

# CHAFFCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for Chaffcombe held in the Village Hall on Monday 17th April 2023 at 7.30 p.m.

### Attendance and Apologies

Those present:

Mrs M Butler (Chair Chaffcombe Parish Council)  
Mrs S Morley (Clerk)  
Mrs G Wills  
3 members of the public

**Apologies** - Mr R Bale, Mr D Bracher, Mr S Robinson, Mr T Yates, Ms V Bucknell

### 1. Report of the Chair of the Parish Council covering activities for the years 2022/3

#### Covid

During the past year Covid seems to be gradually getting behind us. All our meetings have been held in the Village Hall in the usual way and things seem to be more or less normal again. Sadly there are still a number of people suffering from long Covid but with most of us being vaccinated it is hoped that we should be through the worst.

#### War in Ukraine

One of the saddest things this year has been the ongoing war in Ukraine. Many local families are hosting refugees. The profit from the Queen's Jubilee celebration weekend in June, a sum of £1,230.69p, was donated to Chard Nightingale which has been set up to help Ukrainian refugees learn English. A coffee morning for Ukraine was held in the Village Hall and raised £250.00 which was also transferred to Chard Nightingale.

#### Queen's Jubilee

The highlight of last year was of course the Jubilee celebration in June which was a great success. Bunting was put up, programmes were printed and delivered to all residents, sausages and burgers were provided, Jubilee mugs were given to all the children in the parish and Jubilee coasters were given as prizes during the festivities. Spare mugs were sold at £3.50 each and coasters at £2.00 each. Donations were given for Ukrainian refugees. Photos of the event were posted on the Chaffcombe chat site.

#### Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Another highlight, but this time a sad and sombre one, was the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September 2022. A book of condolence was ordered from Shaw & Sons which arrived very promptly and was set up in the Church. Flags were flown at half mast. The book of condolence is now at Buckingham Palace. The proclamation of the reign of King Charles III was announced by County Hall.

#### Election

An election was held in May with 6 candidates standing for the 5 vacancies on the Parish Council. Duly elected were: Robert Bale, David Bracher, Mary Butler, Stan Robinson and Geraldine Wills. Mary Butler was elected as Chair and Geraldine Wills as Vice Chair.

There was also an election for the new Somerset Council: Sue Osborne and Val Keitch were elected as councillors for the Ilminster ward which includes Chaffcombe. Sue Osborne also remained as District Councillor covering Chaffcombe until the District Council was dissolved on 1st April 2023.

#### Somerset Council

Somerset now has a unitary authority. The district councils were dissolved on 1st April.

#### Footpaths

Tony Gray, our volunteer footpath officer confirmed that all footpaths within the parish network have been walked at least once in the year (with the exception on the short section of CH4/23 east of Tolleys Lane on the A30 which is no longer cleared) and more than 91 hours have been spent in the

year carrying out local cutting back etc. There have been 10 monthly walks around the village out of a possible 12.

The diversion to the Avishayes Estate Footpath CH4/16 encountered some problems when one person objected to the proposed diversion around the clocktower. After some discussion the objector withdrew the objection, but since then we were surprised to see new notices, including plans, inviting comments by the 17th February (4 days notice at best). Tony contacted the Rights of Way asking why these notices had been posted bearing in mind that the diversion had been approved and we were expecting that the estate would be receiving paperwork allowing the diversion to be put in train.

The bridleway to Whitemoor Hill was re-opened.

#### Flooding

David Bracher and Tony Yates, our Flood Warden, have been working with local landowners, the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) and Somerset Highways to provide a long term solution to the problems of flooding in the village. Sandbags and a container were placed in the Pound. These are in addition to those at the Village Hall. Work on the drains by Kerris Vean and Woodlands in Knapps Lane were undertaken earlier this year.

#### Orchard Plot

Unfortunately the mulberry tree died and has been replaced with a victoria plum tree.

#### Highways

Ongoing problems with blocked drains, potholes etc have all been reported to Highways with varying degrees of success.

