



Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Clapham Parish Council

Held at Clapham and Patching Village Hall, Long Furlong, Clapham, BN13 3UT

On Thursday 26th October 2023 at 6.35 p.m.

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

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

No members of the public.

60. Election of Chair of the Parish Council

Councillor Gale tendered his resignation as Chair of the Parish Council and

It was **Resolved** – to appoint Councillor David England as Chair of the Parish Council, who signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Proper Officer.

61. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations.

None.

62. Public Participation

None.

63. Apologies for Absence

Councillor J England had sent her apologies and

It was **Resolved** – to approve the reason for absence.

64. Minutes from the Council Meeting Held on 31st 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.

65. Report

- Chair – Councillor England acknowledged the contribution of Councillor Gale in his role as previous Chair and offered the Council's best wishes to Councillor Gale and his wife Gilly.
- West Sussex County Council – Councillor Urquhart had sent her apologies and a report (Annex B) as she was travelling back from County Hall.
- Arun District Council – Councillor Cooper had sent his apologies as he was attending a District Council meeting.

66. Recreation Ground

i. Grass Cutting

Three quotes had been sought and two had been received. As the work was not required until March 2024, a decision was deferred to allow a possible third quote for comparison. A quote to maintain the area over the winter months, for up to three visits at a cost of £200 per visit (no VAT), had been submitted and

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It was **Resolved** – to appoint Colin Ramsbotham to undertake the winter work, subject to evidence of £10M Public Liability Insurance and a Risk Assessment.

ii. Tree Survey

Establishing ownership of the dead English elm was proving difficult with WSCC adamant that it was the responsibility of the owner of the footpath, with whom the Clerk had now met. However, the Land Registry Title cannot be relied on for boundary purposes so, in the interests of public safety, on an ex-gratia basis and without creating a future precedent, to meet the recommended timescales for felling the tree

It was **Resolved** – that the Parish Council appoint Beechdown Arboricultural Ltd to fell to ground level, ensuring there was no residual trip hazard, cost £ 220 net of recoverable VAT.

iii. Play and Adult Gym Inspections.

Foster Playscapes had visited and adjusted the timing of the gate closure as identified in the annual inspection report and

It was **Resolved** – to ratify the cost of the work at £120 net of recoverable VAT.

iv. Path Surface

Balfour Beatty had advised that it was unable to fund the project based on the total cost, albeit they might be able to help with laying the surface if the Parish Council paid for the materials. Concerns were cited over the Trustees' restriction on the width of the path and this aspect would need to be addressed as part of the Council's planned application for National Lottery grant funding as the path must be both accessible and safe for all users.

v. Commemorative Benches

The two new Coronation benches funded through the generosity of the National Lottery had been installed, placed 'on risk' through the insurer and the asset register updated.

vi. Fence (southern boundary)

Plans to meet with a Trustee were deferred until Spring 2024.

67. Grants and Donations

i. Donation Awarded

Arun Counselling Centre had written a letter of thanks, explaining that the donation had been used to purchase a 'feeling wheel' which aids communication and understanding as part of identifying emotions and their impact.

ii. Remembrance Day Purchase

Councillor Holmes had made purchases (3 large poppies and some flags) on behalf of the Parish Council totalling £30.97 and

It was **Resolved** – to ratify the purchases and reimburse her.

iii. Grant Received

The National Lottery had confirmed that the unspent grant residue of £127.09 could be for other Recreation Ground costs and

It was **Resolved** – to use this sum to offset the cost of felling the dead elm (refer minute 66 (ii)).

68. South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA)

Parish Priority Statement as part of the Local Plan Review

Members acknowledged the contribution made by Mrs Sally Morris in proof-reading the document, with suggested improvements now incorporated and

It was **Resolved** – to approve the Parish Priority Statement for submission to the SDNPA.

69. 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 September 2023, including the independent check of the accounts by a non-bank signatory (Councillor Monger).

iii. General Reserves and Earmarked Reserves

It was **Resolved** - to transfer £500 from Earmarked Reserves (National Lottery Award 2023) to General Reserves to meet the cost of installing the benches.

iv. Budget at 30.9.23

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

v. Draft Budget for 2024/25

Council members had received a briefing note and initial draft budget which would be finalised at the Parish Council's December meeting to meet Arun District Council's January deadline for submission of the precept requirement.

