



**MINUTES OF THE CHARFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24th MAY 2017
CHARFIELD MEMORIAL HALL**

Present: Charfield Parish Councillors – Cllr. M. Rosher (Chairman), Cllr. J. Law, Cllr. N. Newns, Cllr. R. Rawlings, Cllr. A. Threlfall, Cllr. T. Parker, Cllr. J. O’Neill (South Gloucestershire Council Representative) and Clerk – Paula Evans

Sixteen Members of the Public were present.

Apologies: None received.

Welcome

Cllr. Rosher welcomed everyone to the 2017 Annual Parish Meeting.

Reports had been received from numerous Parish Organisations which had been collated into an ‘Annual Report’ which was circulated at the meeting. The Chairman acknowledged the continued community work undertaken by Parish Organisations over the past twelve months. These reports are appended to these Minutes under Appendix 3.

1. Approval of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting held on 4th May 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council as a true record.

2. Annual Report from the Chairman

A copy of the Chairman’s report is appended to these Minutes as Appendix 1.

3. Annual Report from the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

A copy of the Clerk’s Report is appended to these Minutes as Appendix 2.

4. Draft 2016/17 Parish Accounts

The Clerk presented a copy of the unaudited Annual Accounts for 2016/17 (a copy is attached to these Minutes). The accounts showed a healthy remaining balance.

5. Questions/Any Other Business

The Chairman invited questions from those present. The main subject of discussion was the Charfield Neighbourhood Plan progress and potential development within the village. The Chairman explained that a Neighbourhood Plan would not stop development in law, but once a Plan is adopted it becomes a legal document. There is still a tremendous amount of work to be done on the Neighbourhood Plan.

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The Parish Council had, and continued to make its feelings clear to South Gloucestershire Council, that infrastructure problems need to be addressed before any development can take place. The Parish Council is not a 'pressure group', but perhaps consideration should be given to setting one up which would be independent of the Parish Council.

Cllr. O'Neill updated the meeting regarding representations made by developers, including Commercial Estates Group (CEG). Regarding the Barratt application at Warners Court, this would be referred to the Development Control Committee for a site meeting, possibly sometime in June 2017 – it was essential that residents attend the meeting in order to show the strength of feeling against development at this location. Cllr. O'Neill also updated the meeting on progress regarding the West of England devolution plans and election of the new Mayor.

This was now the time where development can be guided by what the village needs/wants. It has been acknowledged that infrastructure in the area is at capacity including J14 of the M5. It was also acknowledged by the meeting that residents felt that SGC had mis-categorised the village.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)



Appendix 1

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – 2016/17

Welcome, everyone, to the Charfield Annual Parish Meeting. Those of you who have attended in previous years will know how this generally runs, but I'll go over it all anyway; bear with me. The Annual Parish Meeting is a requirement of the Local Government Act 1972, and is a meeting of the parish – it's not a Parish Council Meeting. In every way it is Your Meeting, with only a few caveats; it is hosted and chaired by the Parish Council. It has to happen each year somewhere between 1st May and 1st June and can't start before six o'clock, so that as many of the residents of the parish can attend. It is a key community event, and I'm glad so many of you turned out for it.

Before we start, and again you'll know this already: emergencies... If we have to evacuate the building we'll use the best available escape route, that's likely either to be the way you came in, or out of the emergency doors over there. We're not expecting anything untoward, and there are no tests planned this evening. If you see me running, try and keep up!

Toilets, if you need them, are back the way you came in, into the lobby. Refreshments were being served from the kitchen, and will be again when we break in about half an hour. I'd like to thank Liam and his kitchen team for offering to look after the tea and coffee and I hope there will be a few biscuits left.

Please put your mobiles to silent. I know some folk need to be in contact all the time, but if you need to take a call would you please step out into the lobby and close the door behind you. And since this is quite a booming space, if you need to have a chat with your neighbour would you step outside too. One meeting - one voice - one at a time.

Ok, so the Agenda for this meeting is quite simple. I get to give a short Annual Report, then Paula gets to tell you how the Parish Council accounts are. At that point we'll take five minutes to get ourselves a cup of something and then Paula will go over some group reports, after which we can talk a bit about the potential future of Charfield and go into a Q&A session. When we do that I'll still be chairing, so please don't all yell out at once; I'll get all confused.

