

**Parish Council Meeting  
Held at East Meon Village Hall on  
Monday 18 November 2024 at 18:30.**

**Minutes**

Present: Councillors Susan Davenport (Chair), Charles Ritchie (Vice Chair), Steven Ridgeon, Matt Atkinson, Tom Tyrwhitt-Drake, Sarah Round and Jerry Silence.  
County/District Councillor Rob Mocatta, Sam Marchant (PC), and 7 members of the public attended.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, she began by stating that Parish Council meetings are intended to be inclusive events and wanted to remind all present that comments made must reflect this.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Lang.

**2. To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest**

None were declared.

**3. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Chair asked Councillors to consider whether they felt the Minutes were a true record of the meeting held on 23 September 2024. Councillors who had attended the meeting confirmed that they were, and they were approved as read.

Proposed by Cllr Atkinson and seconded by Cllr Ridgeon and duly signed as a true and correct record.

**4. To Co-opt a Councillor following Cllr Hales' resignation**

The Chair formally announced Cllr Hales' resignation received on 22 October. She went on to thank him for his contribution as a Councillor, particularly his work regarding CiL projects, EMCC liaison, writing PC reports for Meon Matters and as a member of the Planning Committee, she added that he would be missed by all of his fellow Councillors.

She reported that following the resignation a casual vacancy notice had been sent to EHDC as well as displayed on the PC website and notice board. No call for an election had been made and EHDC had confirmed the Parish Council were free to co-opt a new Councillor.

She stated that one application had been received from Richard Downer and referred to Richard Downer's application which had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Once she had checked that no other members of the public present were interested in standing, she asked Councillors to confirm that they wished Richard Downer to be co-opted by a show of hands.

Councillors unanimously agreed to Richard Downer's option.

**5. Allocation of Councillor responsibilities, CiL Money Projects working group and Planning Committee**

The Chair asked Cllr Downer if he would take over the roles of responsibility left by Cllr Hales, EMCC liaison, writing reports for Meon Matters, being a member of the CiL projects working party and the Planning Committee. Cllr Downer agreed to do so.

**6. Open Forum**

The Chair invited those present to make their comments.

David Pepper, on behalf of the Village Hall Committee, presented a proposal circulated to Councillors. This included plans for the Village Hall improvements and funding proposals.

It was agreed that the CiL working group and any other interested Councillors would meet with the Village Hall Committee to discuss the matter further and to bring their thoughts to a PC meeting in the new year.

**7. EMPC Report**

The Chair presented the report for November.

Thanks were noted to the SDNPA volunteers who had completed their annual clearance of the river.

**8. Reports and Updates**

**a) Sewage Workhouse Lane (SD)**

The Chair reported that Southern Water would be visiting residents' homes over the next two weeks to carry out a survey on the network of the sewage system in the village. She hoped that the report would highlight whether surface water from The Green and Penny Mile developments was entering the sewage pipe in Workhouse Lane and if so the steps which would be taken to stop this.

She planned to meet with Denise Cairns, Southern Water, customer case lead, in December along with two residents to discuss next steps. (SD)

**b) Allotments (TL)**

In Cllr Lang's absence the Clerk reported that the annual fees for allotments had been collected and that the Southern Water compensation had now been paid to Workhouse Lane allotment holders

Cllr Lang had asked the Frogmore allotment holders to clear the nettles along the footpath and a resident had reported that the trees along the river side were in need of reducing.

Cllr Round agreed to look at the trees in question. (SRound)

**c) Lengthsman (TL)**

The Clerk reported that there were 52 Lengthsman hours remaining.

It was noted that he had not visited the village in at least two months. It was agreed that the Clerk would try to establish contact with him. (PC)

**d) War Memorial (TL)**

Nothing to report

**e) BOATs (SD)**

The Chair reported that she had on behalf of East Hampshire parishes with BOATs written to HCC Finance Committee suggesting that in order to save money repairing surfaces damaged by trail bikes BOATs should instead be closed November – May, if not permanently, to motorised traffic. She had not received an answer to this yet but was pleased to report almost all of FiveWays had been gated and temporary TRO's imposed.

Cllr Mocatta informed the Council that frustratingly a meeting set to discuss BOATs with Parish Councils had been cancelled.

The Chair would continue to lobby the cause along with other East Hampshire Parish Councils.

On a positive note, the draft BOP (Byways Operation Procedure) looked to include closures to be directed by HCC and to be implemented by local organisations such as Parish Councils.

(SD)

**f) Footpaths and Highways to include Frogmore path fencing (MA)**

Cllr Atkinson reported to Councillors that he had met with Russell Cleaver, the Monday Volunteer group leader, to look at the steps at Frogmore Lane.

Plans had been made for the works to be carried out on 9 December with Cllr Atkinson to organise hogging and wooden boards.

He had no more to report on footpaths.