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

70. Insurance, Risk and Governance

i. Lloyds Multipay Card

Councillor J England was now confirmed as an administrator and would contact Lloyds Bank to arrange online access.

ii. Secure email systems/dedicated council email accounts

JNR Computer Services had now sent the set up instructions and log on details which the Clerk would forward to members.

iii. Councillor Training

Training is available through Mulberry & Co and members were encouraged to let the Clerk know if they wished to attend any sessions. Councillor D England had now attended Chair's training at a cost of £45 net of recoverable VAT.

iv. General Risk Review Assessment

It was **Resolved** – to re-adopt the General and Recreation Ground documents with some very minor changes and to explore the use of the school as a contingency venue for meetings.

v. End of Year Action Plan at 31.3.2023

Three of the five actions were now complete, with the appointment of an independent payroll provider considered prudent as an alternative to the Clerk's use of the HMRC payroll tool. The cost would be £41.75/per month, with the 2024/25 budget to allow for this to start from April 2024.

vi. Annual Adult Gym and Play Equipment - Independent Inspections.

It was **Resolved** – to appoint The Play Inspection Company to undertake the independent inspections at a total cost of £145 net of recoverable VAT.

vii. Website Accessibility Checks

The accessibility requirement on all public bodies' websites is likely to change (from the current WCAG 2.1AA level - which our website already meets - to the new standard of WCAG2.2AA with compliance from October 2024), but any changes would be made by Aubergine at no additional cost. The option of a one-off website accessibility check at £80 net of VAT was considered but no action was proposed for the current year.

71. Consultations

Rampion 2 – Development Consent Order (DCO) – Examination by Planning Inspectorate

Registration as an Interested Party allows submission of written comment and attendance at any hearings during the six month DCO process.

It was **Resolved** – to register and submit its response (Annex C) to meet the 6th November 2023 deadline.

72. Clerk's Update

i. Lighting at the West Sussex Depot

A response to the complaint to WSCC, made jointly with Patching Parish Council had been received (Annex D). Apart from proposed changes in the angle of the lighting to benefit those living close by, further clarification had been sought on whether the lighting was required 24/7.

ii. Anti-social behaviour /Other concerns

Anti-social driving in the Church Car Park had been reported to the police. A request had been made to WSCC to re-paint the give-way markings at the junction of Woodland Close and The Street.

iii. Upcoming Events

- Operation Downsway End of Season - online event - 30th October (the Clerk to join)
- SDNPA Parish Workshop Local Plan Review (in person) 7th December (Councillor Gale to join)
- Bersted Parish Council hosting an in person Chairs' event – 15th December (Councillor D England to join).

iv. Winter Gritting Arrangements

WhatsApp contacts for Sussex Manures are unchanged as the Clerk and Councillor Gale.

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

Nothing to report.

73. Planning Matters

i. Response made under the Council's Scheme of Delegation

a. SDNP/23/03631/TPO Clapham Wood Rectory Lane Clapham West Sussex BN13 3UU

It was **Resolved** – to ratify its delegated response to raise 'No Objection' - now determined as 'Approved'.

b. SDNP/22/03525/FUL & PIR APP/Y9507/W/23/3322382

The relocation of Lansdowne Nursery from Ferring including the erection of glasshouses and agricultural workers dwelling | Gravel Pit Long Furlong Clapham West Sussex

It was **Resolved** – to ratify its response to the wildlife surveys (Annex E).

ii. Lawful Development Certificate

SDNP/23/03723/LDP | Garage Conversion | 1 Woodland Close Clapham West Sussex BN13 3XR.

The application was noted – now determined as 'Approved' (Annex F).

iii. New Application

SDNP/23/03642/LIS | 3no. replacement windows, 1no. replacement external door, 1no. replacement gate | The Old Cottage 157 The Street Clapham West Sussex BN13 3UU.

It was **Resolved** – to raise 'No Objection' on the basis that the replacement windows, door and gate preserve and/or enhance the character of the existing listed building.

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iv. Previous Applications (Updates)

- a. SDNP/23/03089/HOUS | Alterations to rear extension and roof, internal remodel and loft conversion within existing roof. | 2 The Street Clapham West Sussex BN13 3UY – now determined as 'Approved'.
- b. SDNP/23/03007/FUL | Erection of a single dwelling and creation of new access (Re-submission following allowed Planning Appeal Decision APP/Y9507/W/19/3232116). | Gosling Croft Business Centre Long Furlong Clapham West Sussex BN13 3UT- now determined as 'Approved'.

