

MINUTES
Steep Parish Council Annual Meeting
Monday 3rd July 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs. Jenny Martin (in the Chair), Terry Cook, Charlotte Duthie, Freddie Holmes, Robin Hollington, Shannon Askew, Alison Driver

Also present: Dawn Rodgers, Clerk
5 members of the public (MoP)

Minute Item

- 23/133 **Apologies for Absence**
Harriet Waley-Cohen and Paul Garstin.
- 23/134 **Declarations of Interest**
Councillors were reminded of the declaration as received on the agenda.
- 23/135 **Approval of Minutes**
Resolved: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 12th June 2023 were approved as an accurate record.
- 23/136 **Public Comment:**
MoP 1 said a thank you to Steve Cook for all the work in maintaining the War Memorial. The council echoed these thanks whole heartedly.
- They also advised that a car had been abandoned on Bedales land by the bus stop on Stoner Hill.
ACTION: the Clerk to advise Bedales
- MoP 2 asked if a Planning Committee meeting would be going ahead in August, as there was no Parish Council meeting. The Clerk advised that there will be a planning meeting, with the date to be advised.
- 23/137 **Country Councillor Report:**
Cllr Oppenheimer's report was noted (Appendix A), however, it had only been received an hour before the meeting. Cllr Oppenheimer talked through his report.
- (a) Cllr Holmes reiterated the HCC Budget was important and reminded councillors to submit their feedback.
(b) Cllr Holmes also mentioned the ongoing problems with potholes, and the emails from residents that have had to put in claims for damage to their cars. She asked what the compensation claims were Hampshire, broken down by Parish. Cllr Oppenheimer stated this is not known, but it around £10 million.
- 23/138 **District Councillor's Report:**
Cllr Drew reported on the following items:
- Planning Committee – Cllr Drew remind the council that if the council wanted to refer any item to EHDC Planning Committee, they could contact him stating the policy reason for referral.
 - Land at Hayes Cottages – EHDC might be willing to sell the land to the Parish Council
 - Planning Compliance Infringements – We are encouraged to report an planning compliance issues to EHDC
 - Caravan illegally dumped on the Old Coach Road (the clerk has already reported this to HCC, EDHC and the Police). EHDC has arranged recovery as investigations seem to imply the caravan was flytipped.
 - Grants could be available for him litter picking in the Parish.
 - Steep Parish Council drop in – Cllr Drew reminded the council that a EHDC councillor grant might be possible to support the costs for the event
 - Motorbike Noise Forum – Cllr Drew is attending. Cllr Martin, Waley-Cohen and Duthie has previously expressed interest to attend. Residents have reported an increase in traffic down the C18 following the introduction average speed cameras on the A272.
- 23/139 **Completing the HCC Budget Consultation:**
The council were reminded to please complete the consultation before the deadline on 23 July. There are a lot of cutbacks, including in the roads budget.
- 23/140 **Parish Council Drop In mornings:**

Resolved: The date was previously agreed as 23rd September. The hall will be hired 10am to 1pm to set up and clean up, with the public invited to attend from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

The Chair and Clerk will provide protocols for councillors to follow on the day.

ACTION: Clerk and Cllr Martin

23/141 **Land at Church Road:**

The Chair read a letter from Wilson Designer Homes (WDH), which explained that they would like to present their planning application to the council, once submitted. WDH are yet to confirm a date but it is currently proposed as either Monday 11th or 18th September.

It was suggested the attendance of Steep In Need would be useful. The Clerk will convey this request.

ACTION: Clerk

23/142 **Church Road Traffic working party**

- (a) The resignation of Cllr Duthie was noted
- (b) The Chair wondered if Cllr Garstin might like to participate, he will be emailed to ask.

ACTION: Cllr Martin

Cllrs Drew and Oppenheimer left the meeting at 8.30pm.

