

**RECORD OF POINTS AND DECISIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF
THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2023 IN THE READING ROOM**

PRESENT

Sir Richard Packer – Chair
Bev Small – Vice Chair
Sir Raymond Jack
Carl Jacobs - Cllr
Johan Denekamp – Cllr
Morag Philpott – Cllr
Peter Young - Cllr
Sarah Miller - PC Clerk
Bridget Wayman – Wiltshire Councillor

In attendance: Mungo Melvin, Chair, Forbes Field Management Group
Catherine Potts, Black Dog Working Party
Olivia von Halle, Chair, Claybush Playground Committee
Tina Chelsea, Colin Diaper, Becky Lee, Darren Lee, Heidi McCormack, Glen Miller, Felicity Pattenden,
Neil Pattenden, Dan Potts, Roy Trigwell, Alison Whipp-Long

1. **Welcome & Apologies** – The Chair Cllr RP welcomed all to the meeting. No Apologies.
2. **PUBLIC FORUM** – Mungo Melvin suggested that the work of the Village Voice editor should be recognised for the service provided by Village Voice email updates during the pandemic and beyond; councillors thanked Sarah Miller. Cllr RP suggested that other items of public interest – eg School Playing Field fencing - should be raised by members of the public during the Agenda item discussion. The Agenda would thus be re-jigged to allow consideration of the Playing Field fence after the Black Dog update.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
Cllr MP declared an interest School / Playground fencing as married to a Chilmark School Governor
4. **Minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6 September 2023
Approved without amendment & no Matters Arising
5. **Wiltshire Cllr Bridget Wayman's Report:**
 - Cllr BW noted that the Local plan was still under consultation. A policy was being worked into it for the protection of Dark Skies but she felt it should be strengthened in relation to planning applications for roof lights. She would be aiming for the prevention of any roof lights under Permitted Development rights.
 - She also inquired about flooding readiness in Chilmark. Cllr CJ said the gully emptying tank had been at work in Frog Lane that day.
6. **Black Dog Working Party**
 - Catherine Potts provided a progress update on behalf of the working party team of 13. All members were in fulltime work and none had pub running skills and so they were liaising with other community groups who had purchased pubs. They were also relying on the Plunkett Foundation for advice as this organisation seemed to be the first port of call.
 - The first recommended step had been to talk to the community, hence the recent residents' survey. 214 individual responses had been received, of which 54% were from Chilmark. Of the 214, some 65.3% of responders said they would invest in the pub. High quality food, a decent selection of drinks and a beer garden were considered key requirements along with ensuring the pub was inclusive of everyone in the community.
 - Next step was to determine the legal structure of the group and it seemed the most logical option would be a community benefits society. This would be supported by the Plunkett foundation and numerous bodies that give grants for such projects. The group was also working on a vision for the pub: this would include providing a homely welcome, affordability, high quality meals, well stocked bar, locally sourced produce where possible, and active support of community involvement (eg cricket, carols, village clubs) as well as attracting motorists off the A303 with the reinstatement of the Black Dog sign.

- They were now in good position to sign up with the Plunkett Foundation which would offer discounted rates for legal services and similar. The business plan was being accelerated and a professional pub valuer had been engaged for later in November. CP noted the group was seeking more Parish Council involvement, ideally having one PC member on the Working Party.
- Cllr RJP inquired how the group planned to raise the money for the purchase, and whether they had a lead person putting up a considerable sum? CP said on the basis of the questionnaire, it was thought £200,000 could be raised from local residents and others in nearby villages. They would also be looking at the possibility of a getting a loan from the public loans board (PWLb), or the option of a mortgage. Not having a lead investor was better from the point of view of a community benefit society structure and, although the survey indicated there were several people who could put up a considerable sum, this would require a different structure.
- CP reiterated that it would be helpful to have a PC member on the working party, given that the purpose of the project was to benefit the community as a whole. It was agreed the Parish Council would come back with an answer in coming days.
- Cllr RJ asked how confident they were that the cash could be raised in time for the 24 January deadline. Dan Potts (also Working Party member) said they were confident the money could be raised but less confident that The Black Dog owner would accept the offer. It was confirmed that any offer made would be for the whole pub site and not just the curtilage currently up for sale.

