matter to the local Neighbourhood Policing Team. Councillor Gale undertook to take photos and identify the exact locations regarding uncut grass and possible lying water by the pedestrian crossing so these could be accurately reported to WSCC.

vi. Defibrillators

Will Quince MP, Minister of State for Department of Health and Social Care, had written via Arun District Council advocating registration with British Heart Foundation’s ‘The Circuit.’ Clapham’s defibrillator had been registered with them since November 2021.

vii. Boom Community Bank

A letter had been received introducing this local bank and the opportunity to deposit funds with them. The Clerk had contacted the Town Clerk at Arundel, which had recently set up an account, and was waiting to hear back from Boom about the level of authorisation they would offer when accessing the funds – the Parish Council needs triple authorisation. A decision would be made when this information was available.

viii. Upcoming Events

- Gravel Pit Appeal at South Downs Centre Memorial Hall 26th September 10 a.m. (Cllr. Gale).
- Bersted Parish Council - online Chairs’ event -21st September and 19th October.
- Clerks’ ‘Meet the Monitoring Officer ‘at Arun - November 23rd 11 a.m. (Accepted)

ix. Middleton-on-Sea Parish Council/Letter advocating a ‘Network for Neighbourhood Planning’

Although Clapham’s set up is different from theirs – lying within the National Park, with a Neighbourhood Plan, Parish Design Statement and preparing a Parish Priority Statement - members agreed that it was always good to work together and the range of possible presentations and topics through Zoom was definitely of interest.

x. Other Matters after posting of the agenda/for information only.

Nothing to report.

58. Planning Matters

No application details or updates to report.

The Clerk had submitted the Council's representations to the Planning Inspectorate's portal in respect of the appeals against refusal for the re-location to Clapham site and the linked development of the Lansdowne Nursery.

59. Date of Next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 26th October 2023 **at the earlier time of 6.30 p.m..**

The meeting ended at 8.20 p.m.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Dated

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Annex A – Receipts and Payments Schedule (online payments by Cllrs Gale and J England)

TYPE	Number	DATE OF INVOICE	DATE OF ISSUE (CHEQUES) DATE PAYMENT SET UP (ONLINE)	BENEFICIARY	DESCRIPTION	Total Cost Inc. VAT	VAT	Authorised online by	Approvals
Faster Payment	21	N/A	26.6.23	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's salary - period 3	Redacted	£ -	JE &TG	Contract/budget
Direct Debit	N/A	Various	16.6.23	Lloyds Multipay Card	Ad hoc purchases (stationery/postage/donation)	£ 182.97	£ -	DD	Budget, donation £50 Meeting 17.4.23 minute 106 (ii)
Service Charge	N/A	N/A	30.6.23	Unity Trust Bank	Quarterly charge to 30.6.23	£ 18.00	£ -	Bank Charge	Budget
Faster Payment	22	28.6.23	6.7.23	Beechdown Arboriculture Limited	Tree survey	£ 300.00	£ 50.00	JE &TG	Meeting 27.4.23, minute 108 (i)
Faster Payment	23	4.7.23	6.7.23	Society of Local Council Clerks	50% of subscription, split with Slindon Parish Council	£ 93.50	£ -	JE &TG	Meeting 29.6.23, minute 34 (v)
Faster payment	24	7.7.23	8.7.23	AdPrint	Quarterly newsletter	£ 28.00	£ -	JE &TG	Budget
Faster Payment	25	N/A	19.7.23	Sarah Linfield	Homeworking allowance, quarter to 30.6.23 £78	£ 78.00	£ -	JE &TG	Budget and contract
Faster payment	26	N/A	25.7.23	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's salary - period 4	Redacted	£ -	JE &TG	Budget
Faster payment	27	25.7.23	28.7.23	Clapham & Patching Village Hall	Hall hire 29.6.23	£ 15.00	£ -	JE &TG	Budget
Direct Debit	N/A	N/A	17.7.23	Lloyds Multipay Card	Monthly fee	£ 3.00	£ -	JE &TG	Budget
Direct Debit	N/A	N/A	28.7.23	ICO	Mandatory registration - fee	£ 35.00	£ -	JE &TG	Budget
Standing order	N/A	N/A	28.7.23	Sarah Linfield	Clerk's salary - period 4	Redacted	£ -	JE &TG	Budget and contract
Faster Payment	28	undated	8.8.23	The Junction	Prize for Coronation Event 6.5.23	£ 30.00	£ -	JE &TG	Budget
Faster Payment	29	10.8.23	10.8.23	Mulberry & Co	Training courses x 2 for Cllr D England	£ 108.00	£ 18.00	JE &TG	Budget
Faster Payment	30	undated	16.8.23	C Smithers	Petrol and mower part repairs	£ 264.98	£ 6.92	JE &TG	Meeting 23.2.23, minute 93 (v)
Faster Payment	31	N/A	24.8.23	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's salary - period 5	Redacted	£ -	JE &TG	Budget

