

CANDOVERS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Date:	Monday 11 th December 2023	Time: 7:00pm
Venue:	Candover Valley Club	
Present:	Jonathan Moseley Adam Willmott Edwina Curtis Hayward Antonia Cunningham Paul Gaskell (until 7:40pm) Wendy Simson	Chair Vice Chairman Borough Councillor Clerk
Apologise:	Juliet Henderson Sam Foote	County Councillor

1553 Welcome

The Chairman introduce Antonia to the Councillors as a resident of Chilton Candover Antonia has expressed an interest in representing the village on the Parish Council. Cllr Curtis Hayward proposed the appointment and the Vice Chair seconded it. Antonia was therefore unanimously co-opted onto the Parish Council.

The Clerk explained that Hampshire Association of Local Councils run a course for new Councillors which she recommended that Cllr Cunningham attend, the next dates are:

- Wednesday 24th January (10am to 2:30pm) in Winchester
- Tuesday 26th March (10am to 2:30pm) in Winchester

Details of the course content can be found at:

<https://www.hampshirealc.org.uk/the-knowledge-and-core-skills-for-councillors/>

Action: Cllr Cunningham to confirm if either of these dates are suitable so Clerk can book.

The full list of courses is available at:

<https://www.hampshirealc.org.uk/development-all/>

Action: Any Councillors wishing to attend any of the courses to inform the Clerk.

1554 Public forum

Cllr Gaskell joined the meeting and gave an update on Basingstoke & Deane Brough Council (B&DBC). The new administration has decided to liquidate some of the investments which have not been performing over the last 2-3 years and spend this on additional Council Housing. The Chairman asked if the accounts were available to the public, Cllr Gaskell provided the following link where these can be viewed:

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/finance>

B&DBC are 3,500 houses short of the target but until the Local Plan is in place and development sites are allocated, other development is being passed on application for larger housing which generates a larger profit and there is no social housing. The Manydown development will generate 2,500 homes in the first phase with a total of 9,000 but this will take some years to complete as there is limited infrastructure. The new hospital at J7 of the

M3 is out for consultation as is a warehousing area at J5 M3. The plan for an Amazon warehouse at J7 has not been presented again but it is expected.

Cllr Curtis Hayward attended the Policing meeting on Tuesday 17th October and sent Councillors the following notes:

Donna Jones gave a brief overview of her attempts to improve policing in rural areas and to ensure that more crimes are properly investigated (one member of the audience who had previously worked in the Met said that the conviction rate for Hampshire was shockingly low at 4%!). She was very positive about the relatively new Chief Constable who she assured us is very busy with lots of doors being knocked down at the moment! There are 48-50 known organised crime gangs across the county.

She is very aware there is much criticism of the lack of visibility of the police, especially in the countryside. Improving this has been one of her key pledges. Some police stations and police counters are being reopened, although there doesn't seem to be anything new in our area. Apparently, we are well served already with 2 police stations in Basingstoke. There is currently a re-organisation of the police force taking place to return to area police with designated beat officers in specific cars who will attend incidents just in their area and therefore build up a better understanding of local needs. There was a suggestion by Paul Gaskell that these vehicles are not off-road, but Donna Jones assured us that they do have off-road cars and they also have some off road motor bikes. She encouraged people to use the Disc App to share information about incidents and crime. I presume that our PCSO has informed local landowners and others about this app?

They are currently trying to recruit more PCSO's and have another 20 starting but they are difficult to recruit. She has ensured that candidates for the police do not need to have a degree as this can be a barrier to recruitment, especially for many from the armed forces who have very good transferable skills.

She is very aware of how unsatisfactory the 101 service is but encouraged people to email the police. Juliet Henderson shared that she had had a very quick response using this recently. A number of farmers and game keepers present at the meeting complained about not being supported during some very serious incidents, in one case being told that they were in a non-policed area. Donna Jones said this was totally unacceptable and she would look into these specific cases.

She admitted that too many crimes had not been investigated and said that the analysis of incidents and crime is now being coordinated much more effectively by a unit based in Basingstoke.

Cllr Gaskell explained that while additional resources were being deployed in the Rural South area that this would not be a replacement for PC Reid.

The Chairman informed the Council that there had been a huge increase in the number of rural crimes in the area, Cllr Foote had informed the Chairman that one farm had 30 incidents since August. The officer designated to the area PC Holdsworth has been off sick and the PCSO has limited powers and was not able to deal with most of the scenarios in the villages. Cllr Gaskell suggested that the Chairman write to Donna Jones expressing the Parish Council's concerns about the increase in crime and limited resources allocated.

Cllr Gaskell asked if the Council had been contacted by "Thames 21" (<https://www.thames21.org.uk/about-us/>) who are a group cleaning up chalk streams. They focus on the initial work and not the ongoing maintenance, but it was agreed that Cllr Curtis Hayward should get in touch with them.

Action: Cllr Curtis Hayward to contact Thames 21

The Chairman thanked Cllr Gaskell for all his support this year and wished him a merry Christmas.

1555 Declaration of Public Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary or personal interests declared. The Clerk explained to Cllr Cunningham that a declaration of interests was required from all Councillors to declare property or business interests which might conflict with the business of the Parish Council. The Chairman also asks at each meeting if there are any interests in any of the agenda items which must be declared.

Action: Clerk to forward declaration of interest form to Cllr Cunningham.

1556 Any additional Agenda Items

No additional agenda items were suggested.