Subsequent to the presentation, PC members agreed the Parish Council would pay for Reading Room hire for the Working Party weekly meetings up until Christmas, on the basis it was important the group met face to face rather than via zoom. In addition, at least one PC member would aim to attend the meetings each week, although this would not necessarily be the same person. *Action - Clerk*

7. School Playing Field Fence:

- The Clerk and Cllrs BS & PY explained how concerns had been raised over the unannounced installation of new fencing by Chilmark School and subsequent fencing works round the school playing field at Claybush. Cllr BS provided a history of the school playing field and the clerk reported the planning advice given by Wiltshire Senior Planner James Repper. The school and part of the playing field were located in the village conservation area, and an adopted highway ran down one side of the playing field. In normal circumstances planning applications should have been made. The Clerk & Cllr PY noted that they had met with three representatives of the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE), along with the school Head, at the playing field earlier that day.
- Cllr CJ noted it was important in principle for the parish council to seem to be trying to support the school and adopt a positive approach. It would have been nice to have been shown plans for the fencing in advance and better communication from the school and SDBE would be good. Overall, he thought the fencing down the side of the school was an improvement. At the playing field, in his view, three quarters of the proposed fencing would be hidden by vegetation and provided it complied with planning regulations he would be in favour.
- Cllr RJP agreed the PC should be in support of the school but the planning authority had not been made aware of what was being planned. Cllr PY noted that without seeing any plans, it was impossible for the PC to give an opinion. He felt the PC had a right to say to what was aesthetically acceptable. Cllr BS said the situation had been entirely avoidable and it was very disappointing that no-one had been consulted. One villager noted the proposed fencing would make the playing field look like a prisoner of war camp. Another said it looked like standard school fencing except in normal circumstances it would never be more than one metre high and ideally it should have been green rather than black.

It was agreed the PC would write to SDBE, copied to Wiltshire planning dept, expressing concerns about the lack of plans and consultation. Subsequent to the meeting, the PC received notification from SDBE that work on the playing field fencing had been put on hold. Meanwhile, a retrospective application for the fencing by the school would be submitted to Wiltshire. Apologies for poor communication and any upset to villagers were received from the school's headteacher and chairman of governors.

8. Forbes Field update

- Members had before them an update from Mungo Melvin on progress in the last two months. MM provided a further update (as of 1 Nov) with details of a new watering point by the Orchard area, a new water outflow area, new fencing with tractor & pedestrian entrances and preparation of the Coronation Grove. MM noted there was also the possibility of constructing a cairn memorial to Diana Forbes at a viewpoint in the field. Saturday 18 November & Saturday 9 December were set to be the next Forbes Field Days for preparation & planting respectively.

- FF financial update: Members had before them a financial update from Cllr JD for the half year period to 30 September 2023. He noted everything was in good shape financially. Three grants totalling £3,877 had now been received from the AONB. So far 57 trees (costing £3,604) had been planted and a total of 70/80 trees were likely to have been planted by the end of 2023. New fencing and two high quality gates had been installed at the Hops Close end of the field, at a cost of £3,998. Four picnic benches (£792) and cameras, bird and bat boxes (£656) were now in situ. Digger work for the new water point and drainage area had cost £480. As of 31 October 2023, the Forbes Field deposit account held £7,819.61.

9. Playground update

- Claybush: Olivia von Halle, Playground Committee Chair, explained the difficulties the committee was having with the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) in its attempts to renew the lease for the Playground at the Claybush school playing field. This had been going on since March and despite being promised a resolution at the beginning of October, nothing had happened. She was concerned that the lease difficulties and school playing field fencing were somehow linked, though she hoped her fears were unnecessary. Until the lease situation was resolved, it was impossible to make any plans for the future of the Claybush playground.
- Frickers Paddock: Cllr RJ noted some cutting back of bushes around the Playground was required and asked for the council's discretion to use Malcolm Roberts to do some tidying up in the winter. Agreed, to a limit of £100. Regarding the longer term future of the play equipment, Cllr JD noted that it would not last for ever and he would recommend a sinking fund be set up for when new equipment was needed. Although members thought the equipment looked in pretty good shape currently, it was agreed it was probably time to start setting funds aside.
- Cllr RJP noted that Cllr RJ had kindly agreed to attend a Playground Inspection training course which would mean it would not in future be necessary for the PC to engage an external company for the annual Playground Inspection.

10. Finance

- *Payments & Receipts statement*: the Clerk presented a summary of PC Treasurer's account activity for period 1 Sept to 31 October 2023. Expenditure for the period totalled £870, made up of two grass cutting bills (£370), Annual Reading Room hire (£100), a £250 donation to the Seeds4Success charity, and £150 for Playground Inspection training. There had been no receipts during this period. The Treasurer's account balance at 31 October 2023 was £8205.86 – this included £1,290 ring-fenced for the Millennium Cross.
- *Proposed Budget for 2024/2025*: the Clerk had circulated a financial update for 2023-24, with a proposed budget for 2024/25, suggesting an increase in the precept to £10,000 (from the current £9,600). Points to consider were increased bin emptying costs, future election costs of £400+ in 2025, and the possible setting aside of funds for Frickers Paddock Playground equipment renewal in 5-10 years' time. It was noted the proposed budget allowed £500 for the purchase of an additional bin to serve Forbes Field. Cllr CJ suggested that the FFMG could consider the cost of purchasing this new bin, while the PC would pay for emptying costs. This to be discussed under Bins item.
- Cllr JD note he would be recommending an increase in the Precept to £10,500. The Clerk advised that Wiltshire Council's Precept Calculator tool would not be available until later in November. Once this was available, she would circulate the details of neighbouring Parish precepts to give members a comparison. It was noted the actual budget for 2024/25 would be set at the PC meeting on 10 January 2025.
- Cllr RJ suggested it would be sensible for the ring-fenced Millennium Cross funds to be kept in an interest earning account. This was agreed. *Action: Clerk*