23/143 **To receive and agree the following documents**

(a) Communications policy

Unfortunately, these were not ready. To be postponed for future meetings as and when they become available.

(b) Roads and Traffic working group terms of reference

Resolved: These were accepted by the council.

23/144 **Planning Committee training**

The planning training held at Rowlands Castle PC attended by Cllrs Askew, Driver and Holmes was very useful and the Clerk has circulated to all councillors the PowerPoint training plus a summary written by Cllr Holmes.

The Clerk is investigating further planning training for the rest of the council, from EHDC and Anna Whitty (Chichester). It was suggested the Clerk also check the Town and Country Planning Association.

ACTION: Clerk

23/145 **Investigate Neighbourhood Plan**

- (a) **Resolved:** the council agreed to hold an informal information gathering Q&A session with Troy Planning.
- (b) It was pointed out that September was already full with meetings and it was agreed October would be more suitable. A representative from Troy Planning was present (as a member of the public) and they were asked by the Clerk to provide a suitable list of dates for presenting to the council.

Cllr Hollington stated that he thought a proposed project plan would be needed in order to make an informed decision. He also questioned whether the PPS should be seen as an interim measure as the Neighbourhood Plan timeframe is extensive. It was pointed out the council would not want to commit to items in PPS that would negatively affect the Neighbourhood Plan.

It was also again pointed out that the timeframe for the PPS was difficult for the council, bearing in mind the change in council.

The Clerk will put both points to SDNPA.

ACTION: Clerk

23/146 **Bench and Mapboard at Mill Lane**

The Clerk advised that we needed a councillor to take on responsibility for regularly checking this council asset.

Resolved: Cllrs Askew and Waley-Cohen volunteered to look after this as an extension of their War Memorial responsibility.

23/147 **Phase 2 Traffic management project**

Work is ongoing and a potential delivery date of September has been suggested.

23/148 **Roads and Traffic working party**

A report was provided by Cllr Holmes via email before the meeting (Appendix B)

23/149 **Steep Marsh noticeboard**

The Clerk had been in contact with Sheep Parish council to see if Cllr Bird would give his opinion on the noticeboard. Unfortunately, there were Health and Safety and Risk Assessment issues for our insurance provider involving a volunteer doing the repair work. The Clerk will progress the matter, with a view to finding a way forward by the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

23/150 **Finance:**

(a) To approve the bank reconciliation for 10th June 2023

Resolved: The bank reconciliation was approved.

(b) To approve cheques and direct debits list for July payment

Resolved: the attached cheque list (Appendix C) was approved for payment.

(c) The Clerk advised that the online banking application had been completed, but online uploading had failed. Further documentary evidence had also been requested.

23/151 **GDPR:**

The Clerk had contacted one company, but two others would be contacted in order to receive a full and well rounded response.

23/152 **Correspondence received**

Both items of correspondence were noted. The Clerk confirmed both had been added to the council Facebook page and website.

23/153 **Date of next meeting:** The next meeting will be held on **Monday 4th September 2023** at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS
3 JULY 2023**

1. Pothole repair boost

An extra £7.5 million each year for the next three years will be spent on repairing more potholes across Hampshire under new plans outlined by the County Leader Councillor Rob Humby in June.

Anyone using roads in Hampshire and elsewhere will be fully aware of the impact of sustained severe weather on our highway network. We are currently fixing record numbers of potholes and road defects – currently around 1,000 repairs every week – but it's still not enough to keep up with the number of defects on Hampshire's 5,500 miles of roads.

As part of these new proposals, we have asked the County Council's contractors Milestone to relook at how we programme repairs so that when a single repair is made, smaller ones nearby are also filled at the same time. Currently, repair gangs are being asked to focus on the defects that pose the biggest risk, but under our new approach we want to empower and equip teams to fill more potholes in a single visit and help deliver stronger roads today.

