

**YAPTON PARISH COUNCIL**

A Meeting of the Yapton Parish Council was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 in the Club Room of the Yapton & Ford Village Hall, commencing at 7.55pm.

Present: Mrs Philippa Greenan (In the Chair), Mr Andrews, Ms Rosemarie Davidge, Mr Jones, Mrs Vicky Newman and Ms Rachel Turner.

Also present: County Councillor Jacky Pendleton, Mr Gardiner (Clerk of Yapton Parish Council) and 11 members of the public.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

38. Councillor Mrs Amanda Worne had sent her apologies to the meeting.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

39. Members were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or pecuniary interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. None were raised.

**RESIGNATION OF PARISH COUNCILLORS**

40. At the meeting of the Parish Council on the 15th January 2024, the Clerk reported on the resignation of Dilys Lownsbrough as a Parish Councillor with immediate effect. Following that Michael O'Dell resigned as a Parish Councillor on the 15th February 2024 with immediate effect.
41. The Clerk reported that, after consulting with Arun District Council's Election Department, he had placed the statutory notice required following notification of the vacancies for the required period. The Notice was published on the 29th February 2024. If no local electors request an election to be held to fill the vacancies the Parish Council can fill the vacancies by co-option. The closing date of such a notice is the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.
42. The Clerk reported that he had received an e-mail dated 5th March 2024 containing the resignation of Karen Donnelly as a Parish Councillor with immediate effect. The Clerk reported that he had consulted Arun District Council's Election Department, and the Council would be required to place a separate statutory notice advertising this latest vacancy. The Notice would be published shortly and if no local electors request an election to be held to fill this vacancy then the Parish Council can fill the vacancy by co-option. The closing date of such a notice would be around the second week of April 2024.

43. The Clerk suggested that the vacancies be advertised in the Yapton News, on the Council's website and on the Council's Notice Board with a closing date for the receipt of applications of Wednesday 10th April 2024. This would be subject to the outcome of the statutory notices and if 10 local electors had come forward requesting a by-election to fill the vacancies.
44. Applicants could then be invited for interview by the Interview Panel to be held in week commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024. The successful candidates would then take up their positions at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council due to take place on the 13th May 2024.

## URGENT MATTERS

45. There were no urgent matters for this meeting to deal with.

## PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

46. The following issues were raised by members of the public present:

- (a) **Proposed Footpath Diversion, Cinders Lane, Yapton - Order Plan DMNO 11/18 Cinders Lane to FP 166** – A number of local residents raised the issue that a Footpath Diversion Notice had been posted by the footpath around February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 informing the Public that it was proposed to divert the existing footpath which runs along the northern and eastern boundary of the Allotments, to take a diagonal route across the allotments to a point on Charles Square where a footpath had already been created to meet the proposed diverted footpath.

The consequences of this would be to open up the Allotments to all who used the proposed footpath thereby reducing the security of the site and the risk of loss of produce being grown on individual allotments. Between 6 – 8 plots would be directly affected by the creation of a 2.5m wide pathway across those plots.

The Clerk informed the Council that he had been sent a notification of the Proposed Footpath Diversion on the same day that the notice had been posted in Cinders Lane. If the Council were minded to send a response to the West Sussex County Council regarding this matter then that was due to be submitted by 13th April 2024. Councillor Mrs Newman gave a brief outline in response to the many questions regarding the site which were raised.

## MINUTES

47. *Resolved* - That the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chair.

## MATTERS ARISING

48. The Clerk referred to various matters requiring update from the minutes of the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The issues raised were as follows:
- (a) **Minute 4 (b) – Flooding in Bilsham Road outside new development** –The County Highways and District Planners had been contacted and the Council’s concerns would be passed on to the developer. The missing railings in front of the properties on Bilsham Road would be installed in accordance with the plans.
  - (b) **Minute 6 (a) – Statue of Duncan Goodhew** - no further information has been forthcoming to date.
  - (c) **Minute 6 (e) - Minute 159 (b) and Minute 131 (d) – 25/09/2023 - West Sussex Chargepoint Network** – The Clerk reported that he had been in touch with the County Council and their contractors and held a virtual meeting with them and a representative from Arun District Council on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023. This was a precursor to them collating more information prior to a site meeting and a date was awaited for this to take place, hopefully in January 2024. No further updates on this at the present time.
  - (d) **Minute 6 (g) - Minute 159 (g) (13/11/2023) & Minute 139 (25/09/2023) - Village Hall Car Park** – The Clerk reported that he had received no further update from Councillor Greenan regarding the possibility of creating a policy for the control of the use of the Village Hall Car Park including a review and update of the current Byelaws.
  - (e) **Minute 11 (a) – Defibrillators** – Councillor Rosemarie Davidge reported that both Defibrillators had been installed outside the Bilsham Stores on Bilsham Road and outside the Yapton Chippy giving 24-hour access to the apparatus. The Parish Council wished to thank the Managers and the Owners of the Bilsham Stores on Bilsham Road and the Yapton Chippy for their generosity in allowing the units to be placed on their property and for agreeing to pay for the ongoing energy costs used by the units.

