

## **Clerk's Report January 2024**

**ANPR Camera Application** – The Service Level Agreement and Triage form have been completed and returned to the Police. Cllrs Funnell, Samaroo and Wood are due to meet on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January to discuss potential locations for the ANPR camera to be positioned. Once a location(s) has been identified, the next stage is to meet with the Police to discuss and visit the chosen sites to check if the location meets criteria and to gain approval; this meeting is currently scheduled for Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January. I have received confirmation that this type of camera triggers advisory letters to be sent, it is not enforceable so fines will not be issued. I attach a copy of the letter that will be sent to offending vehicles for your information. I have also received confirmation that the camera will be the property of the PC and we are therefore responsible for it should it get damaged, the camera will be added to our insurance policy. It is recommended that as we will be the data owners, we should have a data protection impact statement and a camera operating policy in place. F&M are due to review this at their next meeting.

**Community Speedwatch Group** – The newly formed Group are due to receive their speed gun training on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January and our Vehicle Activated Sign will soon be seen around the Parish again; data will be collated and shared with the Police and Highways.

**Highfield Way Parking Concerns** – All vehicles have now moved from where they were parked on the verge at Highfield Way. County Cllr Turner and our Local Highways Manager (LHM) have provided support to address residents' concerns. We have received a visit from a resident to thank us for our support, I have also passed thanks on to County Cllr Turner and our LHM.

**County Boundary Commission Consultation** – Our submission was made as agreed at our December meeting, see below.

(1) Support proposals to keep Chalford within Minchinhampton:  
The Parish Council supports the fact that no changes are proposed for Chalford, and agrees that Chalford should retain its current valley links across to Minchinhampton. We have been advised that one political party is recommending Chalford be joined with the more rural Bisley/Painswick area. We would strongly object to any such change. Chalford is a large parish of almost 6,500 and any proposal to move the parish into Bisley/Painswick simply to make numbers match, has no regard for community or other administrative boundaries.

(2) Object to proposals to move Thrupp from Minchinhampton to Stroud Central:  
Brimscombe and Thrupp and the A419 London Road transport corridor (together with the Canal and Railway) are closely associated with the parish of Chalford as part of the Minchinhampton area. The Parish Council considers that the current status for Minchinhampton should be retained - maintaining a cohesive unit with a single county councillor, rather than splitting the area down the middle, without regard for community or other administrative boundaries.

**Winter Gritting Arrangements** – Rob Asher is our snow plough operator; the PC pay him on an ad-hoc basis. I have asked him to confirm the arrangements for Winter; I have not received a reply as of yet, I will keep you updated.

**Elections May 2024** – I have received a request to book the Parish Centre for use as a polling station for the elections on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May; I have completed the necessary paperwork to confirm the booking. There has been a lot of changes to the legislation for elections including the introduction of Voter ID and a change to the way postal voters can return their postal votes at polling stations. The RFO and I will be attending training for Clerks on February 14<sup>th</sup> at Ebley Mill. I will share more information with you about what is required when I have further details.

**Small Grant Scheme** – A reminder that the closing date for grant applications is 31<sup>st</sup> January. Prior to Christmas we sent reminders to the organisations that applied for a grant last year, and we have also advertised via Facebook, our website and the Eastcombe, Bussage and Brownhill newsletter.

**Model Biodiversity Policy** – In January 2024 additional duties relating to biodiversity and nature recovery come in to force for local authorities, including Town and Parish councils. The legislation is part of the Environment Act 2021 and builds upon the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Public authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This is the strengthened ‘biodiversity duty’ that the Environment Act 2021 introduces. This means that, as a public authority we must:

1. Consider what you can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
2. Agree policies and specific objectives based on your consideration.
3. Act to deliver your policies and achieve your objectives.

One way of complying with this legislation is for Parish and Town Councils to develop a Local Nature Action Plans (LNAP) and to adopt a Model Biodiversity Policy. The Finance and Management Committee are due to consider this at their next meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January and an update will be provided at the next Full Council meeting.

**Meet Father Christmas at the Parish Centre** – This event went well, with around 40 children visiting Santa to receive a chocolate gift. There were a lot of positive comments from parents/grandparents/carers. We could perhaps consider making this an annual event.

**ILCA Qualification** – I am pleased to report that the RFO and I passed our ILCA (Introduction to Local Council Administration) qualification in December. In April we will register for FILCA (Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration).