Our firm commitment to fixing the roads will address the demand for action right now, but it does mean rebalancing the highways budget to scale back how much we spend on the larger planned maintenance activity (Operation Resilience) which seeks to prevent potholes forming in the first place. This is not a decision we take lightly, but it reflects the national picture of sustained underfunding which has led to a decline in road conditions across England.

Despite extra money awarded to the County Council by Government earlier this year, to mend potholes, unprecedented levels of damage combined with soaring costs, means that current funding levels are simply not enough. We are not alone in facing this considerable challenge. The cost of repairing roads has risen steeply in recent years, but local authority highways teams in England are estimated to have only received around two-thirds of what they need from the Department of Transport to maintain local roads.

The County Council currently spends around £13.5 million on reactive pothole and road defect repairs each year. Under the new proposal, funding would increase by £7.5 million starting in this financial year and across 24/25 and 25/26. Excluding one-off grants from the Department for Transport and other temporary budget adjustments, this will mean a core annual budget specifically for reactive highway repairs of around £21m through to spring 2026.

2. Repairs to King William III Statue in The Square, Petersfield

The statue of King William III (William of Orange) has been a focal point of our market town for over 200 years. People from right across the Western Downs have visited the markets in Petersfield Square for as long as William has been there.

The Square in Petersfield is actually owned by EHDC but the statue of William III is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and hence it falls under the purview of Hampshire County Council. You may be aware that William's arm has become detached and requires repair. HCC will this month be removing the statue. The timeline is as follows:

- Monday 10th July: Scaffold erection by RHC (Conservator)

- Thursday 13th -Friday 14th July: Removal of William.
- Monday 17th July: Scaffold down, followed by Heras fencing, installed around the plinth by HCC.
- Repair period of 10 weeks (Provisional)
- PROVISIONAL Monday 18th September: Scaffold erection by RHC
PROVISIONAL Thursday 21st -Friday 22nd September: Reinstatement of William.
PROVISIONAL Monday 28th September: Scaffold down, Heras fencing removed.

The second batch of dates are provisional as they depend on how the repair progresses in the workshop in London.

William will undoubtedly be missed; no-one likes to look at an empty plinth. But we can look forward to William returning in September in fully restored condition. PTC may wish to consider organising a ceremony to celebrate his return?

Since Petersfield Urban District Council purchased William III for the town in 1911, it has been repaired at least seven times. In September 1913 Petersfield residents held jumble sales and concerts to raise money to repair the statue. The townspeople filled the Square to celebrate the unveiling of the newly restored statue, which was decorated with laurel leaves. Amazingly the event was filmed and that film is available to view at Hampshire Records Office in Winchester (I have watched it myself).

Finally I would also like to mention that Cllr Robert Mocatta and I have recently met with the Petersfield Area Historical Society with a view to developing a new plaque which would provide more historical detail and context for the statue. We are both supportive of the concept of this additional plaque. Work on this is ongoing. Planning permissions are needed so this new plaque may not be ready in time for William's return but hopefully it can be installed before the end of the year.

3. Pulens Lane Traffic-Calming Project

This scheme is the highest priority for the Petersfield Strategy Group and for Hampshire County Council. Cllr Mocatta and I have been pushing this scheme strongly behind the scenes for the last three years and we are very pleased to have a great team of people working on it and strong commitment from the HCC and EHDC Leadership and senior officers at HCC to deliver the scheme.

Raised crossings will form the basis for slowing traffic and for making it easier for people to cross the road at key points. Cycling and environmental improvements will be embedded within the scheme.

An in-person Workshop with stakeholders took place in Penns Place on 14th June. I know that the Placemaking Team at HCC found this extremely useful. A second Online Workshop will be held from 4.00-5:30pm on either Tuesday 18 or Thursday 20 July. The date will be confirmed this week.

The purpose of the second online Workshop will be to show emerging designs and discuss them in Workshop Groups, with a view to the Project Team developing the proposals in more detail over the Summer. If you would like to be invited to this Teams workshop please let me know.

