

Chirton & Conock Parish Council
Annual 'Open' Minutes of the Meeting
Monday 26th April 2021 at 7.15pm

The public were invited to attend this meeting online via 'Zoom pro'

email: clerk@chirtonandconock-pc.org.uk

Please note that Meeting may be recorded

Present: Cllrs. David Harmes, Chair (**DH**), Paul Mills, Vice Chair (**PM**), Neil Warburton (**NW**),
Kay Clare (**KC**),

Attending: Susannah Lampard (**Clerk**)
Sharon Prance (RFO).
2 Parishioners

1 Introduction of online Meeting format and Welcome by the Chair

2 Received apologies for absence: PO, PRH

3 Annual report by the Chair on the work of the Parish Council and Committees 2019-2020.

Councillors: 5 of 7 places are currently under nomination, one councillor left in February 2021, Lyn Organ, due to over commitments with work & Neil Warburton has moved away from the area and remained as long as he has been able to continue but has not been able to stand for re-election. The Chair expressed significant thanks for their service to the PC over the years. Their contribution to the Parish Council will be greatly missed.

Five Councillors stood for re-election – we will look to co-opt 2 Councillors after the 10th May 20221 to return to 7 (full complement)

Sharon Prance joined as RFO, late 2019 – making a great difference

All meetings held virtually to normal schedule via Zoom Pro. Audits for both years were completed to the normal timetable.

Precept – No increase on Band 'D' property - expected shortfall of around £2,300 vs anticipated budget.

Corona Virus – Fantastic response from Parishioners, helping those isolating & high risk and/or who needed shopping or prescriptions and minimising journeys out. PC produced fliers to ensure everyone was reached and also set up a neighbourhood co-ordinator structure where residents looked out directly for their immediate neighbours. Facebook, Whatsapp and Zoom were very helpful tools for messaging requests, meetings and planning. Response to the pandemic is ongoing.

Partnered with Chirton School to arrange 2 food collections for Devizes Food Bank – great response & much appreciated

What's been done:

Neighbourhood Development Plan – The Referendum for our NDP was held on the 8th August 2019 – some 3 years after being started. Given the delays at Wiltshire Council level, this timescale can be considered a significant success and is down to the hard work of the NDP Steering Group and our Consultant David King of Planning Street.

92% of the votes cast were in favour of the NDP, meaning that it has now passed and has legal status. Documents are available to view on the PC website.

WW1 Memorial Plaque unveiling ^[1]_[SEP] - Held on the 10th November 2019 - this event was well attended; 64 people came and the weather was kind. The success of this event was largely due to extremely hard work and preparations to bring this all together by Cllrs' JM, PM and PRH. The oak post on which the plaque is displayed was donated. Anthony Mather led the Act of Remembrance and the tribute was completed by the significant skill of our young Bugler.

War Memorial – desire to create one – form & location tbc – parish consultation planned

Village Hall – Trust Deed updated & approved by the Charities Commission. PC is now Sole Corporate Trustee and historic legal fees have now been fully repaid in 6 monthly tranches. No further developments to report at this stage.

A342 – Allowed to fall into a disgraceful state of repair. Paul Oatway (Pewsey Vale Councillor) secured £345k of funding for repairs after significant pressure.

Parish Steward Scheme:- PRH is PC representative. Various works undertaken – gully pumping, hedge cutting, pothole filling - resource reallocated to cover covid absences/filling potholes/salt spreading, for a number of months.

School – Zig-Zag lines, school signs, flashing lights at pickup times & a 20MPH restriction installed. School sign requested for top of The Hollow.

Village fete – successful fete was held in July 2019 – thanks to Justin Kennedy for hosting. Nothing held in 2020 or currently planned for 2021 due to Corona-virus restrictions.

Manor Farm: Lots 1 & 4 will still be owned by Future Farms. No further meetings or news. This could be of relevance, depending upon what is done, to the viability of a new Village Hall on its current plot.

Keep Britain Tidy – Spring Clean - Litter picking – this year planned for **Sunday 13th June @ 2pm**

Rights of Way: Committee formed to look at R.O.W's. CHIR17 being re-established. Others to be reviewed.

To come:

Yeoman development – Plan for the installation of a footpath along the front has been approved by Wiltshire Council. PC to make a 20% contribution. Works expected to happen during the 21-22 financial year.

Phone Box – Door repaired & full repainting planned during summer

Flood & Winter planning – Plan to add 1 more salt bin later this year.

4 Receive Financial draft of un-audited accounts year 20/21 by Responsible Financial Officer Year ending 31st March 2021

The past year has been different from previous years due to Covid, and the restrictions that have occurred in terms of major projects taking place.

The Parish Council's income and expenditure both increased year on year, with income exceeding expenditure by £3,201.50 at year end.

Income

In addition to the annual precept, we also received a donation from the closure of the local Women's Institute that is to be used towards the creation of a World War memorial. This money has been placed in a restricted fund and it is hoped that the project will be completed within the next year. We were also fortunate to secure a Covid Grant which was used to good effect over the lockdowns, enabling communication to be increased within the village, through the purchase of Zoom subscriptions and stationery.

