

Reports for Annual Parish Council Meeting & Annual Parish Meeting – Monday 20th May

Graham Zacharias

Nothing to Report.

Tony Marshall

Southern Water

With groundwater levels down and pumping into the Lavant at Charlton stopped, we are left with something we've not seen in previous years: daily jetting of sewage pipes in Charlton. This suggests they have reached the point at which they are unable to shift the daily sewage load. We already know that the pipe under the Leys Meadow can't cope, even with the reduced flow, so the 'temporary' pipe laid across meadow continues to be needed, along with the pump to feed it.

I believe the pipes are made from Bonded Asbestos Cement, so high pressure jetting is removing some of the surface each time. As the surface becomes more pitted by jetting, it gathers more sediment – which blocks the pipe, requiring more jetting. And as the surface becomes courser, its vulnerability to erosion from jetting is increased. So we have a vicious circle – and one that seems likely to continue until either they are replaced or they simply collapse.

I've put all this in an email (on 12/5) to Jude Winstanley, the recently appointed MD for Wastewater at Southern Water and am awaiting a response - hopefully we'll also be able to find out more from SW representatives at the meeting.

Singleton CHS

We've now been given a provisional date of 9/12/24 as a start date for the work. The TRO will be published shortly for comment, which we'll have warning of, so can ensure that everyone gets behind it.

Charlton 20mph

As outlined at the last meeting, we were offered 20mph on just Charlton Road and Knights Hill 'to keep costs down' - but we've rejected this idea, because it would require new 30mph signs at the entrance to each of the tiny roads in Charlton, which is likely to cause great confusion for motorists (not to mention the visual impact on the village). We are still awaiting a response from Highways on this. The Charlton village gateways are on hold pending the outcome of this, in the hope that we'll be able to coordinate the changes in due course.

Dog Bin in Charlton

We supplied a detailed case to CDC to move the bin from the foot of Levin Down to the spot in our preferred location, just inside North Lane (beyond the layby, so as not to attract litter in the layby), but they are unwilling to make any changes that would require the bin-lorry to deviate from its current route.

Sam Cox

Maintenance

A further request for any matters that the Parish wish to be addressed to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council - please direct any comments to either Viv or Sam Cox. There is an outstanding request that we have received of late relating to the state of the public footpath along the A286 at the bottom of Town Lane and toward West Dean. Given the proximity to a major road, and the volume of debris on the road, we are in communication with Chichester Volunteers (a part of WSCC) regarding their potential assistance.

EV Charging

We await feedback from WSCC & Connected Kerb as to the feasibility of EV charging provision in the village and, if possible, the timing of the installation.

Jeremy Rigby

School Parking

Quotes for the works and potential funding are being pursued by the Clerk. I have met with the Head Teacher at the village school. The school are, as you would imagine, all in favour of the project and the proposed design. They will not be providing any funds to support the project. The Head also flagged up concerns about speeding vehicles during school drop off/collection times at the crossing point between the bus stop and the Leys parking. We were unsuccessful in our bid for funding from the UK Prosperity Fund.

Centurion Way

I have received the following update from the Centurion Way project lead:

SDNPA have appointed a contractor and are progressing the necessary Section 278 paperwork with WSCC Highways for the A286 Footway works in West Dean to be undertaken in the next few months.

The contractor is appointed for the path construction southwards through the Singleton Station site and Southwest Bridges and is gearing up to commence on site in the summer months.

SDNPA await listed building and planning consent for the safety and repair works to the station site assets, and this section is still on plan.

Ecological assessments in Wellhanger/Littlewood Farm sections are ongoing and scheduled including a dormouse survey and three bat emergence surveys (April-Aug), which will further assist the development of mitigation measures, the Landscape Ecological Management Plan and construction methodology. I am attending a stakeholder meeting on the progress beyond Cucumber Farm through Rooks Wood to Littlewood Farm.

Maintenance of the landscaping and tree planting to the completed sections is continuing through the summer to manage and control ruderal growth.

As regards the establishing of a link between the Hat Hill access ramp and the village itself the SDNPA position is that they are not able to lead on such a project. They have offered to support with expertise, technical insight and potential funding applications (when necessary). Their view is that this should be a Parish lead project; this would require someone to take on the role of project manager and include negotiating access rights and planning permissions – not an insignificant task. I have arranged to meet the SDNPA project lead on site 15th May to discuss the way forward and will give a verbal update at the AGM.

