



Chairman: Pat Sutlieff

[www.charvil.com](http://www.charvil.com)

Clerk to the Council  
Miranda Parker  
Charvil Village Hall  
The Hawthorns  
Charvil, Reading  
Berks RG10 9TT

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## Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023 in Charvil Village Hall at 8pm

**Present** Jane Hartley, Pat Sutlieff, Mike Heath, Rob Jones, Matt Walker,  
and Lee Cripps

**Apologies for Absence** Isabelle Bray and Stephen Lucas

**Absent** Narinder Ryatt

### 23/8186 **Open Forum**

The Media Assistant, one journalist, one resident and the flood warden attended. The flood warden presented an introduction to the flood plan that was to be discussed later in the meeting, explaining that it only covered the main part of the village because the residents of Thames Drive, which is most prone to flooding, have their own plan already in place. He explained at what water level, the area needs to become concerned, because the Environment Agency warnings are set to trigger when Thames Drive should be concerned (flood alert level), rather than the rest of the village, who should only become concerned when the warning reaches "flood warning" level. At the severe flood warning level, this would be a serious concern for Charvil properties, but has rarely been triggered. The key figure is the water reaching 34.5 Metres above sea level and is where the Thames and Loddon form one river. He emphasised one of the decisions to be taken by the Council is whether to commit to helping with sandbags as WBC has so few. He completed his presentation and left at 8.30pm.

### 23/8187 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared.

### 23/8188 **To approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 16<sup>th</sup> October and the minutes of the Extra-ordinary meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

These were approved and signed.

### **Finance**

#### 23/8189 **To receive and approve the financial reports**

It was resolved to approve these which was passed unanimously.

#### 23/8190 **Authorisation of Payments**

It was resolved to recommend approval of the payments of invoices, which was carried unanimously.

£85.79 to the Assistant Clerk

£1756.97 to Andrea Pellegram Ltd

£2165.12 to Berkshire Pension Fund

£55.07 to Bowak Ltd

£143.96 to British Gas

1979

Chairman's Initials.....

Date.....

£38.99 to Cathedral Leasing Ltd  
£10 to the caretaker  
£756 to Concept 17  
£104.20 to Everflow  
£51.50 to Everycare Reading  
£167.53 to Grundon  
£426.05 to Kim Bedford  
£864 to Loddon Door Services  
£93.23 to the clerk  
£114.20 to MKR Electrical Services Ltd  
£72 to the Media Assistant  
£727.54 to RES Systems Ltd  
£266.06 to Smartest Energy  
£4143.32 to Sunshine Commercial Services Ltd  
£1123.20 to Tactical Facilities Management Ltd  
£216 to The Blue Moose  
£6047.85 in Payroll

**23/8191 To note the advice regarding the VAT on the refurbishment of the Pavilion**

The clerk has had advice from the Society of Local Council Clerks VAT advisor, and he has confirmed that any expenditure on things that are exclusively for sporting use is now categorised as non-business, so all the refurbishment of the sport end, we can reclaim the VAT. As this was over three-quarters of the cost, it means that the VAT on the rest of the building could possibly be reclaimed if we have not claimed up to the £7,500 limit on average over the previous seven years. The clerk will need to check this after recategorising the sport expenditure to non-business and will report back in due course. Either way, the VAT burden is going to be less than feared and removes the need to consider the option to tax at this stage.

**23/8192 To decide on a replacement signatory for Councillor Heath**

It was resolved that Councillor Cripps would become the new signatory and that Councillor Heath would step down from this role, which was passed unanimously.

**23/8193 To note the recommendations of the Wokingham Renumeration Panel and to decide whether to accept the principle of offering Councillors the opportunity to claim an allowance, and if so, to decide what the upper limit of this allowance should be**

It was resolved that the Parish should accept the recommendation in full, and that this should be available for any Councillor wishing to take advantage of it after the election in May, which was passed unanimously. It was noted that Councillors do not have to accept the allowance, and that if they do it is a taxable benefit.

**23/8194 Planning, Environment and Highways Committee (PEH)**

**To note the Minutes of 6th November**

These were noted.

**To consider and approve the Flood Plan for Charvil**

The flood warden had circulated the plan that he has been working on for some time alongside the Parish Council, the Borough Council, and the Environment Agency. As he had intimated in the Open Forum that it would not be practicable for it to store enough for the homes that might need them, the Council decided that this was not something it could do, despite the Borough only having limited supplies. Instead, the information as to where residents could get them should be promoted. Apart from the practicalities around opening the Village Hall for affected householders, there were no objections to the plan, which was approved, and it was agreed to give the flood warden a vote of thanks for his work on this

document, which will, once signed off by the Borough and Environment Agency, be accessible on the website.