1557 Apologies

Cllr Henderson and Cllr Foote sent apologies. Cllr Gaskell's colleague who also looks after valley has expressed an interest in attending the meetings, Diane Taylor is Borough Councillor for Oakley & the Candovers, contact details:

Mobile: 07766 705082

Landline: 01256 781081

Email: Cllr.Diane.Taylor@basingstoke.gov.uk

Action: Clerk to ensure Cllr Taylor is invited to the next meeting.

1558 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes for the last meeting held on 3rd October 2023 were reviewed and agreed by the Council as an accurate record. The Chair signed to confirm they were an accurate record of the meeting.

1559 Matters arising

Local Plan update – this was included in the update from Cllr Gaskell.

New Internal Auditor – The Clerk has written to formally engage Paul Renyolds as the Internal Auditor. The Clerk explained that Paul will visit in April to review the files and sign off the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR).

Speed Indication Device – The Chairman explained that a resident had offered to purchase two additional units for the Parish, the opportunity to buy two units from Elan has been put forward and the Council are waiting for feedback.

Action: Chairman to confirm outcome to Clerk.

1560 Financial update

The Clerk circulated the financial statement prior to the meeting along with posting on the Parish Council website.

Following the last meeting the Clerk received confirmation of the purchase of the "Pickleball" game at £310 along with the grass cutting at the Burial Ground at £69, both payments were made.

The Clerk informed Councillors that three were payment to be approved at the meeting are:

- Hedge cutting at Cricket Pitch and Burial Ground - £810.
- Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) membership - £36.
- New Speed Indication device (SID) battery - £109.80

Ellisfield Parish Council have also claimed their Lengthsman funds of £1,000.

All payments were approved, and Cllr Curtis Hayward and the Vice Chair signed the cheques. Cllr Curtis Hayward completed the 6-monthly audit of the accounts and gave the following feedback:

I have looked through the accounts, bank statements and cheque books for the first 6 months of our financial year. As always Wendy keeps everything in immaculate order. I had a few small queries on an un-presented cheque and VAT, all of which were promptly answered. Many thanks to Wendy for her thoroughness.

The un-presented cheque was a grant to the Scouts which was more than 6 months old and was therefore cancelled.

The Clerk has had an email reminding the Council of existing Section 106 funding for the following purpose:

- £931.16 – Open spaces
- £327.72 – Play areas
- £465.61 – Sports & Playing Fields

There was also an allocation of £124.92 for allotments which must be handed back as the Parish don't have any allotments. This allocation is from the conversion of the agricultural building at Moth Farm to a Shooting Lodge (14/01272) and needs to be spent. The funds are held by B&DBC, and any application is to be agreed by the budget manager for that line item. Councillors suggested that the Cricket Club are raising funds for a new roller, and this may be a good use of all three pots of funding.

Action: Clerk to email the Budget Managers and ask if applicable.

The Clerk informed Councillors that a resident from Preston Candover had needed to use a defibrillator recently and asked about supporting training for the community on how to use the device. The Clerk has investigated and The Heartbeat Trust (who supply and maintenance the units) do supply training at £175 for a 2-hour session for up to 50 people. It has been suggested that a session be held in Northington Village Hall, Preston Candover Village Hall and CVC in January, February and March to allow residents to attend the most suitable location and date. The family have also suggested creating keyrings with the code for the cabinets so everyone who attends the training can take one away. The Councillors approved this project.

Action: Clerk to get dates for the training and circulate.

1561 Budget for 2024/25

The Clerk talked the Councillors through the budget for 2024/25.

The Councillors asked the Clerk to provide data for the following for the next meeting:

- Clerk's salary based on scale point 18 (£15.21/hr) for 2 hours per week - £1,581.84.
- Grass cutting at Bus shelters (£99) increased by 10% - £108.90
- Grass cutting at Burial Ground (£69) increased by 10% - £75.90
- Grass cutting at churchyard (£355) increased by 10% - £390.50
- Replacement battery costs for Speed Indicator Device - £91.50
- Defibrillator pads and battery costs – Battery - £190, Adult pads - £60, child pads - £85, plus £10 delivery and VAT.

Action: Clerk to update budget for next meeting to allow the precept request to be completed.

1562 Candover Valley Club (CVC) Update

The Chairman Informed Councillors that the guttering at the Club needs attention. The Saturday evening opening is working well with varied numbers attending.

A piece is being put in the Oxdrove about the Pickleball equipment to promote this at the Club, the Chairman informed Councillors that BBC Breakfast had done a piece on the game, and it is the fastest growing sport in the country at this time.
Paul Clarke who manages the bar is doing an excellent job.

1563 Flooding

The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council has sandbags and sand available if needed and that all landowners with a riparian responsibility have cleared the ditches.

1564 Lengthsman

The Lengthsman is due to visit on:

- 14th December
- 27th February

Councillors agreed that clearing grips needed to be the priority.

Action: Chairman to email Lengthsman

1565 Planning

The Council received three applications; they are:

- Tree work at Thorneydown (T/00531/23/TCA) – Councillors had no objections.
- Tree work at Candover Park (T/00557/23/TCA) – The Chairman agreed to visit to inspect the planned work and report back to Councillors before the deadline of 25th December.
- Diversion of Candover Restricted Byway 703 and 12, this can be viewed at:
<http://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/definitivemap/pathorders>

Action: Clerk to forward details of byway changes to residents on Dummer Road.

1566 Website

The Clerk reported that the website is up to date. The Chairman asked if photographs from the Coronation and Jubilee could be added to the pages.

Action: Clerk to amend website.

1567 General correspondence

Councillors asked for the link to report potholes, this is:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

1568 Date of next meeting

Monday 22nd January 2024, it was agreed that a 7pm.