Vivien Nuttall

Finance Report

Balance at year end 31/03/24 - £5,076.18 of which £2,100 transferred to reserves.

Balance in Current Account (16/05/24) - £16,954.70

Reserves – Playground Maintenance - £2,000, School Parking Project - £100

Useable Funds in Current Account - £14,854.70

Balance in Savings Account (16/05/24) - £7,098.37

Funds Received since 18/03/24 – Precept £13,304.00. VAT Reclaim £642.81 of which £454.16 was VAT reimbursed to the Village Hall

Henry Potter – District Councillor – Goodwood Ward

The new administration assumed leadership of the Council in May last year with so many new Members who embarked on a major learning curve on how CDC ‘works’

The review of the District Local Plan continued but still faced with major issues regarding the poor infrastructure in the District. No financial assistance from National Highways resulted in a new policy whereby additional funding will be sought from developers to contribute towards the agreed necessary improvements to sections of the A27. This had been set at £3,400 per bedroom for all development which will have an impact on increasing traffic on the A27 but this has been revised to a figure of £8,000 per dwelling. This seems to me to be less fair considering there is demand for 1 and 2 bedroomed dwellings including small bungalows for downsizing. There are exceptions for example, care and retirement homes where occupants are unlikely to have cars. As I've said in the past, just as CIL charges did, this new levy will add to the cost of new housing and borne by the buyer, not the developer. It has emerged that the allocation of 635 new dwellings per annum is unachievable and a figure of 535 seems more likely. Of course this will depend on the findings and decision of the Planning Inspectorate at examination. Sadly, and against much public opinion, Car Park fees have been increased, the public consultation on this proposal took place last year September and October and the increase was based on the ONS inflation figure, at that time, of 11.1 %. However, when the proposal came before Council in March this year, inflation had fallen to 4.3% yet the suggested increase was still approved and implemented.

The fees for all types of taxi and private hire Licencing, though untouched since 2018, it was proposed that these fees be increased by 35% to the dismay of the Taxi Trade. However it was agreed by the General Licencing Committee that this increase be phased in over two years, lessening the impact of such a large increase on operators.

The continuing incursion of Council owned land and Car Parks is slowly being addressed by introducing earth bunds around open spaces at Sherborne Road and New Park recreation ground. Consideration is being given to how to prevent occupations of Northgate and Market Road Car Parks and it is already agreed to release £50,000 from reserves to recruit a Gypsy and Traveller 'Liaison' Officer to engage with members of the travelling community to hopefully bring this nuisance under control. The cost to the public purse for evictions and the clear up afterwards is enormous and intolerable. Time will tell if this investment is wise and effective.

The Council's Budget was set and agreed at a little over £15 million and the precept increase for a Band D householder works out at approximately 5 pence per week, a very modest rise.

The Council's 'Green' Agenda towards Climate Change is continuing with installation of solar panels at our Leisure Centres and the further purchase of Electric Vehicles for the Parks Maintenance teams, though a diesel truck had to be replaced like for like because an electric vehicle was unable to tow trailers.

Two new city street sweepers are now operating with favourable support from the operators but not such good news regarding the two Refuse Collection Freighters. One has been frequently breaking down, the charging period is lengthy and the initial cost is eye watering! In excess of £400,000 each! A diesel equivalent is about half that figure.

The recent discovery of Roman and even earlier Iron Age artefacts and remains on the land at Tangmere has thrown a spanner in the works. The excavation and associated works are expected to continue until late 2026 and considering Outline Planning Permission was granted in 2020 this strategic development is well behind expectations. However, the Compulsory Purchase Order for parts of the site is yet to be completed.

And finally, we received notice on May 3rd that the reviewed Local Plan has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration, this is good news as pending his decision, which is likely to take several months, the Plan will carry some additional weight when considering future Planning Applications.

Heaver Commercial are pressing ahead with the proposal to create a 'Commercial Logistics Hub' in Boxgrove Parish but abutting Westhampnett Parish. The original proposal was for 60,000 sq. mts. of warehousing and office space including car parking but the most recent plan undergoing an Environmental Impact Assessment is for 44,000 sq. mts. it isn't shown that there

is a need for this, and the impact on traffic using the A27 and surrounding roads will be colossal and especially as the Rolls Royce Motor Cars extension has gained approval. It certainly doesn't fit in with the Reviewed Local Plan which, of course, is now under review.