**To hear feedback from the green mapping exercise**

Councillor Jones reported that a group of Councillors, interested residents and Simon Bartlam from the Wokingham Countryside Service met with a representative of Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC), and were given a series of maps that they used local knowledge to add missing information from the maps. The TVERC have now gone away with the maps and will produce updated maps and a report. This will form part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

**To Hear Feedback from the Public Meetings**

The Council held two meetings to inform residents of the conclusions the planning consultant employed by the parish council to see what hope there was of defending the two sites included in the draft Local Plan, and in particular, the land west of Park Lane as this is now subject to an outline planning application. Councillor Jones had prepared a presentation on this and on effective ways of commenting on applications. Seventeen residents attended the first meeting, and nine the second. A reasonable discussion was had at both, and it appears the meetings have had an effect on the way residents have been commenting on the application since. The presentation on this will be shared on the website and Facebook for residents who could not attend the meetings to benefit from the feedback.

**23/8195 Amenities Committee**

**To note the Minutes of the Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November**

These were noted.

**To hear an update on the idea of a Repair Café**

The clerk contacted the Twyford clerk because it would be easier to find a suitable variety of volunteers from around the other parishes as there has only been one from Charvil so far. It was agreed that the other northern parishes should be contacted to see if they would support this initiative. It was suggested that this be an agenda item for the Northern Parishes Group.

**To consider the wet weather plan provided by the Fete Committee and to decide whether this is enough to confirm they can use East Park Farm for the fete on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024**

The Council approved the plan and confirmed the fete could take place on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024. It was agreed that Councillors would help on the day if available.

**23/8196 Report from the Borough Councillor**

There was no Borough Councillor report.

**Items for Consideration**

**23/8197 To hear an update on the Neighbourhood Plan**

The plan is moving forward with the Consultant on board. He has reviewed the first draft and will draft policies on our behalf. He has identified areas where we lack evidence. We have been in touch with AECOM and are arranging a meeting in the village with them and the consultant. There is concern over how small the Neighbourhood Plan group has become, which is not an issue at this stage, but will require more once the time comes to consult again. The aim is to reach the Article 14 stage by March 2024.

**23/8198 To hear feedback from the training session with Kim Bedford, and to decide what recommendations from this should be adopted**

The training was well received, and it was agreed that the Council should pursue the use of the gov.uk domain; that the clerk/assistant clerk produce a brief report

for information only, with a timeframe for follow-up if necessary, and that this would be trialled for a few months.

**23/8199 To hear an update on the playground plan, and to decide upon the next steps**

Councillor Sutlieff has visited some playgrounds, and she will make some more visits with Councillor Bray, and they will visit Matthewsgreen. It was agreed that this should be a Full Council topic, and that the Parish should proceed with the necessary planning permission.

**23/8200 To hear an update on the planning for the Christmas event at the hall**

The date is set for Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 5-7pm. Suzanne Newman will play carols, and it is designed to be a Community Carol service with mulled wine and mince pies, and with chocolate santas for children. It will be a ticketed event, and the media assistant will advertise on social media and organise the ticketing.

**23/8201 To set up an event working party to organise forthcoming events, particularly the revamped Annual Community Meeting for 2024**

It was agreed that Councillors Walker, Hartley, Cripps and Sutlieff would be the members of this group.

**23/8202 To review alternative layouts for the website, and to decide which one is best**

The media assistant explained that he, the clerk and Andy Weller, the web designer, had a productive meeting and from this Andy had pulled together three models for alternative designs, depending upon what the Council would like to promote. It was agreed that the priorities for the Council were the marketing of our facilities and the promotion of village events whether or not these are anything to do with the Council, as it is important that the Council helps to promote community interests and cohesion.

**23/8203 To note the update on social media**

The media assistant reported that there were 8 new followers this week, mainly because of the holding of public meetings regarding the current outline planning application for 75 dwellings. The meetings were well received, and the engagement was appreciated by residents. People were also interested in the Christmas events, which had been viewed over 200 times. It is still the case that two thirds of followers are female and between the age of 35-54.

**23/8204 To approve the dates for next year's meetings**

It was agreed to avoid February half term, and all other dates were approved.

**23/8205 To hear feedback on the BMX track idea**

The clerk met with Simon Bartlam of the countryside service, and a resident who had brought up the idea, and we talked about what is possible, and what the dangers are. We also talked about a possible location, and all agreed that the most sensible place for such a thing would be near the kickabout area behind Vale View. The Countryside service would be open to allowing the Parish Council to put something in there but could offer no financial or practical support. The clerk has also spoken to Wargrave and Earley Councils, who both have such tracks, and they are both hugely popular, but are also high maintenance. Both agreed that cutting corners in the design and build stage is a false economy, and that the Council need to be prepared to check the facility regularly.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.50pm**

**Chairman's Signature .....**