Expenditure

There have not been any major asset purchases in the last year, however a major refurbishment of the village telephone box was carried out, pest control was required at the parish hall and a new battery and pad sets were purchased for the defibrillator. Salary payments increased year on year, due in part to a heavier workload for both the Clerk and RFO. Similar to previous years, the Parish Council again paid for every household to receive a monthly copy of the Redhorn News and the maintenance of the grass verges and bin emptying around the village.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, major expected project expenditure was postponed. However, our earmarked reserves going into 2021/22 include money set aside for Rights of Way, The Old Yeoman footpath contribution, parish maintenance and emergency fund expenditure.

I would like to thank the Chair and Vice Chair for prompt authorisation of bank payments, Councillor Neil Warburton for organising and implementing our secure cloud file storage system, and all the Councillors for their patience over the past year in digesting the myriad of financial information and policies that have been distributed. It is very much appreciated.

Sharon Prance

Responsible Financial Office April 2021

5 Report from local Councillor Paul Oatway The Chair read the following:

"Good Evening Chair, members of the Parish Council and the communities of Chirton and Conock.

I apologise for not being able to attend this evening due to a family commitment, typical after from what I recall being present at every one of your meetings during the last year and beyond.

My update for you this has been an incredible year which has had a dramatic impact on all of us. I am pleased to report that Wiltshire Council during this pandemic has been able to maintain all of its services both operationally, administratively and at a strategic level, in addition it has supported our communities both financially, looking after the vulnerable and allocating considerable funding and support towards foodbank initiatives and the like. We have and continue to support business with the allocation of thousands and thousands of pounds in grants not loans grants and we are in the process of

delivery our restart programme of grants to businesses with grants ranging from 6K to 10K per business.

More locally I have maintained my presence across the Vale helping and supporting where I can. I have continued to support all of my Parish Councils, wider communities and members of The Armed Forces that live and work within my Division. I am very concise of several areas that cause concern to you such as excess speed and the state of the roads. I was particularly pleased to have had the A345 completely resurfaced from Upavon to North Newton and secured 345K after some serious lobbying at County Hall to have considerable works undertaken on the A342 between Rushall and Conock. I am sure like you I was disappointed in the quality of the work after so much of my time was invested in securing this project. Be assured I have not let this go and raised my concerns at Cabinet level.

To speeding I am in serious conversations with Wiltshire Police to increase enforcement in our villages and this stream of work will advance in the coming months. I am also pleased with the funding I have secured for footpaths at North Newton and Woodborough which likewise has been greatly appreciated.

Whilst out and about this week I have helped two of our communities, an elderly couple had been waiting since January to have a huge pot hole filled outside of their house, within 24 hours this matter was resolved and the Parish Steward on scene dealing with the matter, that reminds me of the huge pothole that you had at Chirton which I had swiftly repaired once it was brought to my attention and a nice email in return from the resident. The second matter was another couple who had been struggling with our planners for months and months to have an application registered, a few phone calls that night and by midday the following day the matter resolved, much to the unbelief of the couple involved.

Congratulations to this council in the election on the 6th May, believe me you should all be proud of what you do and have achieved for your communities, even if it is a bit uphill at times.

I wish you all well and hope to see you again after the 6th May.”

Best wishes Paul

Paul Oatway

6 Open Forum for Parishioners questions and views
Representation was made by two Parishioners as follows:

With knowledge of the Yeoman footpath and the history of it, where did discussions about a footpath from the Hollow to the School lead, given the danger of walking along the road during busy traffic commute times? The Chair responded with a brief summary of a previous meeting discussion around the feasibility of a path that would have to be given consideration by all as it would substantially change the look of the village. The safety aspect of path running straight over driveways during busy times for school run and potential commute traffic has also been a cause for concern and discussion. Cost is a key factor, to be clear, using the figures that will be paid for scheduled works at the Old Yeoman footpath; paths covering the length of the village would require, it was calculated

the equivalent of approximately 5-6 years of Precept parish funds to achieve. On the positive side; The CHIR17 work to open up the path running parallel with the Hollow and the Street is being pursued as an alternative route to school/path and progress is being made. The proposed traffic calming measures to CATG await further discussion and a speed assessment and we are working with Cllr. PO to achieve this. The Yew tree near to Mill Farmhouse was reported as needing to be added to list of trees to be cut back. A second Parishioner spoke in support of the work that the PC had continued to do, despite the challenging times and thanked Councillor's for the brilliant job that they had done to keep this 'spread Parish' together. She supports the 20mph issue that is being discussed and feels that the grass verges and wide street are an historical feature of the Village that these should remain despite parked cars and an increase in traffic. The school over the past 5 years has been a success story; it is unfortunate that this comes with increased traffic volume, however she very much supports the progress of the School. The zig-zag lines painted by the Council seem to have had some effect on spreading out parking effectively.

Consultation for a War Memorial was raised and an intention to proceed this coming year with further planning promised by Councillor PM.

7 Chair to close meeting

The Meeting was closed by the Chair

Meeting Ends 20:02

Agreed and Signed:..... Dated:

David Harmes – Chairman Chirton & Conock Parish Council

Susannah Lampard
Clerk to the Council