

Minutes of the Chagford Annual Parish Assembly Meeting held at Chagford Jubilee Hall on Monday 24th May 2021 commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Present: The following Parish Councillors; Parish Electors and Members of the Public were recorded as being present:-

Cllr: Gay Hill (Chairman)

Cllr: Kevin Coombe

Cllrs: Andrew Parrott

Cllr: Gill Printy

Cllr: Marion Stanbury

Cllr: Peter Williams

Cllr: James McInnes

(Devon County Council)

Cllr: Nicky Heyworth

(West Devon Borough Council)

Claire Ash Wheeler

Roger Ash Wheeler

P. Burrell

Vicki Cairns

Stuart Clarke

Crispin d'Apice

Angie Emberson

Mr. T. Garratt

Mrs. V. Garratt

Nick Hamilton

Simon Hill

E. Hodges

Jo Hodges

David Hooper

Kirsty Howie

Gary Winter

Margaret Jeffreys

Maurice Jeffreys

Ralph Mackridge

Jill Millar

S & J Mylius

Una O'Connor

Michael Ritchie

Lisa Schneidau

David Scott

Nicky Scott

Sarah Sharpe

Peter Shields

Yuli Somme

Lewis Steer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs: Mrs. Haxton, Mrs. Malseed and Shears.

Speakers: Tony Whitehead – Climate and Ecology Working Group

Kirsty Howie – Proposal to increase the number of Bike Stands

Crispin d'Apice, Chairman of Chagford Community Trust

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Speakers.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Assembly Meeting held on Thursday 11th April 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed.

3. **Tony Whitehead – Climate and Ecology Working Group**

In November 2019 Chagford Parish Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency, following similar declarations by Government and Councils all over the UK, including the Dartmoor National Park Authority.

The Climate and Ecology Working Group was set up to represent the community young and old and to consider the impact on future generations. This group would work under the umbrella of the Chagford Parish Council. The Working Group, consisting of Chagford Residents and Councillors was set up to take forward actions on this issue.

The Working Group believes that the actions suggested below will make a significant contribution –

- Land Management
- Built Environment
- Transport and Travel
- Community Action

Kirsty Howie – Proposal to increase the number of Bike Stands

The Parish Council is asked to consider increasing the available parking facilities for cycles in the town.

There is currently only one cycle parking stand (or Sheffield stand) close to the entrance to the gentlemen's toilets by the Market House. There is a significant risk that traffic may hit cycles parked here. This is known to have happened on at least one occasion.

The proposal: To site a number of additional cycle parking stands around the town in visible, accessible sites where cycles can be safely and securely locked while their owners are shopping or using the cafes and pubs. Number dependent on available funds and suitable sites.

These additional cycle parking stands to be provided as soon as funds and sites can be agreed and confirmed.

Why do We Need Cycle Stands?

Changing Lifestyles: Cycling is increasing because it is an excellent way to get about and provides a wide range of health and environmental benefits. Chagford has seen an increase in cycling, particularly during 2020. On the 28th July 2020 Boris Johnson vowed to bring about “a golden age of cycling” and committed a £2 billion investment to develop cycle routes, improve the Highway Code and give children cycling lessons.

Emerging research carried out by SWEEP (The South West Partnership for Environmental and Economic Prosperity) shows that 81% of visitors come to Dartmoor for roaming recreation (e.g. walking, riding, **cycle riding**).
Dartmoor National Park Visitor Survey 2017

An Opportunity for Chagford: The increase in cycle use locally is a result of more residents using bikes and e bikes, and increasing numbers of visitors coming to the town by bike.

Chagford is already a popular destination for groups of cyclists and this will increase as infrastructure improves. Groups of cyclists stop in Chagford to buy refreshments and enjoy the town. Word of mouth recommendation will lead to more visits and business for the town. Chagford is on national cycle map: Sustrans National Cycle Route no. 28. Introducing cycle parking spaces provides additional opportunities for enhancement of the town's public spaces, of benefit to all.

The Greenway Project

This proposed traffic-free multi-use route between Moretonhampstead and Chagford will create potential for the town to become an important destination for cyclists.

The project group has conducted a survey in the local communities, asking people what they think about a safe walking and cycling route between Moretonhampstead and Chagford. An overwhelmingly positive response has been received, with nearly a thousand people supporting a multi-use trail and recognising the benefits it would bring to both communities.

Type of Stands Required:

Sufficient overall space should be allocated. As a rule of thumb, eight cycles (four stands) can be parked in the space of one car.

