

## Chichester District Association of Local Councils

**Chair:** Cllr Alistair Spencer (West Itchenor PC)  
**Clerk:** Anna Beams, Mulberry & Co, 9 Pound Lane, Godalming, GU7 1BX  
**Tel:** 03303 450597  
**Email:** [admin@wsalc.co.uk](mailto:admin@wsalc.co.uk)

---

Minutes of a Meeting of Chichester District Association of Local Councils held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 7pm via Zoom.

### Present:

|                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cllr Henry Potter      | Boxgrove PC                     |
| Cllr Stephen Johnson   | Chidham & Hambrook PC           |
| Cllr Dougie MacDonald  | Earnley PC                      |
| Cllr Charles Britton   | East Lavington PC               |
| Cllr Pamela Kensington | East Wittering & Bracklesham PC |
| Cllr Anne Tyrrell      | Ebernoe PC                      |
| Cllr Helen Marshall    | Fishbourne PC                   |
| Cllr Andrew Shaxson    | Harting PC (Vice Chair)         |
| Cllr Joan Foster       | Hunston PC                      |
| Cllr Tim Russell       | North Mundham PC                |
| Cllr Nicholas Taylor   | Plaistow & Ifold PC             |
| Cllr Colin Field       | Sidlesham PC                    |
| Cllr Amanda Tait       | Southbourne PC                  |
| Cllr Alun Alesbury     | Stoughton PC                    |
| Cllr Sarah Foxall      | Stoughton PC                    |
| Cllr Richard Hitchcock | Westbourne PC                   |
| Cllr Alastair Spencer  | West Itchenor PC (Chair)        |
| Cllr Nicolette Pike    | West Wittering PC               |
| Cllr Sophie Winship    | Wisborough Green PC             |
| Trevor Leggo           | WSALC, CEO                      |
| Anna Beams             | Secretary                       |

### 1. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

### 2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Timothy Firmston (Birdham PC), Anna Gaymer (Donnington PC), Sheila Bramley (Harting PC), Sharon Holden (Northchapel PC), Bob Taylor (Southbourne PC) and Nigel Rickets (Westbourne PC) and from Heyshott PC and Westhampnett PC representatives.

### 3. Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022

On a proposal by Cllr Andrew Shaxson, seconded by Cllr Nicolette Pike, the minutes were **APPROVED** as a true record.

**4. To appoint a Treasurer for 2022-23**

As there were no volunteers for the position, the matter was **DEFERRED** to the next meeting.

**5. Annual subscription – to set the subscription for 2022-23**

Cllr Andrew Shaxson suggested that a decision should not be made at this meeting on behalf of member councils when a formal proposal has not been presented for them to consider. It was acknowledged that CDALC should make it clear to its members the rationale and purpose of the subscription and the services provided to them by the association.

Trevor Leggo recommended that it may be helpful for the association to produce a working plan which includes a way of CDALC acting as a vehicle to assist member councils to engage better with other organisations.

The item was **DEFERRED** to enable the Chairman to draft a working plan and subscription proposal prior to the next meeting.

|   |
|---|
| <b>ACTION:</b> Chairman to draft a working plan and subscription proposal |
|---|

**6. Update from CEO of WSALC, Trevor Leggo**

Trevor Leggo updated members of the following matters:

**Recruitment / reward of clerks** - the recruitment and retention of clerks is becoming increasingly difficult and pay should not be a barrier for either. Councils are advised to follow market forces and pay clerks accordingly as the loss of a clerk can often be more costly than increasing their pay. Trevor added that it is difficult to compare salary bands by council due to their different requirements and that councils should use their own discretion based on their individual needs. WSALC can assist councils with salary calculations where necessary.

**WSSC Local Area Committees** – it appears that WSSC will no longer be holding the committees which were poorly attended. The Chichester district did however have the highest attendance across the county.

**Resilience planning** – member councils are being encouraged to produce a resilience plan, or to ensure that current plans are regularly updated. Dee Thornton is available to assist parishes with their plans at a cost, Bury and Plaistow & Ifold Parish Councils are currently helping to pilot the scheme.