Councillor Davidge said she was indebted to Adam Marshall from London Hearts who had also volunteered to become a Guardian of the machines and would register them on “The Circuit”. He would also keep the log of the monthly checks and also review the apparatus as and when they had been used. He had offered to put on an engagement session for up to 30 people to understand how to use the machines.

Councillor Davidge suggested that the Parish Council agrees to the payment of an Honorarium to Mr Marshall. *A sum of £200 was agreed by the Council.*

## COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS

49. County Councillor Mrs Jacky Pendleton was present and covered the following items:
- ❖ Water Issues including Flooding and a collapsed sewer;
  - ❖ Arun have been hosting a Flood Forum;

- ❖ West Sussex County Council have held a first meeting with Southern Water, Arun District Council, some Parish Councils to discuss recent flooding across the Arun District, this is an active group trying to find long term solutions. Some issues are caused by the fact we live on a coastal plain;
  - ❖ Problems with sewage, Southern Water systems are old and need complete refurbishment;
  - ❖ Potholes – explained more efficient machine and manual filling of potholes;
  - ❖ Some contractors being replaced and WSCC working on the situation, there has been a drop-off of roads defects being reported by the public;
  - ❖ Progression of two Traffic Regulation Orders in the village;
  - ❖ Introduction of hedgehog runs with correct signage.
50. Hot spots of flooding in Yapton area – Councillor Rosemarie Davidge had created a list of drainage hot spots in the village along with Andy Faulkner. They had met with Highway staff and agreed to send a map of hot spots to the County Highways department. They have not done a camera survey in the last two years. County Councillor Jacky Pendleton suggested that this was not being done through the correct process and the County Councillor should be actively involved in all correspondence.
51. District Councillor Mrs Amanda Worne was not present and had not sent in a written report.

#### **UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL PCSO**

52. PCSO Natalie Shrimpton was not present at the meeting and she had not submitted a report. Councillor Michael Jones reported that he had recently written to the Police and Crime Commissioner on this issue.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

53. The Parish Council dealt with the following items of correspondence which had been received since the date of the last meeting:

**(a) Portrait of the King**

The Council noted an e-mail dated 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 received from Claire Pritchard, Communications Manager at Arun District Council informing the Council that the government is offering a free portrait of His Majesty the King to all town, parish, and community councils in the United Kingdom from 12 February.

Town, parish, and community councils can apply for one free framed portrait per council and also access a frequently asked questions document for questions about the portrait and the scheme. Once the registration has been accepted, an order can be placed, and delivery details can be provided.

The closing date for applications is 28 March. The deadline for all other eligible public authorities to apply has also been extended to 28 March.

The Council **resolved** to acquire a Portrait of King Charles III, free of charge, under the government's scheme.

**(b) AirS Rural Housing Enabling Service – How can we help you?**

The Council noted an e-mail dated 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024 received from Graham Maunders, Community Led Housing Adviser, informing the Parish Council that Action in Rural Sussex (AirS) is relaunching its rural enabling service, building on many years of successful Rural Housing Enabling to help increase provision across Sussex.

AirS has a long track record of supporting rural communities with the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs, having been one of the first to employ a Rural Housing Enabler back in the 1990's. Their service has enabled the provision of 17 rural affordable housing schemes - some 275 homes. The Service will cover the whole of rural East and West Sussex. From 1st April 2024 AirS will be appointing an additional, dedicated Rural Housing Enabler to work alongside existing staff.

The Parish Council **resolved** to invite Graham Maunders, Community Led Housing Adviser to its July meeting to take up the offer of a preliminary discussion and gaining more information on how AirS might assist the Council to provide more locally affordable rural housing in our community.

**(c) Bognor Fun Bus CIC**

The Chairman has recently received an approach from Mr Jan Cosgrave of the Bognor Fun Bus CIC requesting that he be invited to a future meeting of the Parish Council to update the Council on the latest activities being offered by the Fun Bus.

The Bognor Fun Bus CIC provides play and youth activities for children and young people in this area. The Bognor Fun Bus ran from 1983 for 28 years and recorded over 96,000 attendances in its operations. The BFB CIC seeks to provide exciting yet safe activities through a converted double decker bus. A number of Parish Councils took advantage of the service in 2023.