The simple Sheffield (inverted U) stand gives good support, good security and multiple locking points. They are cheap, flexible, and work for different styles of cycles.

Alternatively designs based on the Sheffield can be individually built to illustrate Chagford's history or similar.

Potential Costs:

Recommended cycle stands ("Sheffield" type): basic galvanised, £40 for concreted in fixing; £48 for bolt down. Colours are available at extra cost. Costs for labour and materials for simple fixing would be small and will vary according to site and circumstances. Costs would obviously be higher if the work is done in association with surrounding enhancements (e.g. paving).

As part of enhancement of the Square:

Opportunities could be created to increase space for cycle stands by repurposing the road space around the Market House (either in front or behind). This could form part of an overall plan to develop the Square by rationalising and reducing confusing traffic flows and creating an attractive paved area for pedestrians, with seating, planters, etc. as well as providing safe and secure bicycle parking.

This would be a more significant improvement plan, more expensive and will require wider consultation with local people, and Highways/Devon County Council. Therefore, a potential option though one that may take longer to bring to fruition.

Sites for Cycle Stands:

Sites have been considered that meet the three criteria i.e. are accessible, visible and secure.

Funding Options:

The cost of cycle stands is unlikely to be huge, and it should be possible to raise the funds locally without any substantial input from the Parish Council, though if the option to re-shape and enhance the Square was an option there would need to be more significant investment.

Self-Funding – there are a number of keen cyclists who could help with fund raising through events, sponsorship etc. This group could investigate grant funding as well.

Carnival Fund – this fund has now been wound up and there is a small residue that may be available for this project and could go some way to supporting the cost of cycling stands.

Crispin d'Apice – Chagford Community Trust

Chagford Community Trust Limited is a community land trust formed for the benefit of the local community, as defined by Section 79 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, and is incorporated as an Industrial and Mutual Society. The Society's objectives are to carry on any business for the benefit of the residents of the Parish of Chagford and adjoining parishes.

The new homes being built at Bellacouch Meadows include 32 properties that will be let at affordable rent. Affordable rent means that the cost of the rent will be 80% of the average local rate. In order to be eligible for the affordable housing you will need to have a local connection.

The Bellacouch Meadow includes a block of four small employment units which are available through Fowlers.

4. The Audited Accounts of Chagford Parish Council for the period 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020

- a) The Chairman presented the current Financial Statement for the year 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020. These have been audited by the Council's Internal Auditor and District Auditor. The accounts were adopted.

The Financial Statement of the Chagford Parish Council for the period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

- b) The Chairman presented the current financial statement for the year 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021. A statement of receipts and payments were circulated and attached to the Minutes.

As there has not been an Annual Assembly Meeting for two years this report will highlight the last two years.

The Accounts for 2019/20 were audited last year by the internal auditor, and PKF Littlejohn LLP and were approved.

The Accounts for 2020 /21 have been approved by the Internal Auditor. The accounts will be sent to PKF Littlejohn LLP at the end of July having been made available to the Parishioners from June.

In 2019/20 it was necessary for the Council to purchase a new computer for the Clerk to carry out her responsibilities.

The Insurance premium was increased to provide insurance cover for the whole of the Market House.

The Jubilee Field had work carried out on the trees and shrubs as they were encroaching onto the field and the safety surfaces. The Skate Park also had some improvements following the installation of the Memorial Seat which meant that the fence was repaired and the Safety Surfaces improved.

The Parish Council placed a down payment for the new Multiplay which cost a total of £40,000.00

The Southcombe Garden had some tree surgery work, and the fence between the Cricket Field and Padley Common was replaced.

In 2019/20 the Parish Council had to pay WDBC for the public convenience contract for 2018/2019. As well as maintaining the toilets in the Market House in 2019/20.

The new Councillors were encouraged to go on the Good Councillor Course.

2020/21 The Council began the year during the first lockdown the toilets were closed and the bins were not emptied for the first three months, but we had to pay a contribution to the 2019 Election even though we did not have a Parish election.

The Council's premium is less for 2020/21 because we have a renewed fixed premium for three years. The Leases for the Market House retail businesses were finally completed and the final instalment of the multi play was paid.

The hedge between the Cricket Field and the track was replaced.

The usual maintenance on the Jubilee Field, Cross Tree, the Pound Garden and the Southcombe Garden were carried out.

The Market House was redecorated as the Parish received a Covid Grant.

The Parish requested a precept of £50,000.00 for this coming year and still has some ideas about a new consecrated burial ground.