**Cost of living and warm hubs** – Trevor suggested that parishes should consider ways in which they can assist vulnerable members of their communities by providing warm hubs or other forms of assistance. He asked for examples:

Hunston - a community hub is open three times a week in the Village Hall where volunteers provide sandwiches and hot soup. Funding is being sought through CDC and the church and the Parish Council will make up the remainder.

Wisborough Green – the three pubs in the village have agreed to provide a warm space for residents use during the day, the Parish Council will provide the landlords with tea and coffee so that they can provide hot drinks.

Southbourne – have been doing some research and emergency planning. The Parish Council do not own any buildings however they would like to initiate schemes, such as asking pubs to provide warm hubs, and would appreciate any help in implementing ideas.

Harting – the Village Hall is always in use although there are two other halls which will be approached to facilitate a warm hub.

**Police Focus Groups** – the next meetings in Chichester will take place by Teams on 18<sup>th</sup> November at 10.30am for the south of the district and 2.30pm for the north. Invitations have been sent to clerks but please make contact with Trevor if you wish to be added to the distribution list.

**WSALC Board** – Each District Association in West Sussex is currently able to appoint two representatives onto the WSALC Board, other than Adur who can appoint one. As the Chichester district is much larger geographically than the other districts in West Sussex, the Chairman of WSALC would like to offer a third seat on the Board. A proposal will be taken to the WSALC AGM on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November to amend the Articles of Association following which it is hoped that a third representative can be appointed by CDALC, one of which must be from within the South Downs National Park.

Cllr Richard Hitchcock advised that he had recently attended a Bournes Forum meeting and is happy to share his report. ([appendix A](#))

#### **7. Report following a meeting of North Chichester parishes held on 1<sup>st</sup> September**

Cllr Andrew Shaxson referred to the attached report ([appendix B](#)) and advised that 23 councillors and clerks were in attendance from 16 parishes.

Feedback was that, in its present form, CDALC is not as relevant to northern parishes and that councils in the northeastern area of the district communicate with each other regarding issues pertinent to them, including development in the Horsham district.

Concerns raised at the meeting included speeding, noisy motorbikes and confusion regarding road closures and signage, with many of those present providing examples.

It was concluded that it was a useful meeting but that proper consideration should be given to the structure and format of CDALC for the future.

It was suggested that there is potential for CDALC to be proactive and act as a forum for collaborative working and sharing between members, for example when applying for funding opportunities.

Cllr Andrew Shaxson proposed that a steering group could be formed to meet between meetings and the Chairman requested that he produces a briefing paper for the next meeting.

|   |
|---|
| <b>ACTION:</b> Cllr Shaxson to produce a steering group briefing paper for the next meeting |
|---|

## **8. SDNPA Report**

Cllr Andrew Shaxson referred to his attached report ([appendix C](#)).

Cllr Shaxson added that fracking will not now go ahead following recent announcements.

A meeting took place on 18<sup>th</sup> October when the main matters to note were that there will be a delay in the Local Plan and that the National Park has made a call for development sites.

The Open Space Society is trying to set paths made for BOATS (byway open to all traffic) which is mainly an East Hampshire issue.

## **9. CHC Report**

Cllr Nicolette Pike referred to her attached report ([appendix D](#)).

Cllr Pike added that she commences training and hopes to be elected on to the Planning Committee next week.

She further explained that the issues highlighted in her report are happening all around the national coastline.

## **10. Matters of concern to your council**

No matters were raised although Cllr Sophie Winship (Wisborough Green PC) requested that all reports and papers provide the full name of organisations initially rather than the acronym.

The meeting closed at 8.43pm

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

Chairman

## Appendix A

### **Bournes Forum Meeting, Monday, 24 October, 2022, at 7.00 pm, at The Church Room, St Mary's Church, Church Lane, Funtington**

The meeting was attended by 22, including the Chair Lyn Hicks (Southbourne) and Vice-Chair Sheena King (Funtington). Andrew Kerry-Bedell (WSCC) was in attendance and Roy Briscoe (CDC) sent his apologies. WPC was represented by Nigel Ricketts and Richard Hitchcock.