Following a suggestion from the Chairman, The Parish Council **resolved** that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman meet with Mr Cosgrave to discuss his proposals regarding regarding the Bognor Fun Bus CIC and how it could operate in the Yapton area.

**(d) Great British Spring Clean returns from 15<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

The Parish Council noted receipt of an e-mail dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 informing the Parish Council that the Great British Spring Clean returns from 15 - 31 March and the Keep Britain Tidy Group are asking #LitterHeroes across the country to join the #BigBagChallenge once more, showing that the environment belongs to everyone. Details can be found on the Keep Britain Tidy Group website to sign up and share information to be made available to resident volunteers. This event is happening as Keep Britain Tidy marks its 70th anniversary!

## ISSUES RAISED BY PARISH COUNCILLORS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

54. **Organisation Working Group** - The Parish Council agreed last year that a revision to the committee structure of the Parish Council be created and that a new website be designed in collaboration with those councillors who have been involved in the Communications Working Group. A final draft has now been created of both the new Parish Council Committee Structure and a basic new website structure. The Council agreed that any final structure proposals would need to be agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council for implementation in the new civic year commencing in May 2024.
55. **Structure of the Parish Council** - The Parish Council resolved at its meeting on the 12th September 2023 (Minute 136) to make an application to the Arun District Council with a request that the District Council conducts a Community Governance Review with a view to increasing the number of Parish Councillors elected to represent the residents in the Parish of Yapton. *The Clerk reported that a letter had been sent to the Monitoring Officer on the 9th October 2023 and a reply is still awaited.* The Clerk was asked to contact the Monitoring Officer at Arun District Council to see what progress is being made.

## AWARD OF CONTRACTS FOR GROUNDS MAINTENANCE ON THE KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELD, LITTER PICKING / COLLECTION AND ALLOTMENT GRASS CUTTING IN 2024/25

56. The Council received the schedule of quotations (*confidential copy attached to the minute book*) received from those individuals and companies wishing to be considered for the provision of the following contracts. A total of 14 invitations had been sent out and responses were received from 4 bidders. Following a discussion on the quotations received and the closeness of the two lowest bids received for the Grass Cutting at Cinders Lane Allotments it was decided to continue with the person who had provided the service in 2023/2024 as follows:
- (a) Litter picking/collection on the King George V Playing Field and local areas – William Cronin – Excelsior Landscaping;
  - (b) Grass Cutting at the Cinders Lane Allotment Site - William Cronin – Excelsior Landscaping;

And to note that

- (c) *Idverde Ltd had been awarded a three-year contract for the period 2022/23 – 2024/2025 in 2022 for the Grounds Maintenance on the King George V Playing Field (mainly grass cutting).*

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF MEMBERS/STAFF**

57. Councillor Michael Jones reported that he had attended training provided by Angmering Parish Council on the Levelling Up initiative. The Clerk of the Council had not attended any training courses since the date of the last meeting.

## **PARISH COUNCIL MAGAZINE (YAPTON NEWS)**

58. The Clerk reported that a 32-page paper version of the Yapton News was being prepared for publication in March 2024 (Edition 124), which should be available for distribution on or around Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024.
59. The Clerk reported that a Local Resident and his wife who had delivered the Yapton News for the Park Road / Park Drive / Fairholme Drive area had decided to step down from this volunteer role after 20 years. The Parish Council congratulated them on their invaluable assistance over the years. Several new distributors were being allocated rounds after coming forward following the appeal in the January edition.

## **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

### **ALLOTMENTS**

60. Diversion of Footpath through the Cinders Lane Allotment Site – the Parish Council agreed that it would be objecting to the proposed diversion on many grounds including the ongoing security of the site and the loss of 6 to 8 plots. Councillor Andrews and Councillor Mrs Newman agreed to draft a response to the proposed diversion on behalf of the Council.
61. The Parish Council received an update from Councillor Andrews on current issues at the Allotments. The Clerk reported that he was liaising with Mr Caiger on the re-allocation of certain plots and after having written to two plot-holders asking them to conform with the rules regarding their behaviour on the Allotments, he would be issuing Notices to Quit as they had not complied with the written requests.
62. The Clerk reported that, following various changes, several plots had become vacant and Mr Caiger was in the process of re-letting these. The Clerk reported that all the plot-holders had paid their fees due for the forthcoming year.

### **EMERGENCY & RESILIENCE**

63. The Clerk reported that there were no issues to be raised under this heading. It was agreed that the local flooding issues would be a topic for the Joint Committee when it meets. The status of the Council's Emergency Plan was raised and it was agreed that the Clerk should send a copy of the latest Plan to all Parish Councillors.

