

Draft Minutes of the Chippenham Area (3) Committee Meeting held on Monday 16 July 2007 at the Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham.

Present:

Councillor D.B. Allen (Chairman)

Councillors R.A. Causer, P.R. Darby, J.P. Doubell, S.K. Doubell, P.J. Hutton, R.B. MacGregor, S.D. Meadows, J.A. Phillips, N.M. Phillips, J.R. Scragg, M.L. Singlehurst and J.B. Whincup.

County/Town/Parish Council Representatives:

A. Butler	Biddestone and Slaughterford Parish Council
R. Jones	Chippenham Town Council
E. Kennedy	Chippenham Town Council
A. Noblet	Chippenham Town Council
H. Purdon	Chippenham Town Council
M. Stickland	Chippenham Town Council
F. Wilson	Chippenham Town Council
T.C. Bate	Chippenham Without Parish Council
J. Clark	Seagry Parish Council
L. Workman	Sutton Benger Parish Council

Officers Present:

S. Pangbourne (Deputy Chief Executive) and M. Todd (Senior Policy and Democratic Services Officer).

Others Present:

J. MacDonald and S. Venn – Citizens' Advice Bureau

CH15. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillors C. Caswill, P. Coleman and J. Scott, Parish Councillors C. Dash and L. Palmer and County Councillor R. Henning.

CH16. Public Questions/Receipt of Petitions

No public questions or petitions were received.

CH17. Minutes

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Chippenham Area (3) Committee meeting held on 4 June 2007.

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of the Chippenham Area (3) Committee held on 4 June 2007 be approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- ◆ The inclusion of J. Clark and H. Purdon in the list of those present.



- ◆ Minute No. CH8 – delete the sentence “Unfortunately the Parish Council felt that the matters discussed had not been consistent across all Parish Council meetings” and replace with “The Parish Council was concerned that a neighbouring Parish had been given a questionnaire to complete indicating their main priorities for neighbourhood policing but Grittleton Parish Council had not received such a questionnaire.”

CH18. Chairman’s Announcements

(a) 20/20 Vision for Chippenham

The Chairman reported that the 20/20 vision document was not yet available but that copies of the slides from the Chamber of Commerce presentation which took place at the last meeting were available for Members.

(b) Play Strategy

The Chairman informed Members that the Play Strategy consultation would end on Friday 27 July and that the Council would welcome as many people as possible putting forward their views. It was also possible to log on to the North Wiltshire District Council website to complete the on-line questionnaire.

(c) Environmental Issues – Discussion at Next Meeting

The Chairman reported that the feedback forms regarding suggestions for future topics to be discussed at Area Committee meetings had now been analysed. It was suggested that the main discussion topic for the next meeting should be Environmental Issues. Forms were distributed to members so that they could express a preference for any matters they would like to be covered under this broad heading.

CH19. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CH20. Town/Parish Council Update

The Committee received the following updates from Parish and Town Council representatives:

(a) Chippenham Town Council

The Town Council asked who was responsible for the area opposite the bus station which was the site of the former public conveniences. It was suggested that a sign should be erected on the site informing people where the nearest public toilets could be found. It was confirmed that the District Council was responsible for the site.

The Town Council was also unhappy that the benches had been removed from the Town Bridge and requested that these be reinstated. One bench had been repositioned outside WH Smiths and this had increased petty theft and anti-social behaviour.

Two thirds of the Borough Parade Car Park was now out of use and the Town Council requested that when the works were completed the District Council publicise widely that the situation in the town was back to normal.

The charge for car parking in Chippenham was now 50p for the first hour. In Corsham this was just 30p and in Wootton Bassett motorists could park for free in the High Street. This was considered to be unfair and the Town Council asked that the District Council re-consider its charging structure.

The Town Council had been concerned by the state of the road outside the Wilkinsons store. Wilkinson's had agreed to write to the District Council about this. The Area Committee agreed to monitor the situation.