4. HCC Budget Consultation

A brief reminder that the closing date for the HCC Budget Consultation is 23 July. If you have not already completed the questionnaire I would like to invite you to do so by clicking on this link:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/budgetconsultation>

5. Agroforestry Workshop

At the Hampshire Forestry Partnership we are keen to win hearts and minds when it comes to planting more trees and hedges on agricultural land. There are benefits to the bottom line because farmers can make extra profits from the timber, fruit and nuts whilst also increasing output. Trees can improve grazing pastures by providing shade for animals and improving soil and water retention. And by providing a natural habitat, trees can naturally increase numbers of helpful predators such as spiders and beetles, controlling aphid crop pests without the need for costly and harmful insecticides.

We have organised a free Agroforestry workshop for land managers and farmers which takes place in Alresford on the afternoon of 28 July 2023. It's a great opportunity to learn more from the experts. Please share this opportunity with anyone you know locally who might be interested. To register for the workshop please follow this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/silvoarable-agroforestry-workshop-for-arable-farmers-land-managers-tickets-668673238657?aff=oddtcreator>

6. Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire

Hampshire County Council has been appointed by HM Government to prepare a 'Local Nature Recovery Strategy' for Hampshire, including the areas of Portsmouth and Southampton. £388,000 will be provided to coordinate the development of the new strategy in collaboration with key partners.

The Strategy will bring together organisations and residents to restore precious habitats, protect wildlife and combat climate change. Hampshire County Council is one of 48 individual local authorities across England designated as leads for the delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and will work with Southampton and Portsmouth unitary authorities, the region's two national parks and all eleven district and borough councils across Hampshire.

7. South Downs Park Protectors is launched

The SDNPA has launched a new scheme which gives corporations a significant opportunity to get involved with nature recovery and staff volunteering in the great outdoors. The South Downs Protector scheme is inviting corporate partners to support the South Downs National Park with a £10,000 contribution.

The donation will help fund the National Park's ambition to create 13,000 hectares – or an area almost twice the size of Southampton – of new habitat where plants and animals can thrive. The ReNature initiative is tackling biodiversity loss by creating significant new areas of woodland, hedgerow, wildflower meadow, and wetlands over the next decade.

Businesses that sign up to the scheme receive volunteering days in the incredible landscape of the National Park, a ranger talk, as well as corporate getaway opportunities at the breathtaking Seven Sisters Country Park.

They will also receive a one-year subscription to the Green South Downs Sustainability Certification Program, which focuses on helping businesses reach sustainability goals.

It would be great to get local firms to sign up and I hope Councillor colleagues will help to spread the word. Joining the scheme will be good for businesses and good for nature!

To find out more about becoming a Park Protector visit <https://oursouthdowns.co.uk/page/SupportNP> or email james.winkworth@southdownstrust.org.uk

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers

Steep PC Roads and Tracks Working Group Report
July 2023

- ToRs are ready and have been circulated.
- Pothole in RCL is increasing in size. Cllr Oppenheimer has asked Milestone to prioritise its repair, and Cllr Holmes has contacted Highways (again). It is being aggravated by a leak of water from up Sandbury Lane, which has been reported both online and via the emergency number to South East Water.
- Jetting is scheduled in both Ashford Lane and Mill Lane
- Stoner Hill Traffic Calming potentially happening 2nd week September

DRAFT

Cheques-June 2023

| Chq No. | Amount Payee | Service |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 100532 | £783.33 Dawn Rodgers | Clerk Salary and Lengthsman Admin |
| 100533 | £60.00 Rowlands Castle Parish Council | Planning training |
| 100534 | £960.00 Hart Landscaping and Tree Services Limited | Lengthsman Services (other parishes) |
| Subtotal | £1,803.33 | |

Direct Debits-June 2023

| Invoice | Amount Payee | Service |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Subtotal | £0.00 | |

TOTAL **£1,803.33**

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