### **PLANNING**

64. The Parish Council was informed that there were no matters to be raised from the Planning Committee held earlier this evening;

## PLAYING FIELD

65. The Clerk informed the Council that remedial works to the Zip Wire would be completed shortly following receipt of parts. The Toddler Rocker Seat had still not been completely fixed, the replacement bolts had been received and some had been installed.
66. It was reported that the Dog Bin was overflowing and that there had been recent anti-social behaviour in the area, including the throwing of eggs. It was suggested that these incidents should be reported to the Police and the local Community Warden.
67. The Clerk reported that he had obtained a quotation from a company who provides Tree Surveys to town and Parish Council. The quotation covered all the trees on the King George V Playing Field, on the boundary of the Main Road Car Park and the small car park.
68. The Parish Council agreed to accept the quotation from Ligna Consultancy Ltd on the terms outlined by the Clerk in their submission dated 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024.
69. It was agreed that Councillor Mark Andrews be appointed to the vacant position on the Playing Field Committee following the resignation of Michael O'Dell.

## YAPTON ECO GROUP

70. Councillors Mark Andrews updated the Parish Council on matters arising and any actions taken since the latest meeting of the working group. He referred to recent work undertaken by young people and in particular with the Scouts in the Play area.

## EVENTS WORKING GROUP

71. The Parish Council noted an update from Councillor Rosemarie Davidge who reported that there would be a May Fair on the Playing Field on May 6<sup>th</sup> 2024. Adverts would be posted on the website, social media and in the Yapton News.
72. Councillor Davidge reported that the Christmas Panto had raised a profit of £697.14 which had been paid into the Parish Council Accounts.
73. Councillor Davidge requested that a second Parish Councillor be appointed to join the Events Working Group. It was **resolved** that Councillor Mrs Pippa Greenan be appointed to sit on the Working Group.

## REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

### 74. Village Hall

- (a) Councillor Mrs Newman gave a brief update on a recent meeting of the Village Hall Trustees including the progression of works on the Accessible Toilet project and the introduction of a new licensing system.



## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

75. The Council **resolved**:

- (a) To approve the financial statements showing the receipts and payments for the months of January and February 2024 (*schedules attached to the minute book*);
- (b) To note the Reconciliation of the Council's Bank Accounts and the Public Sector Deposit Fund as at 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (*copy attached to the minutes*), and to approve that Councillor Mark Andrews, who is not a signatory to the Bank Accounts, be appointed to check and sign off the reconciliation with the Bank Statement and the Deposit Fund Statement;
- (c) To note the summary of income and expenditure over the various budget heads for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (*copy attached to the minute book*).

## STAFFING MATTERS

76. *It was resolved by the Parish Council that all Members of the Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as they related to personal staffing matters.*

### 77. Position of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

The Clerk updated the Parish Council that it was his intention to resign from the position of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer as at 31st May 2024. The Clerk handed the Vice-Chair his letter of resignation which gave the Council over 11 weeks notice. The Clerk was contracted to give only one months' notice of resignation.

The Clerk left the meeting at this point.

78. The Vice-Chairman and other Members of the Parish Council reported on the work which had already been carried out in anticipation of the current Clerk's resignation including the following issues:

- (i) The future staffing structure needed to provide a resilient organisation to support the work of the Parish Council and agreement of any budgetary implications;
- (ii) Agreement of the Terms and Conditions to be applied to the new staffing structure;
- (iii) Arrangements for the recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced staff for the new role(s) created in the future staffing structure;
- (iv) Whether to appoint recruitment specialists to assist the Parish Council in the recruitment and selection process;
- (v) Appointing a panel of parish councillors to assist in the selection and interviews of potential candidates;
- (vi) Identifying dates for a possible special meeting of the Parish Council to agree to the recommendations of any such panel appointed;

79. The Clerk was invited to re-join the Councillors in the meeting at this point.
80. During their discussion the Parish Council decided to increase the number of Councillors serving on the Staffing Committee to assist in the recruitment and selection of new members of staff. It was resolved to add Councillors Michael Jones, Mrs Vicky Newman and Ms Rachel Turner to the Committee.

(The Existing Members of the Staffing Committee are Councillors Mrs Amanda Worne (Chairman), Mrs Philippa Greenan (Vice-Chair) and Rosemarie Davidge).

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024. The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on this evening commencing at 7.00PM followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. The Parish Council Meeting will take place at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting followed by the Planning Committee.**

**Meeting closed at 9.55pm**

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Chair  
Councillor Mrs Amanda Worne