He informed Councillors that he had obtained two quotations to replace the fencing along the edge of the Frogmore Allotments and had accepted the cheaper one from Simon Hills. (MA)

**g) All Sports Pavilion and East Meon FC Vets (CR)**

Cllr Ritchie informed Councillors that the East Meon Veteran Football Club had continued to hold football matches and had been maintaining the pitch.

He had identified a leak in the roof of the Pavilion which was to be discussed later in the meeting. (CR)

**h) Environment & Nature (SR)**

Cllr Ridgeon had received details from the Nature Group regarding the Butterfly Count which had concluded in September. The results show a decline by half the number from the previous year, this had been put down to the wet summer.

Also, a further Riverfly survey of the River Meon found that invertebrate numbers were still low but not at an urgent trigger level. It was hoped that further rain would increase the river level and help to dilute pollutants (e.g. coming from traffic along the High Street).

Cllr Downer asked about the introduction of Beavers in the local area.

Cllr Ridgeon said that the beavers were set to be introduced by the end of the year in a new controlled area.

A team from the Nature Group had carried out bramble clearance work on the wildflower site in Workhouse Lane.

**i) Grants (SRound)**

Cllr Round said that she had nothing to report however if Councillors had any projects in mind to let her know.

**j) Recycling Scheme (JS)**

Cllr Silence said that he had been in touch with Hambledon Parish Council to discuss their recycling scheme.

Following discussion, it was agreed that he would investigate costs for collection of batteries, film plastics and blister packs to see if this would be viable with locations for collection bins to be sited by the Pavilion and the Village Hall. (JS)

**9. Matters Arising**

**a) Elan City Warranty (MA)**

Cllr Atkinson informed Councillors that Elan City had offered an extended warranty plan for the Speed Sign located on the Clanfield road.

It was agreed that this was not required.

**b) Hiring of Football Field for a Marquee Event and Conditions to be imposed (SD)**

The Chair reminded Councillors of the discussion in the last PC meeting.

She had drawn up draft conditions and this document had been circulated prior to the meeting. The hirers had also been shown this document and had agreed in principle to the terms.

The comparison of costs from similar venues were considered, it was agreed to propose a hire cost of £2000 with a deposit amount to be agreed to cover any clean-up or repair costs incurred.

The Chair agreed to write to the resident to confirm conditions and costs. (SD)

**c) Playground Equipment: to approve quotation for works (SRound)**

Cllr Round reported that following the play equipment inspection for both The Green and Recreation Ground sites she had sought a quotation from RJ Playgrounds and that this had come in on budget at £1250. In previous years RJ Playgrounds had been the most reasonable regarding costs and she proposed that the quotation be accepted.

It was agreed for Cllr Round to accept RJ Playgrounds quotation for the works.

She also proposed that new playground equipment be considered as a potential project for 2025/2026.

Her plans included connecting the recreational sites around The Green, it was agreed that when the plans for the Village Hall were discussed these should be included and for Cllr Round to draw up a proposal. (SRound)

**d) Path across the Green: to discuss new quotations for approval (TTD/CR)**

Cllr Tyrwhitt-Drake presented the two quotations received; it was agreed to accept the one from Neil Hunt at £8,000.

Cllr Tyrwhitt-Drake agreed to instruct Neil Hunt to go ahead. (TTD)

The yellow crosshatching lines in the car park at the beginning of the path needed repainting this was to be put to the Village Hall Committee.

(SRound)

**e) Positioning of new defibrillator: to discuss proposed sites (SD)**

The Chair informed Councillors that Clive Tillbrook was getting in touch with East Meon School, to ask whether the new defibrillator could be sited on the school grounds by the notice board.

This would be confirmed provided it was agreed by the Headteacher and HCC.

**f) Basketball back boards: to note replacements needs and quotation for fitting (CR)**

Cllr Ritchie reported that the basketball back boards had deteriorated considerably, and replacements were to be ordered by the Clerk.

Quotations had been received to fit the boards however Cllr Tyrwhitt-Drake considered whether he could organise this before accepting the quotation.

It was agreed to have the back boards delivered to Bereleigh.

(CR/TTD)

**g) All Sports Repairs/improvements: to include quotations (CR)**

Cllr Ritchie reported that water had been coming through the roof of the pavilion, he had had two contractors look at the roof with differing opinions of the cause.

He was waiting on the second quotation to come through.

The second part of the SDS Building and Landscaping quotation for the veranda of the All Sports Pavilion was discussed, it was agreed to keep this part on hold for now.

Prior authorisation was agreed, a limit of £3500, for Cllr Ritchie to have works carried out on the roof to prevent further damage.

Funds would be taken from general reserves. (CR)

**h) Ditch clearance: quotations (CR)**

Cllr Ritchie reported that the ditch at Workhouse Lane car park was in need of clearance of silt and vegetation. He stated that the ditch was vital for directing surface water away from the road.

He had received quotations for the works.

It was agreed that Cllr Ritchie should instruct Leydene Tree Care to do the initial clearance of the ditch and that QLS would be asked to add ongoing strimming of the area to the existing grass cutting agreement. (CR)

**i) VE Day 80 Celebration of Peace 8 May (SD)**

The Chair informed Councillors that she had received an email from Bruno Peek, the King's Pageant Master, regarding the national events to be held on 8 May 2025.