The evening's guests were Katy Bourne (Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex - KB) and Chief Inspector Nick Bowman (District Commander for Arun and Chichester – NB). The topic for the meeting was "The role of the Police Community Support Officer" followed by questions.

- There were 300 PCSOs in Sussex when KB came into office. One third were then taken out but numbers are slowly being built back. This is a red line for KB. However, 20 have recently left to become regular police officers. Why the reduction? In a time of austerity, the most obvious saving is salaries. Police officers cannot be made redundant; PCSOs can!
- Visibility of PCSO is important as it gives confidence to the community. Extra powers have been added recently and now comprise:
  - *going on highly visible foot patrols*
  - *reassuring the public after minor crimes or anti-social behaviour*
  - *building relationships with community, religious and business leaders*
  - *working with young people and local schools*
  - *making house visits to gather intelligence*
  - *collecting CCTV evidence*
  - *carrying out missing person enquiries*
  - *protecting crime scenes until police officers arrive*
  - *providing crime prevention and personal safety advice*
  - *offering support at large public gatherings, such as sports events and public demonstrations."*
- PCSO are trained differently from police officers: more 'touchy-feely'. KB considers PCSOs to be 'the beating heart of the community'.
- KB, responsible for the budget, has put up our Council Tax several times in order to have more police officers but still does not feel it is adequate. Capped at £10 per household.
- Nick Bowman has the lead for the area's PCSOs. They are assigned to a specific station and can only be moved voluntarily.
- NB described policing as 'complicated' and most definitely not what it was 30 to 40 years ago. It is made more so by social media. Demands placed on the police have increased significantly and 52% of crime now consists of fraud.
- There is a shortage of PCSOs In Chichester: 7/17 have recently transitioned to police officers. This couldn't have been predicted but they are slowly being replaced. PCSOs only need to give four weeks' notice if they take a police position and this impacts on the speed of replacing PCSOs.
- Eighty-eight police officers are joining the force next month.
- The Rural crime team currently have 20 officers, the biggest team in the South East.

- NB openly admitted that they don't always get it right and don't always meet expectations. However, bearing in mind changes in policing, public expectations may not always be realistic. For example, a great deal of resources are invested in mental health issues and missing persons. They also receive five rape reports a day.
- The police are currently going through a process of restructuring.
- A number of parishes, including Fishbourne, Chidham and Hambrook, Southbourne and Westbourne shared their concerns, which on the whole, were attributable to a lack of resources. What came across very strongly was that proactive, neighbourhood policing is crucial and good working relationships need to be established.

Katy Bourne and Nick Bowman were thanked for their attendance. The next Bournes Forum meeting will take place some time in January next year.

NR/RH 25/10/22

### **Northern Parishes of CDALC Meeting: 1st September 2022 at Lodsworth**

Andrew Shaxson started the meeting by explaining that there used to be separate Petworth and Midhurst Association of Local Councils branches, as well as CDC facilitated community forums, but that these no longer exist. CDALC must endeavour to replace the function they fulfilled and that is why he had arranged this meeting for parishes in the north of the district. What follows is an overview of comments made.

### **How can CDALC support and benefit your council - in the widest sense?**

#### **Isolation/ lack of engagement**

**Plaistow & Ifold Parish Council** – reported that he felt the CDALC meetings were largely dominated by SDNPA and Chichester Harbour reports. Both were important but bore no relevance to parishes located on the Surrey border. Due to this, a ‘northern parishes meeting’ was created with neighbouring councils to discuss issues more relevant to them. They believed an alternative group would be more beneficial to CDALC but they already had formed one. He also informed the attendees that they had just joined AiRS which they thought was a useful resource. He was aware of meetings with the police and would like to engage more but stated that councillors only had a limited amount of time so had to prioritise.

**Loxwood Parish Council** – the Parish Council felt isolated due to its rural location and advised it had liaised with neighbouring parishes (referred to by P&I) to discuss coordinated responses to relevant planning applications.

**Unknow PC** – had formed clusters in the past to discuss big issues.

**Stoughton PC** – posed the question, how do parishes raise issues to discuss at CDALC meetings? Trevor Leggo suggested a questionnaire could be circulated ahead of the meeting requesting details of items that councils would like to be included on the next agenda.