11. Planning Procedures and Applications – Cllr BS

Applications determined or progress since last meeting

- **PL/2022/04332 & 04333** - Chilmark Estates (former RAF Chilmark) SP3 5RW: Retrospective change of use applications. *PC position: Object*. Cllr BS noted that the PC's original objections on Highways grounds had been resubmitted. Decision deadline: 7 September. *It was noted Wiltshire planners were now looking into the possible flood implications of the application.*
- **PL/2023/06710** - Chieldmarc Farm, The Street, Chilmark, SP3 5AU. Works to trees in conservation area: Lawsonia Glaucou - fell. Decision: No Objection, 8 September.
- **PL/2023/07054** - Frog Cottage, Frog Lane, Chilmark, SP3 5BB. Listed building consent: Replacement of the existing clay single roll pantiles with new clay pantiles of matching colour and profile. *PC position: No objection*. Decision deadline: 13 October 2023

12. Bin emptying contract

- The clerk recapped how Idverde – the bin emptying contractors for the PC's dog poo bin at Mooray and litter bin opposite the Black Dog – had announced they were increasing their charges from £3.56 plus VAT per empty to £30.45 plus VAT per empty. For the 36 empties a year in Chilmark this would come to a total of £1096.20 + VAT, as opposed to the current annual rate of £128.16 plus VAT.
- Cllr MP had subsequently contacted Grist (who empty the RR bin) and received a quote of £7.98 + Vat per empty (this includes the cost of the bin liner) for the bin opposite the Black Dog. Originally when approached, they had been unable to provide a Dog Poo bin quote, but Cllr MP had now been informed they would be able to empty the bin at Mooray for the same rate as the Black Dog bin, on the basis Dog waste was no longer classified as Hazardous. The annual cost of 36 empties at Grist's rate would be £287.28 plus VAT. Members agreed to opt for the Grist quote and to cancel the Idverde contract.

Action: Cllr MP & Clerk

- *Additional Bin for Forbes Field/Hops Close:* it was agreed that the new bin for Forbes Field/Hops Close would be purchased out of FF funds, while the PC would cover the once monthly emptying costs (£97.56 plus VAT). *Action: Cllr MP to liaise with Cllrs CJ & JD*

13. Flood Prevention update / Seed4Success

Cllr CJ, Flood Warden, noted Seeds4Success had now visited for a third time this year, doing fantastic work clearing the drainage ditch opposite The Black Dog. The charity was very appreciative of the PC's recent £250 donation and Cllr CJ suggested the PC should budget for making a contribution to them next year as well. He was waiting for the SSEN grant to come through for the purchase of flood defence equipment. Meanwhile new aqua sacks & more gritting salt for Cleeves Farm had been ordered ex Wiltshire. A drainage clearance tanker had cleared drains outside Cleeves Farm and Frog Lane. Ladder Lane was the one that still need clearing – this been blocked up for years, meaning rainwater came straight down Ladder Lane to the Dairylea cottages - the drain on the B3089 is blocked. Dani Everett, Wilts Land Drainage engineer, had finally visited Chilmark and this had been useful.

14. Ridge Phone Kiosk

The Clerk noted those concerned seemed happy with BT's proposed adoption contract and there appeared to be no risk of the PC becoming responsible for any future electricity bills for the kiosk. The contract to be signed and sent off. *Action - clerk*

15. Highways – traffic survey update

Clerk had now been told that, despite earlier advice, a traffic survey could be conducted on the Chilmark-Fovant road by Portash. Application for this had gone in. However, there was a backlog in surveys and so the one due to be carried out this autumn on the Chilmark-Tisbury road was now unlikely to happen until February 2024. Meanwhile, it was noted the Blind Summit sign approaching Rock Cottage from Tisbury was in place; however the white line SLOW warning on same stretch of road was still awaited, along with white line extension at The Cross.

16. Future meeting dates

- LHFIFG Wednesday 15 November 2-4pm Nadder Centre – Cllr BS to attend
- Area Board Highways Matters meeting, 29 November 7-9pm at East Knoyle VH – Cllr JD to attend
- Area Board mtg, Wednesday 28 February 7-9pm at Broad Chalke Village Hall - Attendance tba

17. Items for Village Voice

Clerk vacancy to go in VV, Tisbury Focus, Hindon News & elsewhere
Forthcoming FF Days & forthcoming Litter Pick day

18. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 10 January 2024 at 7pm in the Reading Room.