#### Broadband

Geraldine Wills confirmed that the 57th and final person would be connected to the Broadband network on 6th March. Mrs Wills took over from Mike Otterbeck in autumn 2020 and has worked tirelessly to get this project up and running. It has all been funded by the government voucher scheme. The whole thing has been fraught with difficulties and set backs, not least the incompetence of Openreach and various internet providers. Without the dogged determination of Mike and Geraldine Chaffcombe would still be waiting for Broadband.

#### Planning

There have been 4 planning applications during the year. Phosphate levels are still affecting local planning applications.

The applications considered were:

- (a) App No: 22/01496/COL  
Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness application for the existing works to change double glazing roman tiles/glazing on rear section of extension.  
Location: The Forge, Main Street, Chaffcombe TA20 4AH

Chaffcombe Parish Council had no objections. The application has been approved.

- (b) App No: 22/01940/S73  
Proposal: S73 application to vary condition 2 (approved plans) for the erection of replacement garage etc.  
Location: East Lodge, Whitemoor Hill, Chaffcombe TA20 4AE

Chaffcombe Parish Council had no objections. The application has been approved.

- (c) App No: 22/01937/HOU  
Proposal: Conversion of existing stone barn and attached garage to artist studio and ancillary accommodation.  
Location: The Forge, Main Street, Chaffcombe TA20 4AH

Chaffcombe Parish Council had no objections. The application has been approved.

- (d) App No: 23/00112/COL

Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness for an existing use - use of building as a dwelling etc.

Location: Gatehouse Cottage, Chaffcombe TA20 4BG

Chaffcombe Parish Council had no objections. Application awaiting decision.

#### Precept

This has been held at £3,000 for another year.

#### Website

The website administered for the village by Lewis Bates, continues to provide residents with information about events, both past and future, together with lots of beautiful photos uploaded particularly by Lewis and David Bracher. For such a small village our website is truly one to be proud of.

#### Local Community Networks.

Under the new Somerset Council there will be 18 Local Community Networks (LCNs) which will be a forum for local organisations including parish and town councils, the Police, Fire, Health, Schools and the Voluntary Sector. Chaffcombe will be in area 11 together with Ilminster and Crewkerne but not with Chard. It is planned to have 6 - 8 meetings per year with each organisation having a representative with one vote each.

#### Defibrillator

The current defibrillator contract is due to finish at the end of June. Councillors agreed to continue to support the defibrillator on the same basis as previously: a 50% / 50% split with the Village Hall. There will also be an update course on the use of the defibrillator and CPR.

#### The Coronation of HM King Charles in May

Finally planning is underway for the coronation of King Charles III in May. It was agreed to open the Village Hall which will be suitably decorated and the Union Flag will fly on the Church Tower.

It has been agreed to hold a celebration in the Parish by firstly planting a tree and then afterwards back to the Village Hall for a barbecue and tea/coffee and cakes. This will be held on Sunday 7th May, the planting of the tree to be at 2.30 p.m. by the telephone box. The tree is to be a Weeping Flowering Cherry - Prunus Serrulata Kiku Shidare Zakura.

#### And Finally

During the past months we have had a number of new parishioners coming to live in our parish and we wish them a hearty welcome.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the life of the Parish: my fellow parish councillors, our two unitary councillors, our volunteer Flood Warden and Footpath Warden, our volunteer website administrator, our Clerk and everyone else in the village, too many to name, who give their time to make Chaffcombe a wonderful place to live.

Mary Butler, Chair Chaffcombe Parish Council 2023

## **2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2022**

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting were available and were signed by the Chair as a true record.

## **3. Public Voice.**

### **(a) Knapps Lane roadworks**

A question was asked about the roadworks on Knapps Lane. This will be clarified at the next Parish Council meeting in May.

### **(b) Ditches and flooding at Kerrs Vean**

This was discussed and will be on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting in May.

The meeting finished at 8.00 p.m.

Mary Butler  
Chair Chaffcombe Parish Council.