



Clerk's Report

Full Parish Council meeting, 11th January 2023

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

Number	Item
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- 1. Apologies for absence & housekeeping**
Apologies have been received from Cllr. Bushell.

- 2. Disclosure of interests**
At the time of drafting this report, no disclosure of interests have been received from any Member. If a Member becomes aware of an interest in any agenda item, they must notify the meeting (either at the beginning of the meeting, or before the agenda item is discussed).

Members have a positive duty to consider the agenda and notify the meeting if they, or their Partner, have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI), or other interest in any matter listed. If a Member, or their Partner, has a DPI, or any other interest, they are prohibited from participating in the discussion and/or voting. However, a Member can apply in writing to the Proper Officer (Clerk) for dispensation to participate and/or vote in the matter. It is a criminal offence for any Member to withhold disclosure of a DPI without reasonable excuse and/or participate in debate and/or voting (in the absence of dispensation from the Proper Officer).

- 3. Public Forum**
At the time of drafting this report, no requests to address the meeting have been received.

In accordance with Standing Order (SO) 1(d) the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions, and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. However, public participation shall not exceed 10 minutes, unless otherwise directed by the Chairman (SO1(e)). A speaker is limited to 5 minutes (SO1(f)). The Council is not required to respond and/or debate a matter/question raised during public participation and the Chair can direct a response to be provided (oral/written) by either a Councillor or the Clerk (SO1(g)). Only one person shall speak at a time and if more than one person wants to speak, the Chair shall direct the order (SO1(i)). A record of the public participation session shall be included in the minutes (SO1(j)).

The business of the meeting will start immediately following the public forum.

4. **Minutes**

Approval of the draft minutes of the full meeting held on 14th December 2022.

The minutes are published on the [website](#).

Circulated to Members, via email, on 16.12.2022.

Approved minutes shall be signed via Secured Signing – a secure and legally recognised digital signing software package - in accordance with Standing Order 9(d). The signed minutes will be published on the website [here](#).

5. **To receive reports from [County and District Councillors](#)**

[District Cllr. Evans](#) has sent his Report in advance, which has been circulated to Members via email and is published on the [website](#) alongside the agenda.

6. **Financial Matters**

1. Payments and Receipts Analysis

Financial Reports for December 2022 - January 2023. Includes income and expenditure since 14.12.2022.

To note in particular: -

RECEIPTS

- NatWest refund of bank charges levied during the period (September – December 2022) when the Parish Council's account was treated as a standard business account. *(It has now reverted to its original Community/Charity account, which does not account charges).*

PAYMENTS

- All payments explained on the analysis report.

2. Finance Working Group / Finance Committee

Councillors are directed to the Parish Council's website [here](#) to review and note the [minutes of the Finance Working Group](#) meeting dated 05.01.2023. However, for ease of reference, the minutes have been published on the website alongside the current agenda [here](#).

The [Quarter 3 \(October – December 2022\) budget comparison spreadsheet](#) is also published on the website.

The Finance Committee meet immediately before this full Council meeting at 7pm. If there are any relevant highlights from this Committee meeting, these will be provided verbally.

***Please spend time considering the minutes of the Finance Working Group – as these provide all relevant background for considering the draft budget and 2023/24 Precept requirement considered at agenda item 7 below.**

Councillors are asked to note the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated 14th December 2022, published on the website [here](#).

7. **To review and agree the recommend draft budget for 2023/24**

The Finance Committee recommends to the full Council **Column H** of the Draft Budget Precept 2023/24 Comparison Spreadsheet as the draft budget for 2023/2024.

The minutes of the [Finance Working Group meeting](#) dated 05.01.2023 sets out the salient details of how this budget was arrived at.

For context and reference, Column F is the projected End of 2022/23 figures, which are pulled over from the Quarter 3 budget comparison spreadsheet.

8. **To agree the Precept for 2023/24**

A verbal update will be provided from the Finance Committee meeting, which met prior to the full Council meeting.

At the time of drafting this report, the recommended Precept for 2023/24 is £102,500 – being a 5.3% increase.

The amount of Council Tax paid is based on the banding of the property you live in (bands A – H).

The law requires the Tax Base to be shown as equivalent Band D's rather than actual dwelling numbers. Each parish has a range of properties that fall into the 8 valuation bands, with the Council Tax charge based on a calculation as a percentage of the Band D. For example, properties in band H are counted as 2 band D's.

