



Chairman: Pat Sutlieff

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

www.charvil.com

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 11th December 2023 in Charvil Village Hall at 8pm

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

Apologies for Absence Isabelle Bray and Narinder Ryatt

Absent

23/8210 Open Forum

The Media Assistant, and three residents attended. One of the residents spoke about the precept and that the Council must not shy away from increasing it substantially if this is necessary for the parish to be able to do the things it should be doing. He was concerned that for 2023-24, the precept only increased by 2.9% when inflation was over 10%, and that below inflation increases are unsustainable. This resident left at 8.50pm.

23/8210 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

23/8211 To approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 20th November and the minutes of the Extra-ordinary meeting held on 27th November 2023

These were approved and signed.

To note the Clerk's report

This was noted.

Finance

23/8212 To receive and approve the financial reports

It was resolved to approve these which was passed unanimously.

23/8213 Authorisation of Payments

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

£72.75 to the Assistant Clerk

£1740.88 to Berkshire Pension Fund

£201.82 to British Gas

£104.20 to Everflow

£110.63 to Grundon

£300 to Locality

£197.45 to the clerk

£577 to Omega Security Ltd

£35.65 to SSE Contracting Ltd

£200.30 to Smartest Energy

£1135.73 to Sunshine Commercial Services Ltd

1986

Chairman's Initials.....

Date.....

£1166.40 to Tactical Facilities Management Ltd
£4550.40 in Payroll

23/8214 To consider S137 grant applications from Me2Club, Daisy's Dream and Twyford, Wargrave and District Volunteer Centre

It was resolved to give each group £465 each.

23/8215 To decide on a final list for five-year plan items

The list needs prioritising but this cannot be done until the issues around the sinkhole are resolved. However, in no particular order, the plan includes Village Hall car park resurfacing; Tennis Court fencing; BMX track; outdoor gym; setting up a fund for purchasing land if the opportunity arises; Renovation of the East Park Farm Playground; modernising the St. Patrick's Recreation Ground; Pre-school; Community Café; jogging track; and dog free sensory area.

23/8216 To approve any expenditure likely to be incurred around the sinkhole, and to provide an update as to any progress

The clerk explained that the Borough Council insist that the responsibility for repairs to the car park lies with the Parish Council, and that the repairs will cost at least £17.7k plus VAT, assuming there is no more work needed in other areas. There are more areas that need further investigation, and if these also need to be cleared out and filled in with more solid material, then the costs could be much higher. Given that the precept is £90k, this is not affordable to the parish. The clerk was given permission to employ a solicitor to give a legal opinion, and if necessary to take things further, up to a cost of £10k.

23/8217 Planning, Environment and Highways Committee (PEH)

To note the Minutes of 27th November

These were noted.

To hear an update on the Community Orchard

The planting date is now Saturday 16th December at 12.30. One more sponsor is still required.

To approve the idea that a Charvil Conservation group be part of Econet

This was approved unanimously, and it was resolved that the Council would support the development of the group.

23/8218 Amenities Committee

To note the Minutes of the Meeting on 4th December

These were noted.

To consider the options for improving the cricket area at East Park Farm, and to approve one of them

It was resolved to approve the option of re-seeding as soon as possible providing it can be done by early January, otherwise it should be the option for seeding in March.

23/8219 Staffing Committee

To note the Minutes of the meeting on 4th December

These were noted.

To approve the recommendation from the Staffing Committee to increase the clerk's hours to 25 per week, plus extra for specific projects such as Neighbourhood Plan support, and to increase the Administration and Media Assistant's hours to 35 per month, so he can take on some things from the clerk from 1st Jan 2024.

It was resolved to approve this which was carried unanimously.

To approve the pay recommendations of the Staffing Committee for April 2024

These were approved.

23/8220 Report from the Borough Councillor

There was no Borough Councillor report.

Items for Consideration

23/8221 To hear an update on the Neighbourhood Plan

Councillors Jones, Heath, Sutlieff, and the clerk met with two members of the AECOM team and with the Consultant Lee Searles and discussed how to develop a Design Code for Charvil before taking a tour of Charvil to talk about what people liked and disliked about the properties in Charvil, and how well various developments fit together. They will now go away and develop a Code, which should be complete in three to four months. Lee Searles also mentioned that it would be worth investigating how many properties have solar panels as these feeds into the carbon footprint – it looked as if Charvil was below average in terms of adopting solar power so more could be done on this issue.

23/8222 To consider and approve the template for event planning, and to decide on events for the coming year

After some discussion as to whether it was too detailed, it was agreed to trial it for a year.

There was a discussion around what types of events the Council should do, whether we should “piggyback” onto other events and such like, but the net result was to concentrate on the annual parish meeting, the fete and an event at either Halloween or Christmas. Other ideas included having a presence at the Charvil Art Group Exhibition, a sunflower growing competition, and some kind of competition involving the school, with the results being announced at the Annual Parish Meeting.

23/8223 To decide on what is needed for the Christmas event, and how much to spend

Fifty-one tickets have been booked, and the clerk was instructed to buy chocolate Santas, soft drinks, mulled wine, mince pies, wine, beer, crisps, and Christmas Decorations.

23/8224 To note the update on social media

The media assistant ran through his report, and there followed a discussion as to why the numbers of followers are not increasing more quickly. Various ideas were discussed, but nothing was decided upon.

23/8225 To note any agenda items for the next meeting

Councillor Hartley would like to discuss pictures for the Pavilion and the Committee Room

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.47pm

Chairman’s Signature