It was noted that the initial works on the fountain had now started.

(b) Seagry Parish Council

The Parish Council thanked Cllr S. Meadows and the District Council for their recent support in dealing with a very difficult planning application.

(c) Biddestone and Slaughterford Parish Council

It was reported that due to members of the public feeding the ducks there had been a large increase in the number of rats in the area. A recent village event had to be cancelled due to this problem.

There were still problems in getting through to the community police officers by telephone. The Parish Council had been pleased with the way that the local PCSO had reassured residents during a recent incident.

(d) Sutton Benger Parish Council

The Parish Council wished to ask whether the District had decided to adopt weekly or fortnightly refuse collections. It was agreed that this matter would be discussed at the next meeting.

The Parish representative asked why a resident who was living in an illegal dwelling due to not obtaining the necessary planning consent was included on the electoral register. It was agreed that a written response should be sent.

Resolved that a request be made for the benches on the Town Bridge to be replaced.

CH21. Community Planning Update

The Chairman of the Chippenham Community Area Partnership gave an oral update regarding community planning issues. The Partnership had appealed to all groups involved in leisure and culture issues to attend a meeting and had been very pleased with the response. A group had now been formed which would enable local organisations to apply for grants, work together and share equipment.

The special interest group on transport had met and had issued a questionnaire on public transport needs in rural areas.

CH22. Appointment to Spatial Planning Advisory Group

The Committee was informed that Cllr P. Coleman had been appointed to the Spatial Planning Advisory Group.

CH23. Update on Rural and Suburban Post Offices

Sheila Venn, Manager of the North Wiltshire Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) gave a presentation regarding the future of rural and suburban Post Offices. The Government had issued a consultation paper regarding the proposed closure of 2,500 Post Offices throughout the country.

The following issues were discussed:

- ◆ The CAB had undertaken a survey on this matter and most people felt that Post Office closures would have an impact on the local community.
- ◆ Local Post Offices were important to communities in order to provide a sustainable future and to provide support to elderly and vulnerable people.
- ◆ A proposed closure plan would be rolled out over the next 18 months and there would be a six week consultation period on each plan.
- ◆ 95% of postcodes would be within 6 miles of a Post Office.
- ◆ Local Authorities would be key consultees on the closure process along with Local Strategic Partnerships.
- ◆ A consultation meeting regarding the proposed closures would be held in Swindon on Thursday 19 July.
- ◆ It was noted that there were no detailed proposals available yet for the North Wiltshire area. Details of which Post Offices would be closing and which would be remaining open would be available in October. It was noted that some Post Offices were likely to have their opening hours reduced.
- ◆ Members agreed that Post Offices formed a very important part of the community and were keen to be kept informed of any developments.

Resolved that the CAB representative be requested to provide feedback to the Council on the consultation meeting to be held in Swindon on Thursday 19 July.

CH24. Car Parking Charges

Concern was expressed about the cost of parking charges for people wishing to attend the leisure centre for health and fitness classes and to use the gym. This could amount to as much as £5 per week which was a substantial amount to low income families.

CH25. Outside Bodies

The Members appointed to outside bodies updated the Committee on the following topical issues:-

(a) Chippenham Area LYPIG

Cllr Whincup reported that she had recently attended a meeting of the LYPIG and that this had been very positive. The young people were currently updating and decorating the kitchen areas at the Bridge Centre. A Corsham extreme sports day was planned and the Bridge Centre kit car had now been completed.

(b) Chippenham Town Centre Partnership

Cllr Phillips informed the Committee that the Partnership had now been disbanded. He felt that there had been a clear lack of support from the District Council in the past, both in attendance at meetings and provision of funding and was very disappointed that the group no longer existed.

(c) Kingsley Road Community Hall Association

Cllr Allen reported that no meetings of the Association had taken place.

The meeting started at 7pm and finished at 8.10pm.

There were no members of the public present.