In respect of Plaistow and Ifold, as there are a number of properties higher than Band D this means that the Parish's Tax Base is higher than the actual number of dwelling (821). The Tax Base figure is net of properties that are exempt or discounted and those that are receiving council tax reduction. Where a property pays less than full Council Tax, the tax base is reduced accordingly.

The Council's 2023/24 Tax Base is less than in 2022/23; therefore, if the Precept remained unchanged at £96,000 the amount people pay would be reduced.

See Column H, rows 157 – 160 – the figure in red in the annual reduction if the Precept remained unchanged.

Column F, rows 157 – 160 show the number of dwellings within the Parish within a certain Council Tax banding, e.g., F,157 show that the Parish has 35 houses in Council Tax Band D.

Column G shows the current annual Council Tax charge i.e., in 2022/23, a Band D property paid £85.87.

Columns L, N, P & R, show the annual increase in Council Tax according to the four taxation scenarios.

Therefore, if the Precept increases to the current recommended level of £102,500 (Column L, row 101) then a Band D property would pay £4.52 per year more, which is a 5.3% increase.

The Council took a £50,000 loan in 2021 to pay for the Lady Hope Playpark update. The outstanding loan amount in 2023/24 is shown in row 151.

It is important to always bear in mind that by the end of the loan re-payment term of 5 years (2026) the Council will need to have built up its own reserves to sufficient levels. The Council's own reserves are represented in row 147.

Due to the amount of unbudgeted (unforeseen) expenditure in the current year, the Council is predicting ending the current financial year (on 31.03.2023) with £7,801.96 'own' reserves. This is a £24,475.78 reduction in 'own' reserves from the beginning of the financial year.

The recommended minimum reserve level is shown on row 149.

This is based on a special calculation advised by The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) to work out a Council's Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE). In essence, the bigger the Precept, the closer to 3 months NRE is required. So, Council's with £200,000 per year Precepts should run with a 3-month NRE as their reserves. The smaller the Council/Precept the closer to 12 months NRE.

Row 149 shows a 6-month NRE for Plaistow and Ifold based on the Precept.

So, for example, based on the Council's 2023/24 recommended draft budget (column H) and a Precept level remaining at £96,000 (H,110) the Council's

projected 'own' reserves as at 31.03.2024 (H,147) are £11,331.56 below where they should be (H,149). The Council could not consider ending a financial year with 'own' reserves of £4,093.44.

Column R illustrates the Precept scenario that provides the Council with the correct Precept vs recommended minimum reserve level. The other scenarios (Columns L, N & P) show a reserve deficit each year.

The Council must appreciate that the recommended Precept level of £102,500 anticipates an end of 2023/24 'own' reserve position of only £10,593.44.

9. **Highway Matters**

1. To receive and resolve to act upon any Highway matters raised by Councillors.

None have been raised prior to the meeting.

2. To receive and note any updates regarding the School Safety Zone in Plaistow and the TRO application along Rickman's Lane, Plaistow

No further updates received since the full meeting on 14th December – the Clerk continues to chase for updates.

3. To receive and note the minutes of the joint speed awareness meeting and public meeting

Pursuant to the decision of the full Council on 28th September 2022 ([C/22/124\(3\), pgs. 5-6](#)), a 'cross-party' meeting was held between the Parish Council, Ifold Estates Ltd and the Community Speed Watch on 04.01.2023. The minutes of the meeting can be found on the website [here](#).

An informal public meeting is being held 10th January to ascertain the views and ideas of the public on how to address the issue of speeding, not only in Ifold but in the wider Parish area. This will provide the parties with suggestions to consider/progress in the future. A verbal update will be given to the full Council at this juncture of the meeting.

In addition to this public meeting, the following ideas were considered by the 'cross-party' group, which can be further refined after the

public meeting and presented to the Council for its consideration in due course: -

- Regular Facebook posts publishing speeding data (GDPR compliant) and other speed awareness information
- Regular correspondence with Sussex Police asking for a speed operation along Plaistow Road
- Explore the creation of a Youth Council
- Local pledge to adhere to the speed limit within the Parish and 'pledge car sticker'

4. To note the new dates for the Plaistow and Ifold bus shelter builds and consider the budget and material requirements.

Subject to there being no further (unforeseen) delays, the two bus shelters will be built on the following dates*: -

16th – 23rd February

6th – 8th March

16th – 23rd March

29th – 31st March

* no over weekend working and some dates will be in the workshop, rather on site.

Volunteers from the community are encouraged to help out – therefore some publicity will be required – however this additional 'manpower' is not a mandatory requirement for the builds to go ahead.

The final budget for this project is currently 'work in progress', as the Team put together the final material list and get the current figures from builder's merchants etc. The Council will consider and agree the final budget at its February meeting (8th).

5. To note the updated method of reporting highway issues to WSCC

The information sent out by CDC is on the website [here](#). The Parish Council's website has been updated accordingly and this information will also be circulated on Facebook.

10. Local Plan Review

On 11th January (between 4-5pm) Cllrs. Jordan, Capsey and the Clerk had a meeting with CDC's Planning Policy Team to receive an update regarding the Local Plan Review and in particular CDC's 'look again' – as directed by the Planning Inspector - at the Northern Parishes to take up more development, which cannot be met in the South of the District.

A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

Background: -

CDC wrote to the Northern Parishes in January 2022 about a 'look again' exercise and set out a series of scenarios which had been developed, for further discussion and testing with transport infrastructure providers, sustainability appraisal, and market deliverability. The letter can be found on the Parish Council's website [here](#) (11.04.2022 full meeting). The meeting agreed to instruct Mrs Burrell to draft a response to CDC's letter challenging the sustainability of the various housing number scenarios (C/22/052). This letter was approved by the Council on 13.07.2022 and sent to CDC on 15.07.2022. For ease of reference, the Parish Council's letter in response is published on the Parish Council's website [here](#).

11. **Social Media and Website**

The previous Lead Member for the Parish Council's Social Media and Website was Cllr. Jerusha Glavin. However, Cllr. Glavin left the Council in August 2022, owing to moving out of the Parish area. A new Lead is recommended – preferably someone who is familiar with Social Media and websites and can assist the Clerk in updating the website and undertaking some management of the Council's Social Media requirements.

12. **Crouchlands Farm**

Two planning applications have been lodged with and validated by the Local Planning Authority, CDC

- [22/03114/FULEIA](#) - for the erection of 108 dwellings (full application)
- [22/03131/OUTEIA](#) for the erection of 492 dwellings and education provision including primary school (outline application)

In accordance with the Council's decision to form a [Planning Working Group](#) to support the Planning Committee and full Council in relation to large-scale and complex planning applications ([C/22/105, 13.07.2022](#)) the Council is invited to instruct the Planning Working Group to consider the applications

and present their findings and recommendations to the full Council for its consideration and resolution on a formal response to the applications.

Since the formation of the Planning Working Group new Councillors have been Co-Opted who may wish to support the Group due to their own complementary expertise/interests. The Council is invited to consider any application(s) to join the Group.

The Council is invited to resolved to instruct expert planning and transport support, to assist in its objective consideration of these applications in accordance with its resolutions dated 28th April 2021 ([C/21/075](#)) 8th June 2022 ([P/22/145](#)) and 31.08.2022 ([P/22/180](#)).

The Council should note that the expenses incurred from instructing experts falls under Reg 11.1(a)(ii) of the Council's Financial Regulations; namely that all contracts must follow Reg 11 save those contracts relating to (ii) specialist services. This removes the requirement to seek three quotes.

Given the length and complexity of these applications, it is the Clerk's recommendation that the Parish Council advise CDC that the earliest full meeting at which the Parish Council can consider these applications and resolve upon a response is 8th March. Thereafter, the Clerk and Working Group will need 21 days to draft the final response(s). This would give a final response date of 29th March 2023.

13. **Correspondence**

- **Government's proposed amendments to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in relation to housing targets.**

On 5th December, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities made an announcement on progress it has made on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. They have stated that whilst Government Housing Targets will remain, these will be a starting point for plan making with new flexibilities in place to reflect local circumstances. More detail on these measures has now been set out in a [Ministerial Statement published by the Government on 6 December 2022](#).

District Cllr. Evans provided the following information: -

You will be aware of media reports concerning the government's proposed amendments to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in relation to housing targets. Local housing need is presently

assessed using the government's standard methodology and it appears that this is to be retained but with a changed emphasis on such need being an advisory starting point, rather than being mandatory. CDC officers have received some further guidance from DLUHC and are current assessing what the government's amendments mean in practice and any implications for the Local Plan Review. We are expecting a further update on this on or after 14 December.

The Parish Council has asked for a further update. This matter ties in with item 10 above, where a verbal update will be provided.

- **Response to concerns regarding local social housing stock**

Further to the Council's resolution to write in support of District Cllr. Evans' question regarding concerns about the condition of The Hyde Group houses ([C/22/165. 14.12.2022](#)) CDC answered as follows on 21.12.2022: -

I am writing further to your letter in support of Cllr Evan's question relating to Damp & Mould in Social Housing and the sad death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale. I am assuming you are referring to the question that Cllr Evan's raised at full Council recently which was responded to by Cllr Alan Sutton the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

As you are no doubt aware the Secretary of State Michael Gove has written to Registered Providers (RP's) requiring them to provide details of their stock condition and what action they will take to prioritise damp and mould. The Regulator of Social Housing, who oversees and regulates providers of social housing including Hyde, has also written to RP's in a similar vein. It might be useful for you to see the letter which can be found at this link:

[Letter to CEOs of large RPs regarding damp and mould \[accessible version\] - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Regulator of Social housing has asked RP's for the following information by 19th December:

- *Firstly, your approach to assessing the extent of damp and mould issues affecting your properties, including how you assess the prevalence of category 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards*

- Secondly, and in the context of that approach, your most recent assessment of the extent of damp and mould hazards in your homes, including the prevalence of category 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards
- Thirdly, given those findings, the action you are taking to remedy any issues and hazards, and ensure that your homes meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Lastly, tell us how you ensure that individual damp and mould cases are identified and dealt with promptly and effectively when raised by tenants and residents.

The Regulator will be considering the responses in due course, but I would not expect the Regulator to be in direct contact with this Council as it is for them to decide what action they will take against any RP's who do not meet requirements. Another factor here is some proposed legislation coming forward, the Social Housing Regulation Bill, which intends to strengthen the Regulator's powers.

Having said that, as the Housing Authority, we are of course concerned about the standard of Housing in the district and indeed have a duty to consider it. As stated by Cllr Sutton at Council we take the standard of Housing in the district very seriously and we have also written to our RP's expressing our concerns and making similar enquiries. Hyde have provided a summary of their approach to damp and mould which has been circulated to all members. I would also strongly encourage any tenant of a Hyde property who has damp and mould to report the need for repair or make a complaint, even if they feel they have not received a good response in the past, as Hyde assure us (and will need to assure the Regulator) they are taking urgent action. Tenants can use these links:

[Report a repair | The Hyde Group \(hyde-housing.co.uk\)](http://hyde-housing.co.uk)

[Making a complaint | The Hyde Group \(hyde-housing.co.uk\)](http://hyde-housing.co.uk)

The Council intend to undertake some publicity to ensure social tenants are aware that they should report damp and mould to their landlord in the first instance. Where they do not get a satisfactory response they should make a complaint and can then approach the Housing Ombudsman.

With particular regard to Hyde (who are the largest RP in the Chichester District) the Council are keen to support early resolution of issues. Officers have a good working relationship with the surveyors they use and are able to quickly arrange a joint visit out to properties that raise particular concern. Officers also have quarterly meetings with the Property Team Manager at Hyde to follow up on on-going complaints and cases raised by Members.

Separately to the social sector the Council also enforce the Housing Health & Safety Rating System in the Private Rented Sector which includes damp and mould as a hazard. The Secretary of State wrote to Local Authorities, at the same time he wrote to RP's, requiring them to provide an interim report to DLUHC along similar lines to that requested of RP's above but relating to the Private Rented Sector, which we have done, with a full report due by the end of January. Tenants in the Private Rented Sector should also approach their landlord in the first instance if they have damp and mould but can then approach the Council for action if necessary.

I attach for your information a summary of the statement made by Cllr Alan Sutton at Council which I think provides a good overview, however, if you have any further queries please do let me know.

Louise Rudziak
Director Housing and Communities

- **PCC, [police survey](#) regarding their 2023/24 Precept**

Given the deadline of the survey (10.01.2023), Members were advised to consider this survey in their personal capacity; however, the format and thrust of the survey is important to note generally from the Council's perspective.

The Clerk recommends that the Council conducts a similar small-scale public consultation to help consider the role of the Council in the coming year(s); the services that it currently delivers and the services that residents would like it to deliver. The Council has the benefit of a comprehensive largescale public survey conducted in June 2021, which has given it a 3 – 5 year 'business plan'. However, given the change in the world since summer 2021, it would be useful to canvas the public once more to recalibrate requirements / expectations. This survey does not need to re-do / replace the June 2021 consultation; but keep the Council and public in 'contact' and for a reality check for both parties.

- **The Surrey Tour Road Cyclo Sportive - 30th September 2023**

UK Cycling Events have contacted the Parish Council to advise of The Surrey Tour Road Cyclo Sportive that they are organising to take place on Saturday, 30th September 2023. The details of the event can be found [here](#). The event goes through Plaistow village ([map here](#)).

- **Southern Water's sewer replacement in Loxwood Road in early 2023.**

The following correspondence has been received: -

I am writing to let you know that Cappagh Browne, on behalf of Southern Water, will be carrying out a 150m sewer replacement in Loxwood Road in early 2023. This work is to replace the section of sewer main that has been susceptible to 'bursting' and this work is designed to give the sewer integrity for many years to come.

The work will require a road closure of a section of Loxwood Road, in and around the Southern Water pumping station, which I appreciate could be inconvenient and potentially cause disruption for road users into Plaistow village centre.

I have been in contact with the School Transport Planner for West Sussex County Council and we are working on a safe way to enable school buses to travel through our working area in the morning and afternoon.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with the parish council in early January to explain the scope of work and seek your advice and guidance on how I develop an effective communications strategy, mindful that there are school and businesses to consider in the local area. I look forward to hearing from you.

Further to an email exchange between Loxwood and P&I PCs, a remote meeting with Cappagh Browne, on behalf of Southern Water, will be arranged in due course; however, Southern Water are making some technical changes to the new sewer installation which will be finalised in early January. Considering this, a meeting will be diarised once the final sewer design has been approved.

15. **Clerk's update & items for inclusion on a future agenda**

1. **Trees words around Coxes Pond**

The earliest time the works can be completed is between 13 – 15th Feb 2023.

2. **Coronation of HM King Charles III**

The Councils have received correspondence from the Royal Pageant Master, Bruno Peek, who was instrumental in the organisation of the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June 2022. Buckingham Palace does NOT wish Beacons to be lit in celebration of the

forthcoming Coronation of King Charles III. The reason is that the Coronation will take place less than 1 year after The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and they are anxious to ensure that the events planned for May 2023 have a markedly different look to those of June 2022.

However, Buckingham Palace *WOULD* like Beacons to be lit on **6th June 2024**, as the principle leading community event in celebration/commemoration/tribute to D-Day 80, the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy. More information will be provided nearer the time.

However, notwithstanding the above, the Parish Council is invited to begin thinking about how it wishes to support the community to mark the forthcoming Coronation of King Charles III. This national celebration falls on the Plaistow Maypole Fete bank holiday. At the time of drafting, the Clerk is awaiting details of the specific coronation plans of the Preschool (at the Fete) and from the other local Councils.

3. **AiRS quotation to support Winterton Hall**

Further to the Council's consideration of this matter on 09.11.2022 ([C/22/140](#)) and the Finance Committee's resolution dated 14.12.2022 ([F/22-23/016\(6\)](#)) the Council is recommended to NOTE the initial estimate from Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) to support* the Winterton Hall, being 2-3 days' work, at £410(+VAT) per day. Initial payment for 50% of the lower estimates, with the remainder due upon completion.

*advice at an initial meeting, support with resolving the land issues and possibly bespoke training.

4. Flooding meeting

County Councillor Janet Duncton will facilitate and support a meeting between WSCC/CDC/ Southern Water and local Parish Councils to consider the flooding / water infrastructure issues.

5. Cost of living support

No further update currently. Recommended to defer to a future meeting once the Church (and School) have outlined the local support required.

16. **Meeting Dates**

The dates of forthcoming meetings.

- 25th January, Planning & Open Spaces meeting – Kelsey Hall, 7:30pm

- 7th February, Planning & Open Spaces meeting – Winterton Hall, 7:30pm
- 8th February, Full Council meeting – Winterton Hall, 7:30pm