It was **Resolved** - to exclude the press and public from confidential matters under discussion, minute 74 refers.

74. Confidential – Staff Matters

It was **Resolved** – that the Clerk's Spinal Column Point (rate of pay) and core weekly hours of work remain unchanged.

75. Date of Next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 14th December 2023 at 6.30 p.m. and the 2024 schedule noted, hall bookings to be confirmed and then website updated.

The meeting ended at 8.15 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, Holmes and J England)

Payments/receipts for meeting October 26th 2023									
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
Direct Debit	N/A	N/A	16.8.23	Lloyds Multipay Card	Monthly fee	£ 3.00	£ -	DD mandate	Budget
Standing order	N/A	N/A	29.8.23	Sarah Linfield	Clerk's salary - period 5	Redacted	£ -	SO mandate	Budget and contract
Faster payment	32	29.8.23	29.8.23	Clapham & Patching Village Hall	Hall hire - 24.8.23 (extraordinary meeting)	£ 20.00	£ -	SH & TG	Budget
Faster payment	33	1.9.23	5.9.23	Clapham & Patching Village Hall	Hall hire - 31.8.23	£ 15.00	£ -	JE & SH	Budget
Faster payment	34	7.9.23	8.9.23	Mulberry & Co	Training course x 1 for Cllr D England	£ 54.00	£ 9.00	JE&TG	Budget
Faster payment	35	undated	18.9.23	C Smithers	Mower parts for repair	£ 60.00	£ -	JE&TG	Budget
Faster payment	36	N/A	27.9.23	Sarah Linfield	Mileage - travel to West Sussex Record Office , Chichester - cost split 50:50 with Slindon PC	£ 9.00	£ -	JE & SH	Contract/Budget
Faster payment	37	N/A	27.9.23	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's salary - period 6	Redacted	£ -	JE & SH	Contract/Budget
Faster payment	38	26.9.23	27.9.23	Aubergine 262 Ltd	Annual subscription to WCAG 2.1AA-compliant council website framework, including 2 hours of support and 2GB file storage	£ 238.80	£ 39.80	JE & SH	Budget
Faster payment	39	N/A	27.9.23	Sarah Linfield	Homeworking allowance, quarter to 30.9.23	£ 78.00	£ -	JE & SH	Contract/Budget
Faster payment	40	27.9.23	29.9.23	Omnifence	Installation of 2 commemorative benches	£ 500.00	£ -	JE&TG	Meeting 29.6.23, minute 33 (iv)
Faster payment	41	12.10.23	13.10.23	AdPrint	Quarterly Newsletter Q3	£ 28.00	£ -	JE & SH	Contract/Budget
<u>Receipts</u>	Reason	Amount	Date	Payer					
Current	Precept - 2nd tranche	£7,030.50	8.9.23	ADC					* Signatories are SH = S Holmes, JE= J England, TG = T Gale
Instant Access	Credit Interest	£93.43	30.6.23	Unity Bank					
Instant Access	Credit Interest	116.58	30.9.23	Unity Bank					

Annex B – Report dated October 2023 by Cllr. Deborah Urquhart WSCC

- We Have been awarded more funding from Gov for installation of publicly available EV chargepoints. If anyone can identify a good location in Clapham for 4-6 chargepoints, let me know.
- We've updated our website to provide residents with more information on how to safely dispose of small electrical items. You must not dispose of small electricals in either your recycling or waste bins at home. This is because they often contain hazardous materials which can start a fire when the items are crushed during the collection and sorting processes.
- Between August 2022 and March 2023 our Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) and Mechanical Biological Treatment Plant (MBT) have had over 24 fires due to small electricals. If you do need to dispose of a single use vape please make use of the small electrical collections operated by your district or borough council, or visit one of our Recycling Centres.
- For information on how to dispose of small electricals and disposable vapes safely visit our [website](#)
- A new grant is supporting trainees in England to gain skills working with heat pumps. Heating engineers could receive a discount of up to £500 towards the cost of heat pump training, plus support and advice when installing a heat pump for the first time. Several heating manufacturers are offering extra discounts and offers to participating trainees, which could be worth up to a further £500 in vouchers and training. The initiative is funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and administered by the Midlands Net Zero Hub. The grant scheme is open until March 2025.

Annex C – Rampion 2 – Development Consent Order (DCO) – Examination by Planning Inspectorate

Whilst Clapham Parish Council recognises the importance of wind farms as an alternative source of energy it has concerns regarding the onshore route which will go through the South Downs National Park remain as set out as part of its consultation responses in December 2022 and March 2023.

Rampion 2 is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project which will inevitably pose risks to wildlife, flora and fauna, and, whilst we rely on specialists to identify these to avoid irreparable harm, the Council is extremely concerned at the impacts given the scale of the project and the sensitive area through which it will pass, the area of Clapham and Patching, lying wholly within the South Downs National Park.

WSCC's March 2023 response to the consultation process specifically highlighted a 'notable verge' within the parishes of Clapham and neighbouring Patching;

"Attention is drawn to a Notable Road Verge (NRV) (Nature-friendly road verges - West Sussex County Council) on the south side of the A280 (Long Furlong) in the vicinity of Long Furlong Lane. This road verge supports an outstanding range of butterflies. Twenty species of butterfly were recorded in August 2021, including two notable species, small blue and brown argus. It is noted that access would be required from the A280 (very close to this NRV) should AA-33 be used. Measures may be required to ensure that there is no potential for damage to the considerable wildlife interest of the verge. For example, construction traffic and materials must, on no account, be allowed onto the NRV".

We also understand that there is currently no policy requirement for the project to leave wildlife in a better state than it was before the development but that Rampion has given an undertaking to do so as part of the project. We want to make sure that this happens as part of the DCO application and examination.

We are aware that WSCC *"has a significant concern over option LACR-01d taken forward by the Applicant. The archaeological sensitivity of this section of the route is exceptionally high. LACR-01d crosses an area of the South Downs which forms part of an incredibly rich and complex multi-period prehistoric landscape of national significance including scheduled Early Neolithic flint mining sites constituting the earliest evidence industrial activity in Britain"*. These concerns are also shared by the Parish Council, as previously reported.

Annex D - Lighting at the WSCC Depot – WSCC's Response

"I can confirm that your complaint has been recorded as a Representation under the Councils Corporate Complaints Procedure and that this is the formal response.

I have now spoken to my engineering team and they have attended site and will look to reduce the angle of the light that appears to be causing the main issue.

Originally the matter was referred to Arun District Council Environmental Health team to investigate as a matter of light pollution and I believe the advice provided by ADC was that no action was required hence why nothing was done regarding the lighting.

As an operation Highways Depot that is accessed 24x7x365, lighting is going to be required to ensure the site is kept safe and secure. While I do appreciate that this will inevitably cause a degree of light emission from site, it is unavoidable so we can only address the issue relating to direct light shining on neighbouring properties".

Annex E – Response to Wildlife Surveys

It is of great concern that it appears that the appellant places so little importance on biodiversity that the wildlife surveys have been provided so late in the day, with insufficient opportunity to assess and respond to the mitigations proposed. There are observations within the surveys that date back to September 2022 so it is very unsatisfactory that these are only now provided as part of an appeals process. We believe there has been no real consideration of the effect of the relocation to this site on the wildlife, that the mitigations are ineffective and we will rely on the planning authority and their access to suitable expertise to address the specifics. The Parish Council is not reassured by any of the surveys now provided and continues to **strongly object** to the application, informed by local opinion including those who expressed grassroots opposition at the Appeals hearing, specifically sharing concerns for this wildlife rich habitat. The focus must be on safeguarding our fragile ecosystems, protecting hedges and woodland and wildlife-friendly habitats, not development of a piece of land so totally unsuitable in all respects.

Annex F – Explanation of Planning Applications with suffix LDP

"The suffix 'LDP' refers to an application for a Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed). These applications are a formal test of permitted development, and the applicant is enquiring whether a proposed development/use complies with permitted development legislation, and therefore full planning permission would not be required. As these applications are purely a test of permitted development rights, it is not necessary to notify neighbours or consultees, and there is no statutory responsibility to do so. It is purely for the officer to assess the proposal against permitted development legislation and determine whether the development/use does or does not comply with it".