- 5. The Annual Report of the Parish Council – Chairman Cllr: Mrs. Gay Hill**
The 2019/20 year began with the nominations for the Parish and District Councils. There were insufficient candidates to require an election. The new Councillors were made welcome at the Annual Meeting of the Council

The Chairman welcomed Christine Malseed, Debbie Phelps, Anthony Pope, Gill Printy and Yuli Somme. Alongside welcoming back Kevin Coombe, Andrew Parrott, Margaret Haxton, Gay Hill and Peter Williams.

Nicky Heyworth was welcomed as the new WDBC member for the Chagford Ward.

There was still a vacancy on the Parish Council, this had to be advertised in the official way there were five applicants and following co-option John Shears was appointed.

The new Councillors were all advised to take advantage of the Good Councillor Training Course arranged by DALC.

The other big project for this year was the Market House being handed back to the Parish Council from WDBC.

This began with varying hiccups, a lack of keys, new leases for the retail businesses, and the Toilet Maintenance Contract, now two years later I think we are in control but no guarantees.

The Skate Park had a memorial seat installed and new safety surfaces.

Andrew Parrott and his many helpers obtained Single use Plastic free status for Chagford.

The Path from Orchard Meadow to Bretteville Close was upgraded and the safety bars were widened in order that electric mobile scooters could use the path rather than risk the pavements in Lower Street.

This path is more accessible now because of the links with the new development.

The Parish Council signed the declaration to support the Climate and Ecology Emergency and formed a Climate Emergency working group with members from the Community.

The other big events were Brexit and the Covid 19 pandemic. The latter meant that the Parish implemented the Emergency Plan and contacted all the houses in the Parish with an information leaflet. The 2020/2021 year began with everyone in lock down when the toilets were closed the Jubilee Field and Skate Park taped off and the Council having to have meetings via zoom.

This came with its problems and difficulties because there always seemed to be problems for everyone to access the link. At least it was differing Councillors

The first meeting was light-hearted as everyone admired someone's calendar that was a lesson for us all to check our surroundings. It was also interesting throughout as muting was not always easy and families often forgot that there zoom meeting taking place.

At times it was very confusing as not everyone was visible at once, the faces kept moving or blanking or someone was joining by phone so taking decisions was always challenging but we kept the show on the road.

The Parish Council acknowledged VE day and VJ day both socially distancing events.

There has been a proposal to install a cattle grid on the NE side of Meldon, this is still ongoing awaiting more funds and three price quotes for the work which must satisfy DCC standards.

The Market House has been redecorated and with a big thank you to Cllrs: Coombe and Williams we manage to maintain the premises. They have kindly taken the seat away which was a victim of someone's driving, I am surprised that the vehicle was mobile having knocked the seat right out of the ground. In due course it will return fully repaired. We are also indebted to Cllr Williams for repairing the WI seat on the Jubilee Field and to Cllr: Coombe who has repaired the tractor on the play park.

There has been many planning applications and we are indebted to Cllr: Parrott who keeps us all informed digitally and when necessary, visits the site with another Councillor.

The multi play was fully installed at the end of the summer and appears to be very popular.

There are never ending on going works.

We end the year with another lockdown in place but zoom meetings have come to an end.

Sadly, Cllrs Pope and Ms Somme have decided to resign from the Council for personal reasons. I thank them both for their contribution and support. There will be an election for the two seats in due course, if you are interested, please follow the timetable on the Noticeboard outside Endecott House. If you have any questions, please contact the Clerk and /or a Councillor who will be only too willing to help.

Lastly, I must thank the Clerk whose unstinting dedication to the Council and the Councillors keeps the show on the road she is the Proper Officer for the Council and the responsible Finance Officer and it is important that Council business takes place through the Clerk.

I also thank all the Councillors for their support and dedication.

Covid permitting the Council are hoping to Beat the Bounds in September, this event will be for Chagford Parishioners only in these current circumstances.

6. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

Letters were received from Parishioners: -

- Climate emergency and what action has the Parish Council taken to combat climate change.
- Electric car-charging points
- Car parking in Chagford
- The Safety of pedestrians, especially young children and the older members of our community within the 30-mph limit

Resolved: After much discussion Chagford Parish Council will reconvene the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Groups and move it forward.
Contact the Devon Council Highways regarding the New Traffic Order within Chagford.

Contact West Devon Borough Council regarding Bike Stands

Hold a Public Consultation later in the year regarding all of the above.

The Meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

Date **Signed**