**Bepton Parish Council** – commented that they did not know about CDALC and how to get invited to a meeting.

**Plaistow & Ifold Parish Council** – commented that they are still unaware as to what CDALC does and the constitution does not state it either. The representative for P&I also asked how CDALC had engaged with parishes over the last few years. Trevor Leggo responded to say he had just completed a glossary for WSALC and would do the same for CDALC and disseminate it. He could not provide any examples of engagement but said there was a new WSALC Chair in post and things would improve.

**Loxwood Parish Council** – the representative was a new councillor and said he would find it helpful to have some literature on what CDALC does.

#### **Motorbikes and speeding**

**Tillington Parish Council** – the representative reported that their council discuss motorbike issues with other councils but do not engage with the police anymore as they do not feel that discussions reach any tangible solutions such as erecting speed cameras.

**Bury Parish Council** – the representative also commented on speeding motorbikes in the parish and reported that one councillor had worked hard to engage with residents to create a pressure group which had received attention from senior police officers. They were also putting together a strategy for SDNPA to redesign the whole experience of driving through the parish. He felt that engaging with residents had proved very helpful.

**Petworth Town Council** – the council was engaging with other parishes and their local MP for an acoustic camera. The representative reported that bikes used illegal number plates which only carried a £100 fine instead of 3 points and a heavier fine for speeding.

**Comments from Andrew Shaxson** – he suggested that parishes should meet again and request representatives from the Police to attend to listen and offer individual solutions. Trevor Leggo made reference to the areas in the Surrey Hills piloting 20mph to combat speeding bikes.

**Stoughton PC**- the representative commented that she felt rural parish issues were seen as ‘minor’ in comparison to big towns. She also said she did not think it would make financial sense to have cameras everywhere, although a mobile one would be beneficial. Trevor Leggo advised that a group of councils in the Rother District had paid for a Black Cat radar device which fed into the police database and it appeared to be working well for them.

The same representative then asked how parishes could form a cluster to which Trevor Leggo said it could be discussed at the next CDALC meeting.

### **Highways**

**Lurgashall Parish Council** – the representative commented that ‘Road Closed’ signs were appearing all over the place without any apparent reason. It was unclear for motorists as to which road was closed after seeing the signs. Additionally, signs were being erected to say works were happening but it didn’t relate to the work which was actually taking place. This concern was also expressed by **Ebernoe Parish Council**.

**Midhurst Town Council** – the representative stated that signs were placed and subsequently left by statutory undertakers such as Southern Water and not Highways.

**Andrew Shaxson** suggested a letter from CDALC to WSCC requesting that the process of road closures is better administered.

**Lodsworth Parish Council** – the representative reported that they had been trying to get the speed limit reduced from 30-20mph for several years due to HGVs in the area. They had also been trying to move an HGV road sign but had not had any success with Highways.

**Tillington Parish Council** – advised they had applied for a sign to advise HGVs not to use certain roads but they had been told by WSCC they were far down the list of priorities.

**Midhurst Town Council** – the representative asked what happened to talks from several years ago for Parish Councils to take over road maintenance from WSCC. Trevor Leggo said that Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath had small contracts with WSCC for minor road works. However, when the contract came to tender the chosen contractor said they would only take it if they had responsibility for all the works. He added that efficiency dropped straight away.

### **Is the engagement between SDNPA and towns and parishes effective?**

**Bury Parish Council** – the representative felt that engagement was good in general but it would be useful to have someone to contact, especially for big issues. Andrew Shaxson suggested that SDNPA officers should be asked to attend meetings of clusters of parishes to address questions about issues, procedure etc. He said that CDALC would draft a letter to SDNPA requesting such a meeting.

### **Are you content with policing in your council’s area?**



**Stoughton PC**– stated that the council used to receive reports from PCSOs who also used to attend meetings but do not anymore. She said that District and County Councillors had been helpful with trying to channel their frustration but they still had issues with poaching and plant machine theft. Trevor Leggo explained that the Rural Crime team, established in July 2020 now numbered 20 officers and were being very effective across Sussex. Whilst the number of PCSOs had reduced significantly since 2014 it was now getting back to a better level; every PCSO must complete a patrol plan, which would outline the patrol areas and stakeholders with whom they needed to engage. The plans had to be signed off every 3 months by the relevant Sergeant and if this was not happening it should be reported to the Chief Inspector. Trevor Leggo suggested he would send a survey to clerks asking if they were in regular contact with their PCSO.

Andrew Shaxson thanked the Parish representatives for their comments, and said that he felt their input would be a useful step towards ensuring that CDALC had greater relevance for the parishes in the northern part of Chichester District

The meeting ended 8.30pm.

## Appendix C

### **SDNPA report – 26/10/2022**

The day-to-day and long-term strategic impacts of the reduction of DEFRA funding on the organisation remains uppermost in the Authorities mind. It is no consolation that we are not the only body facing such pressures. Planning remains an area where this can be observed, as the national shortage of planning officers is felt not only by the SDNPA but also the LPAs who undertake work for the authority. Not only do planning applications take longer than anticipated, with many a 'request for an extension' to reset the clock, but the Planning Inspectorate is similarly overburdened with work. There are no short-cuts. The SDNPA is having to recruit a new Planning Policy lead, at the same time as the Local Plan review is commencing – not ideal. The organisation is currently short of 5 Development management officers. The local plan review is one of the topics being covered at a meeting called by the SDNPA for West Sussex Parish reps in Midhurst next Tuesday 18th October. By the time we meet on the 26th this will have taken place.

I was one of eight members and officers from the SDNPA who attended the two-day UK National Parks biennial conference based at Dunster on Exmoor at the end of last month, the theme being 'What does the nation need from National Parks today?' There was attendance from all of the 10 English, 3 Welsh and 2 Scottish parks. The pre-dominant background chatter was the emerging agricultural and land use policy of Mrs Truss's government. As things stand there are concerns that nature conservation and recovery has been side-lined. Uncertainty serves no one well and hopefully the position will soon be clarified, but this seeming change in policy from the last administration is concerning to both National Parks and AONBs. Attendees were split into 8 groups, and the one I was part of was shown the reason for and impact of managed coastal retreat in Porlock Bay, a controlled re-introduction of beavers into a wet land area by the National Trust near Selworthy and an oyster farm at Porlock Weir, including eating of the same. There were numbers of relevant speeches by numbers of relevant speakers including Dr Tony Juniper (the Chair of Natural England), Julian Glover (the author of the 2018 review of NPs and AONBs), and Minette Batters (President NFU). The event very much combined pleasurable knowledge gathering with serious business and networking well into the night. A major message gleaned from the event was the need for National Parks and AONBs to put aside any differences that might divide them to concentrate on lobbying as a serious force as hard as possible for the future of our protected landscapes.

Rather closer to home members and officers had an 'awayday' at the Seven Sisters Country Park on 20th September. This gave everybody the opportunity to see the work already carried out by the SDNPA since acquiring it from East Sussex CC. Having seen it previously, the change is very noticeable, and as a sign of public satisfaction the footfall has greatly increased. The estate is 280 hectares and besides the visitor centre at Exceat there are three other sets of buildings, creating both a challenge and opportunity to gain income from and showcase that part of the South Downs. Concerning income, it is hoped that Seven Sisters will be able to positively contribute to our funds reasonably soon. Identifying income is undoubtedly an area the SDNPA must give full attention to in the future. Being a relatively young National Park we have not accrued the portfolios of (hopefully money-spinning) assets in the hands of the well-established National Parks.

The SDNPA met on 20th October, and spent 2.5 hours debated an issue that is of great concern to those directly affected, namely the use and abuse of BOATs, and specifically whether the SDNPA should get directly involved in their management and creating Traffic Restriction Orders etc. The

East Hants part of the SDNP has many, but fortunately the Chichester District part of West Sussex CURRENTLY doesn't have any. I say currently because for reasons that need explanation the Open Spaces Society have made a request that various routes with doubtful status are made BOATs. 12 of these in West Sussex are in the National Park, there could well be others outside. Be aware that this might happen on your doorstep. The outcome of the debate – a vote of 11 to 7 for no change, though many people feel that in spite of the cost involved at a time of shrinking budgets there is reputational reason for the NPA to do more.

Andrew Shaxson

## **CDALC Report on Chichester Harbour Conservancy – October 2022**

### **Nicolette Pike – West Wittering Parish Councillor and CDALC Representative on Chichester Harbour Conservancy**

Following in the footsteps of Keith Martin, I have produced this short report relating to my first four months representing CDALC on CHC.

Firstly, the very sad news of the sudden death of Rosie Chase on the 31st August has left CHC staff, members and all who knew her shocked. She was sorely missed at September's monthly planning meeting which she would normally organise and attend to take the minutes. Her passing leaves a huge hole in the organisation. The planning meeting held a minute's silence in respect and the whole committee sent its sympathy and deepest condolences to her family friends and colleagues.

Because of the summer holidays new members induction has yet to happen. This is now being arranged for the beginning of November.

The annual CHC tour took place on the 30th September which was an opportunity to get to know some of the other members and staff. The tour included a walk from Itchenor car park to look at the badly degraded salt marsh close by. We had a talk from the team who intend to try to restore the salt marsh by raising its level over the winter using locally sourced sediment. We were then taken by coach to Dell Quay to look at the parking problem and a potential solution for the safe disembarkment of children visiting the education centre by coach. We then walked to Fishbourne to look at the collapsed coastal footpath and discussed the proposal for a permanent diversion in line with current policy not to repair hard coastal defences, the failure of which had caused the collapse. The proposal is to use wooden boardwalks across the meadow in that area with the consent of the farmer.

We had lunch at Emsworth sailing club. Unfortunately due to bad weather the planned solar boat trip for the afternoon had to be cancelled.

At present I have not been elected to the Planning Committee but am attending as the Advisory Committee representative Deputy, so can only vote if another representative has given apologies, which seems to happen most months. This situation should change after the next Advisory Committee meeting on 7th November when three new representatives will be elected.

I have attended a planning meeting each month, which not only is looking at the planning applications for the AONB, but also is considering a review of the policies set out in the Chichester Harbour Management Plan 2019 -2024. The idea of the review is to look at the policies relating to development to ensure that they are up to date and relevant to the current issues challenging the area. In October we also are looking at the draft Havant Borough Local Plan on which CHC has been consulted.

I attended my first CHC meeting at County Hall on 20th June which discussed developments at the jetty at Itchenor to address the problem that the existing pontoon is too short for recreational fishing boats and to create a new pump out facility with a pre-booking system.

There was a presentation by Richard Craven about the recovery of nature in the Harbour. This was particularly timely as the day before we had both attended the seminar at Selsey on Crustaceans

Habitat and Sediment Movement (CHASM) which is a very important study being carried out to try and understand the loss of crab and lobster in the Harbour. This study is being carried out by three universities as well as other interested bodies and its findings are truly shocking. It is showing a direct link between pollution and the loss of fish caused by changes in feeding and breeding behaviour as a result of ingestion of drugs and pollutants making the animals sterile or incapable of feeding efficiently. Richard Craven brought the findings to the attention of the meeting. The study is also looking at the sediments in Chichester Harbour and CHC is facilitating study of the sediments by the University. Due to these concerns a PhD student is being jointly funded to study the sediments in Chichester Harbour.

This theme continued on 6th October with a very interesting symposium held at Chichester Yacht Club hosted by CHC looking at endocrine disruptors in the Channel including Chichester Harbour. The presentations were given by academics from both UK and French Universities who are studying the effects of various pollutants and the effects they have on the metabolism, reproduction etc of animals living in the sea. It was deeply worrying.

A planning application has been submitted by CHC for the necessary shingle recharge of Ellanore Spit, the area being used for tern rafts to encourage breeding.

The CHC meeting on 20th June also looked at the need to protect the remaining saltmarsh and highlighted its rarity as an internationally important habitat we were shown examples of the issue on the Annual Tour and proposals to try and address the decline.

My first few months have been very interesting particularly the insight into the problems caused by pollutants in the sea.

Nicolette Pike

West Wittering Parish Councillor

14th October 2022