Annex B – Lighting at the WSCC Depot – Approved Wording

This complaint is raised jointly by Clapham and Patching Parish Councils.

In January 2022 Clapham Parish Council were first alerted to new lighting which had been installed at the WSCC Highways Depot in Clapham and which was directly shining into a nearby property. Since then other concerns have been raised to both Parish Councils and despite our combined efforts the situation is unresolved.

The matter was initially shared with our West Sussex County Councillor Deborah Urquhart who then liaised with the Highways Team to assist us. A site visit was undertaken following which we were advised that the lighting levels were “compliant with an operational highways depot and required to support the new CCTV system installed, necessary when reporting incidents to the police.” There was the suggestion that a complaint could be raised but as the lighting was essential for security and the health and safety of operatives in the depot, it was unlikely they could reduce lighting levels.

Whilst the Parish Councils recognise operational requirements at the depot they are keen to work with WSCC to the benefit of residents and identify any possible mitigations such as the feasibility of shades to direct the light downwards and reduce spillage.

The lighting is considered obtrusive and is impacting residents, both in the immediate vicinity and wider to Patching, and after almost 18 months no progress has been made.

Annex C - Report dated August 2023 by Cllr. Deborah Urquhart WSCC

Clapham Common is to be resurfaced on 3 Sept. It is important that residents move their cars from the road, otherwise the resurfacing won't happen.

I have reported the over-hanging vegetation from the Village Hall to Coldharbour Lane to Highways and they have raised a works order to get it cut back.

Last year residents reused and recycled over 200,000 tonnes of waste, helping to reduce the amount of general waste processed. We're asking people to continue to 'Think Before You Throw', and help us recycle as much as we can, especially materials such as black plastic pots, tubs and trays, coffee cups and empty plastic bottles with the lids on. Remembering to keep your recycling clean, dry, and loose from plastic carrier bags.

We have a new animation series which shows what items can and can't be recycled in West Sussex. As well as this the series shows what happens to the material after your bin is collected and how recycling and waste is processed: the [videos](#).

In collaboration with Biffa and UK Harvest each month we hold 7 Community Food Hubs (one in each district and borough). Community Food Hubs are open to all residents and are designed to help rescue food from suppliers that would otherwise have gone to waste, for a suggested donation of £3.50. The hubs are child friendly and allow residents to access affordable food, learn low-cost cooking options and find support on a range of social issues. For a full list of West Sussex supported food hubs please visit our [website](#). This initiative has been put forward for a national award on waste prevention.

We have teamed up with Get Composting to help you buy a composter at a reduced price - a 220 litre compost bin for £18.00 or a 330 litre compost bin for £21.00.

Visit our [website](#) for more information on subsidies.

Our West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service reached a huge milestone when its new state-of-the-art training centre and fire station in Horsham became operational last week.

The multi-million-pound site is the first of its type in the county. The training centre has been designed to support the county council's aims to become carbon neutral and has attracted interest as far away as South Korea and Hong Kong.

West Sussex has a new team of Green Business Champions to help businesses learn about the benefits of going green and getting started on sustainability.

Part of the county's Let's Go! Net Zero programme, the champions - themselves local business leaders - will take part in a year-long publicity and business engagement campaign that will include talks at business networks and events around the county, and online resources.

They'll take insights from their own journeys towards net zero to help others understand what works, what doesn't, and the easiest ways to get started.

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