**Coppice Hill Car Park** – Following the annual tree inspection, work is required to the two Ash trees located within this car park. Our Tree Surgeon is proposing to attempt to carry out this work on the 11<sup>th</sup> January, however historically this has been a difficult task as the owners of the vehicles parked here do not move which makes it

impossible for the work to be carried out. You may be aware that this land is unregistered so is not owned by anyone; however, in February 2017 the PC decided to take control of the car park and agreed to collate evidence that we are maintaining the area in order to make an Adverse Possession Claim in 12 years' time (the time period required for unregistered land). Cllr Trinder and I feel that this decision needs a review and this will therefore be brought to the next Full Council meeting for consideration.

**Agenda item 7 – Staff Grade Evaluations** - Following the recommendations in the Internal Audit report regarding salaries, thorough job evaluations were carried out by Cllrs Morris-Wyatt and Trinder together with the Clerk. The Finance and Management Committee considered the outcome of the evaluation and recommend to full Council to revise grading of the Clerk's salary from SCP 28 to 31, the RFO from 26 to 27, the Groundsman to Senior Groundsman from SCP 17 to 20 and Assistant Groundsman from Living Wage to SCP 4. The Assistant Clerk is on the correct SCP of 11. Please refer to Cllr Morris-Wyatt's memo.

**Agenda item 8 – Precept 2024/25** As you are aware the Finance and Management Committee have carefully considered the figures over the past few months. The RFO has prepared the calculation of precept which is attached for your consideration together with a memo from Chair of Finance and Management. Finance and Management make the following recommendations:

- a) **Spending budget recommendation of £232,028.56.**
- b) **Reserves recommendation totalling 218,664.06 at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.**
- c) **Precept requirement recommendation of £215,328.56 to Stroud District Council which is an increase of 8.92% over the previous year.**

If you have any questions, please let me or the RFO know prior to our meeting so that we can ensure your question can be answered as we must finalise our requirement in order to submit our request to SDC by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> January.

**Agenda item 9 – Old Neighbourhood Inn** – We have received a request via District Cllr Watson (on behalf of the Old Neighbourhood Pub Community Group who are running a campaign to bring the pub into community ownership) to consider submitting a request to SDC to issue a compulsory purchase order application to secure the site. Please see the attached confidential document from District Cllr Watson.

**Agenda item 10 - Silver Street Car Park** – a) Cllrs Gardiner, Morris-Wyatt, Trinder and the Clerk met on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January to discuss the wording of the signage which will be displayed in the car park. After giving this careful consideration, the group propose it should read; (please see next page)

**Welcome to Silver Street Car Park. The Car Park is owned and managed by Chalford Parish Council and is for the use of local residents and their visitors.**

**The following restrictions apply to all users of the car park:**

- **Park within the marked bays**
- **Do not block spaces for long periods of time**
- **No vehicles over 3.5 tonnes**
- **No trailers or caravans**
- **No overnight camping**
- **No vehicle maintenance**
- **No untaxed or uninsured vehicles**

**We ask that users of the car park respect the needs of residents and park considerately.**

**Vehicles and their contents are left at the risk of the owner and no liability is accepted for any loss or damage incurred.**

**The Parish Council can be contacted on 01453 887204**

b) I obtained two quotes from F1 Lining in respect of the markings in the car park.

1) to have the numbering and 'V' signs removed, this will cost £450 + VAT.

2) to have the 'V's removed and replaced with numbers, this will cost £650 + VAT.

The working group considered both quotes and recommend that we proceed with option one as this will cause less confusion, will cost less than option 2 and future expenditure will also be reduced.

### **Agenda item 11 – Defibrillators**

a) Chalford Hill Primary School have been gifted a defibrillator; rather than place this inside the school they would like to make it available to the community. However, this means that they will require a cabinet and for it to be connected to the electrics. The school have asked if the PC could provide support with the cost of the cabinet and electrical installation. The new owners of the Methodist Church do not want the defibrillator and we are in the process of organising its removal which needs to be carried out by an electrician. Once this has been done we could gift the cabinet to Chalford Hill Primary School. This would be an ideal location and would replace coverage in this area. We have suggested that the school apply to the PC for a small grant to cover/help with the cost of the electrical installation.

b) France Lynch Church Rooms would like a defibrillator. The defibrillator that was located at the Methodist Church is now spare, however it is currently broken and is with the technical department in America. They have assured us that it can be repaired but due to high demand it will be at least another 6-8 weeks before we will receive it. We could gift this defibrillator to the Church Rooms. The cost of the cabinet and electrics could be partly covered by a PC grant.