

SOBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Soberton Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th September 2023 at the Rookesbury Hall that commenced at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs J Hyland (Chairman), D Buttriss, D Cleeve, P Henderson, S Marland, J Sherwill , V Weston

In attendance: B Gibbs, Clerk to the Parish Council with District Cllrs Pearson and Wallace.

45/24 Apologies for absence

Cllrs Cole, Findlay and Salmon sent their apologies to the meeting along with District Cllr Lee and County Cllr Stallard.

46/24 Disclosure of Interests

No disclosures were made.

47/24 Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

48/24 Chairman's comments

The Chairman made the following comments.

Cllr Hyland spoke about the proposal to create a Soberton Climate Café. A request has been made at the July meeting for some financial support from the Parish Council and the sum of £200 had been set aside. Cllr Hyland said that there would be an initial "open to all" session that would take place on Saturday 21st of October at the Rookesbury Hall between 10.00am and 12.30pm.

Cllr Hyland spoke about the two charities in the village that the Parish Council is involved with.

The Charity for the Labouring Poor and the Soberton Recreation Ground. A meeting has taken place between the Clerk of the Labouring Poor charity and Cllrs Hyland and Findlay. The Clerk to the Council was also present. At that meeting a number of outcomes were agreed. It was proposed that the Parish Council would be in a position to become the managing trustee of the charity. I was also hoped to have Charity's remaining land registered with the Land Registry.

In addition to this (but as a separate piece of work) that the Soberton Recreation Ground charity will also have its landholding registered with the Land Registry.

There will be costs involved in both of these actions and the Clerk was asked to get an idea of the costs involved by speaking with two firms of specialist solicitors.

Cllr Hyland then spoke once again about internal and external communications. He said that the members of the working groups and working parties are empowered to communicate with each other via e-mail without having to involve the Clerk in any email or WhatsApp threads.

However, he said that it was not appropriate for individual councillors to e-mail all other councillors about topics or issues they may have become involved with. Instead, Cllr Hyland said that the preferred method of communicating between members in this manner was for an email to be sent from the Clerk's email account in the first instance.

Cllr Hyland also said that it was important that no individual councillor commences a discussion or communicates with a third party or another authority using their Parish Council email address.

If there is a need to engage with third parties in this way then this should again be via the Clerk's email account.

Cllr Hyland concluded this topic by saying that councillors were free to speak to third parties and other authorities using their private email accounts on the understanding that it may be prudent to copy in the Clerk.

Cllr Buttriss commented that he often had difficulties with Google email - it was agreed that email trails should retain their original subject headings as an aid whilst searching for documents.

49/24 Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the 18th July 2023

Councillor Weston asked the following questions common land responsibilities as listed in the 18th July minutes. The Clerk explained the differences between a commons registration (merely registering an area of common land) and a Land Registry registration (registering the ownership of an area of land). Cllr Hyland said that the Parish Council does not own any of the common land in the parish. Four areas of land appear in the commons registration but are not registered with the Land Registry.

They are Hoe Gate Common, the Chalk Pit, the Chapel Road pond and the South End Plain Pound (sic). Cllr Hyland said that an attempt to register the Chapel Road pond with the Land Registry has failed due to the fact that the Parish Council could not demonstrate that it has had exclusive control of the pond for the requisite amount of time.

Cllr Hyland suggested that the registration refusal letter received from the Land Registry should be forwarded to the estates management team at Hampshire County Council and for this correspondence to be acknowledged by them.

Cllr Sherwill commented that the 20th June minutes did not properly show that the approved proposal to re-organise the Parish Council’s meeting schedule had been proposed by Cllr Weston and seconded by Cllr Salmon.

Resolved: The minutes of the ordinary meeting of the 18th July 2023 having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

50/24 Reports from County and District Councillors

Cllr Hyland said that written reports from District Cllrs Wallace & Lee and County Cllr Stallard had been previously circulated.

The main items to be recorded were as follows.

- Winchester College. Planning Committee in August approved major plans for two boarding houses and redevelopment of a playing field for an all-weather hockey pitch with artificial grass – which will be available to the public. The boarding houses will allow acceptance of girl boarders from 2024.
- Publishing of the next Local Plan has been deferred by over one year to the end of 2025.
- While the emerging new Local Plan is still in draft, it holds some (increasing) weight in planning decision-making.
- St John’s Winchester charity has set up a Homeshare scheme to help tackle loneliness and isolation, relieve pressure on housing and the cost-of-living crisis and have a positive effect on the mental and physical wellbeing of older and younger people in Winchester and District.
- The scheme matches an older homeowner who has a spare room (the ‘householder’) with a younger person (the ‘sharer’) who needs affordable accommodation. In exchange for the room, the sharer volunteers 10 hours a week practical help and companionship to the householder. There’s a small fee to pay for the service (matching, robust safeguarding checks, on-going monitoring) £100 per month for the householder, £200 per month for the sharer.

Cllrs Wallace and Pearson expressed their frustrations with the situation at Long Road with the continued unauthorised occupation of the land. More recently, it has become apparent that some of the occupiers appear to be hosting casual music gatherings that have the potential to cause significant anti-social behaviour.

51/24 Finance

a) Orders for payment.