It was agreed that Cllr Tyrwhitt-Drake would light the beacon on Park Hill and for the Chair to liaise with volunteers to organise a small celebration in the Village Hall.

The Chair said she would reply to the email to confirm plans. (SD)

**j) Caretaker (SD)**

The Chair informed Councillors that the caretaker, Chris Smith, would like to resign.

The Chair and Cllr Ritchie had been working on a new job specification and had been approached by an applicant for the role.

An increase to the hourly rate would need to be included in the budget for 2025/2026 to £1800 per annum, this equated to 2 hours per week.

It was agreed to proceed on a yearly review basis, with a start date of January 2025. (CR/SD)

**k) Village Litter Pick (JS)**

It was agreed that the litter pick would take place on 26 January, refreshments to follow in the Village Hall and for Cllr Silence to organise litter pickers and other kit and for the removal of rubbish after the event.

The Clerk to book the Village Hall.

A poster would be published in Meon Matters. (PC/JS)

**l) Frogmore Lane (RM)**

Cllr Mocatta reported that currently there were eight incidents reported for potholes in Oxenbourne and along Frogmore Lane.

The Chair said that although many of these had been filled they looked to be a temporary fix.

Cllr Mocatta said that he would investigate further. (RM)

**m) Workhouse Lane car park barrier (CR/JS)**

Cllr Ritchie reported an incident resulting in the barrier at Workhouse Lane carpark sagging below the height limit indicated.

This had been fixed by Cllr Silence however the height of the barrier was now 1.9m.

The barrier could either be taken out and reset or a new sign purchased showing the new height.

It was agreed to have a sign made to say 1.9m, Cllr Silence to action. (JS)

**n) Remote attendance and proxy voting consultation (SR)**

The Chair introduced the Government consultation sent to EMPC by HALC regarding Councils having the option to hold public meetings remotely and allowing proxy votes.

It was felt that in person meetings were important and overall, more inclusive.

Councillors agreed a 'not in favour' comment to both proposals to be submitted by the Chair. (SD)

**o) Future Energy Landscapes meeting for East Meon (SR)**

Cllr Ridgeon reported that, following Cllr Mocattas' suggestion, Energise South Downs had contacted him. They had asked to hold a Future Energy Landscapes workshop to inform the community of renewable energy technology options.

The workshops are jointly funded by SDNPA and EHDC, they are locally based in East Hamsphire.



It was agreed to invite the group to hold a workshop at the Village Hall, with a suggested date of 28 January at 7pm. ***(After meeting note) This date was not possible, workshop will be held on Wednesday 5 March, 7pm.***

Cllr Ridgeon said that he would confirm with the group and also ask whether they may be able to speak at the APA in April. (SR)

#### **10. County/District Councillor report**

Cllr Mocattas' report can be found on the Parish Council Website.

Cllr Mocatta reported that due to the A3 closure over the last week the overnight traffic coming through the village had been unacceptable. He had asked for further signs to be located in Clanfield, which should have already been actioned, to deter the lorries using the shorter route rather than the official detour provided.

The Chair informed that she had had many reports of damage and congestion from residents in the High Street and Church Street. She expressed her sympathy for the residents along the route.

Cllr Mocatta said the issue was that Hampshire were unable to enforce the adherence to signage for diversions.

#### **11. Planning - Report by Chairman of the Planning Committee.**

Cllr Ridgeon reported that it had been a quiet month for planning applications, he had received none for dwellings, two for trees and a change of use for a farm building.

With regard to Westbury House the application had been approved.

An application for a 60 metre high EE mast at Whether down had been withdrawn.

An application for change of use to allow animal grazing on a piece of land at Westbury had been turned down by SDNPA.

Lastly the SDNP local plan consultation would begin in January with a closing date of 17 March. Cllr Ridgeon said that it was important that the PC submit a response. The Planning Committee would hold a meeting to put together a draft for approval at the March PC meeting.

A dispute between a landowner and the developer of the Penny Mile site regarding the planned swale and hedge had arisen, the Planning enforcement Officer was acting on this.

## **12. Finance**

### **a. Finance including payments and receipts report (16 September – 11 November)**

The RFO presented her report on all payments and receipts between the dates of 16 September to the 11 November. Councillors unanimously approved.

### **b. Internal Auditor: to approve letter of engagement for 2025**

Councillors approved the RFO completing the letter of engagement for Lightatouch Internal Auditing service for 2025.

### **c. Budget 2025/2026: to agree proposed budget and precept for 2025/2026**

The RFO presented the budget spreadsheet prepared for the meeting, following discussion regarding the deficit in receipts to payments it was agreed that due to the PC reserves being higher than the 9–12-month advisory level this was acceptable.

An increase of 6% (£34,526) to the Precept was agreed for 2025/2026.

## **13. Any other business including correspondence of note.**

None to report.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9:35pm.

Signed:

Date: