

Chichester District Association of Local Councils

Chair: Cllr Alistair Spencer (West Itchenor PC)
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Minutes of the Meeting of Chichester District Association of Local Councils held on Monday 4th April 2022 at 7pm via Zoom.

Present:

Cllr Timothy Firmston	Birdham PC
Cllr Stephen Johnson	Chidham & Hambrook PC
Cllr Cherry Hughes	Chichester CC
Cllr Anna Gaymer	Donnington PC
Cllr John Stant	Earnley PC
Cllr Charles Britton	East Lavington 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 Andrew Brown	Selsey PC
Cllr Amanda Tait	Southbourne PC
Cllr Nigel Ricketts	Westbourne PC
Cllr Richard Hitchcock	Westbourne PC
Cllr Christopher Mead-Briggs	West Itchenor PC
Cllr Christopher Watson	West Itchenor PC
Cllr Alastair Spencer	West Itchenor PC
Cllr Jean Barrett	West Wittering PC
Trevor Leggo	WSALC, CEO
Anna Beams	Secretary

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Received and accepted from Cllrs Keith Martin and Nicolette Pike (West Wittering PC).

3. Approval of previous meeting Minutes

The minutes were **AGREED** and signed as a true and correct record of the meeting held on 10th February 2022.

4. To receive an update from Trevor Leggo, CEO of WSALC

Trevor Leggo updated members on the following items:

[a] NALC Lobby Day:

The annual NALC lobby day was held remotely on 23rd March. All MPs across the District were invited to attend although not all responded possibly due to a heavy workload. Those in attendance showed support for the restoration of sanctions and remote meetings. The issue of housing numbers was also raised. A full report will be taken to the next WSALC Board meeting which will be available with the minutes.

[b] COVID:

COVID figures continue to rise across West Sussex with an approximate increase of 200 cases per day in the Chichester district which is having an impact on councils organising annual meetings.

[c] WSCC Budget:

The Band D Council Tax figure has been reported as £1555.00.

[d] WSALC Forums:

The WSALC Clerks Forum is taking place by Zoom on Monday 11th April at 10.30am and the Chairs Forum on Tuesday 12th April at 7.00pm. Emily King, Director of Communities at WSCC will be in attendance at both forums to provide an update on local issues. Clerks have been notified of dates Trevor would encourage all those available to attend to do so if they can as the sharing of information is extremely valuable, particularly for those clerks working in isolation.

[e] Resilience Plans:

Following the recent storms, many towns and villages experienced lengthy periods without power, broadband and telephone. Trevor would urge that all parish councils have a robust resilience plan in place outlining local measures for the benefit of their residents. He suggested the plan produced by Singleton & Charlton Parish Council as an excellent example and encouraged members to visit their website.

Cllr Mead-Briggs added that, although the local MP may not have attended the NALC Lobby Day, she is working very closely with Chichester District Council in respect of the issues raised, in particular planning reform and housing numbers.

5. SDNP Report

Cllr Andrew Shaxson verbally delivered his attached report (appendix A).

6. Chichester Harbour Conservancy Report

In Cllr Keith Martins absence, Cllr Jean Barrett advised that she had attended a meeting on the afternoon of 4th April and would provide a written report to be circulated with the minutes (appendix B).

7. Election of Representative to Chichester Harbour Conservancy Advisory Committee (CHCAC) and Election of Deputy Representative to CHCAC

The Chairman invited the applicants present at the meeting to give a brief statement in support of their applications, Cllr Jean Barrett delivered a statement on behalf of Cllr Nicolette Pike.

Following a vote by show of hands it was **AGREED** by a majority to appoint Cllr Nicolette Pike as Representative to CHCAC and Cllr Amanda Tait as Deputy.

8. Finance Update

The Chairman reported that the finances were unchanged since the last meeting and that the total funds held by the association remain at £1,588.76.

9. Matters of Concern to your Council

No matters were raised.

The meeting closed at 7.46pm

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman

SDNPA report to CDALC – 4th April 2022

A shorter report than my last one, but as it is less than 2 months since I produced my last report not too much has changed during that time. Whilst officers and members are still being afflicted by **Covid** the SDNPA has largely returned to the methods of working suspended two years ago, with one major difference. Virtual gatherings are now widely used, it having been found that there are few disadvantages faced by the SDNPA by not having the participants drive for many miles to talk face to face. It has the added advantage of benefitting the organisation financially – see below.

The SDNPA have formerly replied to the consultation on the Government's reaction to the **Glover Report**. On 16th March all the Parish Councils in the SDNP were invited to a Zoom presentation to provide them with guidance should they have wished to react to it. A major concern of both the Parish Councils and authority members is the potential for both reducing the size of the authority's membership and managing the membership from Whitehall and Westminster. A perceived lack of 'Local Accountability' was a criticism levelled at the SDNPA when it was first set up. Could what might happen in the future erode the current situation? There was also surprise that there is no mention of Climate Change; be assured that the NPA have raised that point. Scrutiny of the agenda of the SDNPA meeting held on 24th March will provide the details of what was debated. It is worth noting that if there are major changes they are most unlikely to be enacted for some years.

One item held in Part II at that meeting was dealing with the renewal of the **agency agreement with CDC** to undertake planning services on behalf of the SDNPA. After some discussion it was agreed that this should continue, taking note of the positive impact of the arrangement on the budgets of both organisations. Some improved checks will be introduced, but to ensure that both CDC and the SDNPA are kept informed of how the service is working Parish Councils should consider monitoring planning and enforcement delivery.

On the subject of planning, the SDNPA is starting to review the **Local Plan**. This 305 page document was many years in creation, being adopted July 2019. Whilst the fundamental document should remain sound for some years to come, as with all such documents there are issues which as time passes need to be addressed. One that has been flagged up is to ensure all policies take fuller account of Climate Change. Whilst it is unfortunate that legislation doesn't enable the SDNPA to force builders to build better dwellings, including installing better insulation and heating systems, we must ensure we do as much as we can with the legislative tools available to us. As reported two months ago the SDNPA has an up-to-date study of the impact of Climate Change, and that must remain in our sights even as are faced by the fall-out from Russia's invasion of the Ukraine.

The SDNPA has produced guidance to better explain the implications of the **English Nature Water neutrality statement** covering the area where Southern Water provides potable water <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-news/water-resources-in-the-central-area->

of-the-south-downs-national-park/ As far as most housebuilding is concerned the situation remains unresolved. I anticipate English Nature are aware that this past winter's rainfall figures were much lower than average, and that as a result the water table will not be adequately topped up.

Last but certainly not least. As anticipated the SDNPA has been given a **flat cash settlement** for 2022 – 2023 (that is, no change to the DEFRA grant we had last year), and our expectations are that remain the rate for the following two years. It is projected that inflation will be 8% or more this coming year, the impact of which will be to cause the authority some financial discomfort this year but worse in future years. Alternative means of raising cash to cover the day-to-day costs of running the organisation are limited, but be assured that this is being very closely monitored.

I am very happy to expand on any of these items, or address any other SDNP and SDNPA issues that you might like to raise.

Andrew Shaxson

REPORT ON CHC ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 4TH APRIL 2022

Director & Harbour Master's Update

East Head: Work to install a shingle bund at the hinge area of East Head has been successfully completed and withstood Storm Eunice which rolled on the day of completion.

Sussex IFCA – Hand Gathering Byelaw Consultation: Concern over the impact of bait digging and the impact of mollusc collecting have resulted in an initiative by Sussex IFCA to manage these activities with a proposed byelaw which is going through a consultation which closes on 16 April.

Storm Eunice: Conservancy facilities and moorings escaped largely unscathed but a number of private moorings did fail and incidents were logged by the Harbour Team. Conservancy staff volunteered to come in and recover vessels and assist with the clean-up. (2 vessels sank and 11 vessels broke free from private moorings, 1 Conservancy mooring failed and another vessel broke free from a Conservancy mooring due to the vessel's deck fittings). No Conservancy pontoons or jetty structures were damaged.

Damage was reported to some sea defences - west side of Thorney Island, east of the Mill at Langstone. Trippet wall at Bosham collapsed. Erosion to footpaths including No 1 at Itchenor.

Ecology presentation by Peter Hughes, Ecologist, CHC: This slide presentation and report highlighted the efforts being made to establish protection for birds, seals and plant life around the Harbour. The bird population after decreasing over several decades is slowly improving with the introduction of rafts to encourage birds to nest on the shoreline. There is also a plan to discourage kayakers and paddle-boarders to steer clear of the nest sites with proposed buoys marking the most sensitive areas.

Jetty & Harbour Office Consultation: The proposals have been delayed while a Landscape Visual Assessment is completed but the consultation will start shortly via an on-line survey. Hard copies will be available for those not IT savvy.

New Seasonal Patrol Team: 5 new staff members for the 2022 season.

ANOB conference entitled The Nation's Landscapes, People and Places from 13-15 September 2022 at Lancaster University.

Farming in Protected Landscapes – Appointment of a Farming Officer and an Administrator for 2 years due to start on 25 April 2022.

Maybush Copse Art Trail: CHC working with fine art students from University of Chichester to create an art trail at Maybush Copse, Chidham.

Jean Barrett (*attended as Deputy for Keith Martin*)

05.04.22