Date	Supplier	Description	Amount
31/07/23	DM Payroll Services	Annual Payroll Fee	60.00
31/07/23	HMRC	Month 3 PAYE/NIC	76.57
31/07/23	B.V.Gibbs	July 23 Salary payment	767.30
07/08/23	Portsmouth Water	Pavilion water bill	44.26
09/08/23	RP Gardening	Lengthsman First Visit	3000.00

09/08/23	Silhouette Media	DNS Registration	40.00
09/08/23	Swanmore PC	ACSO June 2023	222.16
09/08/23	PKF-Littlejohn	External Audit Fees	360.00
09/08/23	Ampfield Traffic Ltd	May-July SID Deployment	400.00
09/08/23	Swanmore PC	ACSO July 2023	378.97
14/08/23	SSE	Pavilion Electricity	169.54
14/08/23	Easy-Clean Ltd	Pavilion Septic Tank	245.00
14/08/23	B.V.Gibbs	Google Space Mar-July 23	250.47
14/08/23	WCC	2023 Play Inspection	51.50
31/08/23	B.V.Gibbs	August 23 Salary Payment	767.30
01/09/23	WEL Medical	Defib Pads	151.02
07/09/23	Soberton Village Hall	Room hire 18-07	16.00
15/09/23	Vita-Play Ltd	Quarterly Inspection	67.80
		Total amount	7067.99

Resolved: to approve the Orders for Payment from July to September 2023.

b) The Clerk said that the internal auditor would be visiting him over the next couple of months in order to undertake the six-monthly internal audit review.

d) Grant applications had been received from Winchester District Citizens Advice, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Victim Support and the Holy Trinity Church in Newtown. It was proposed to defer these items until the next meeting so that further information could be gathered.

52/24 To receive any reports from the following working groups.

a) Lengthsman.

Cllr Salmon was not available to present a report. The Clerk reported that the Lengthsman was next due to visit on November 22nd.

b) Planning.

23/01782/FUL Glen Wood Heath Road Soberton PO17 6LA : Retrospective change of use of the barn for use as a florist and associated parking.

The Parish Council made the following comments.

It would like to see a planning condition imposed that requires the applicant to ensure all vehicles are able to depart the premises using a forward gear and that no vehicle should ever have to reverse out of the premises on to Heath Road.

It would like the applicant to clarify how many parking spaces will be delivered by the proposal as there is a difference between the figure in the planning application and that of the planning statement.

Similarly, it would like the proposed opening hours to be clarified as there is again a difference between the figure in the planning application and that of the planning statement.

It would like to see a planning condition imposed that requires the applicant to ensure the premises are not to be used for any external or third-party commercial events and that the premises are to be used for the stated use only.

It would like to see a planning condition imposed that prevents additional external lighting that would increase light pollution in the area.

c) Asset Management.

The Clerk spoke about the football pitch at the Recreation Ground and how it is hoped that grants may be made available to improve the playing surface. Firstly, the FA foundation will be inspecting the pitch on the 12th of October in order to outline a way forward with the pitch improvements. The Clerk hoped to meet them onsite.

The report that will be produced is known as the Pitch Power Inspection. Once this is completed then the Parish Council should be able to apply for a tapered six-year grant to improve the quality of the pitch.

53/24 The SDNPA Parish Priority Statement

Cllr Hyland reported that the SDNPA planning priority statement had been uploaded to the website after the meeting in July. He also said that it now required the Parish Council to approve this document so it can be sent to the South Downs National Park authority.

It would then be recorded as an informative document for the South Downs National Park Authority's Local Plan review.

Resolved: to approve and dispatch the SDNPA Parish Priority Statement.

54/24 The Soberton Parish Design Statement

Cllrs Hyland, Sherwill and Weston all expressed their disappointment at the low level of responses to the recent PDS consultation. However, Cllr Hyland it said this was not unusual with village design statements and despite this fact it was clear that the steering group should press on and complete the document in good time.

It was agreed that a public open day will be held to present the draft document when it's complete and ready for publication.

55/24 Standing Orders review

There were no reports to receive and the review was still a work in progress.

56/24 The Soberton Parish Council website

Cllrs Henderson, Marland and the Clerk are to meet some time before the next meeting in order to show the Clerk through the new website's management tools. Meanwhile, the

existing provider is working with Cllr Marland so that DNS and web hosting may be switched across to the new provider. It is hoped to go live before the next Parish Council meeting.

57/24 Code of Conduct Complaint

A code of conduct complaint against a member of the Parish Council was received by the WCC Monitoring Officer following the Full Council meeting held on the 12th April. After gathering written and verbal evidence, the Monitoring Officer determined that there was no breach of the code.

However, the Monitoring Officer commented that it may be appropriate for the member concerned to write a letter of apology for any unintended offence that may have been caused.

This has now been done.

The Monitoring Officer also commented that a more robust procedure for co-opting Parish Council members should be adopted.

58/24 Date of the next meeting

- Tuesday 17th October 2023 – Full Council meeting

59/24 Exempt business

To pass a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press from the discussion of the following matters where publicity might be prejudicial to the special nature of the business.

These matters include planning enforcement notices.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.29pm