But before all that we need to agree the minutes of the 2016 APM. It's hard, remembering what went on a whole year ago, and so much has happened since, but for those who were here and who have seen a copy of the minutes of that meeting, would you please raise a hand to agree them as accurate, or call out if you have a problem with them?

When we were last here, in May 2016, Charfield Parish Council had had three Councillor vacancies for a long time, and Hannah was still standing in as acting Clerk, having left us at Christmas. Paula began later that month, and since then we've also filled our Councillor Vacancies and currently have a full Council. Paula's been with us a year now, and I'm sure I echo the full Council when I say she's taken to the role brilliantly.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank both Paula and all the members of Charfield Parish Council for the hard work they put in on behalf of the community. We are the foundation tier of local government, the tier that is closest to the community and best has their ear. We're not Party based, nor aligned along any particular political philosophy. Apart from Paula, none of us are paid - unless of course it is in your appreciation.

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The past year has, as you know, been filled with developments and plans for more developments. We seem currently to be the punch-bag of the new West of England Combined Authority, who've promised us more houses but no more supporting infrastructure. And there've been other things happening within the work of the Parish Council in the last twelve months. Normal things, like managing the Remembrance Parade, supporting the Memorial Hall and Playing Field, running the Burial Ground and supporting local initiatives like the Youth Groups, Clean Up Green Up Charfield, and the Community Engagement Group.

We've also put a lot of time and effort into the Charfield Neighbourhood Plan, into South Gloucestershire Council consultations, into fighting to retain our Public Rights of Way, such as OCH8 railway crossing which comes to a hearing on 14th June, into local liaison meetings with the Quarry, with Crest Nicholson and Bellway Homes and other potential developers, and also with members of our community over such things as travellers sites, takeaways and cycle paths. This year we took the tennis court back under our wing after the dissolution of the old tennis club, and having refurbished it have now made it free to use, for all.

There's always something new about to happen in Charfield, and it's often the nine Parish Councillors and the Clerk who get hit with it first. It is a constant challenge, but one we generally enjoy meeting. In a while I'll put some slides up and cover a little about the biggest of those challenges; the new West of England Combined Authority, or WECA, and the Joint Spatial plan – the one that potentially presents us with the thousand houses. But first I'll pass to Paula for the Clerk's and Responsible Financial Officer's Report.

Cllr. Mark Rosher
Chairman



Appendix 2

CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICERS REPORT – 2016/17

It was with cautious confidence I commenced my employment with Charfield Parish Council in May 2016. As an existing local Clerk with about ten years under my belt, it was impossible to be unaware of the dark cloud of potential development that hung over Charfield and naïve to think that the Parish would be anything other than really busy! There was also the issue of having to fill some very knowledgeable and experienced boots in replacing Hannah. However, any anxieties I may have had were soon quashed when I began working with the Charfield Parish Councillors. It is so refreshing to be working with a group of very dedicated people who are obviously passionate about their community.

In the past twelve months the Parish Council has, amongst other things, overseen the refurbishment of the tennis court; discussed and debated numerous and sometimes emotive planning applications; filled the three Councillor vacancies through Co-Option; pressed Network Rail to clear and tidy the Railway Disaster Memorial; organised the Annual Remembrance Day Service and Parade; continued developing the Charfield Neighbourhood Plan. As the new Clerk I have spent a great deal of time reading background information and generally familiarising myself with how Charfield works.

The accounts for financial year 2016/17 have now been completed. An independent internal audit has been conducted which has given the accounts a clean bill of health. The accounts will now be presented to the full Parish Council at their meeting in June where the Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Accounts will be approved. The accounts will then go to Grant Thornton for their external audit. Copies of the 2016/17 Annual Return will be posted to the Parish Council web site. Electors of the Parish are able to view any of the financial documents of the Parish Council under the 'Exercise of Public Right to Inspect' – this inspection period will be held between Monday 3rd July and Friday 11th August 2017. However, please be aware that in order to be open and transparent, the Clerk is happy to provide Parishioners with any financial information at any time during the year.

1. I am very pleased to be able to report that Charfield Parish Council's financial position is very healthy. This is mainly due to prudent financial management of what is essentially parishioners' money. Spending was mainly in line with the 2016/17 budget with the exception of the following:-
 - a. Administration Budget - £500, actual spend £1,761. This overspend was due to the re-advertisement for the position of Parish Clerk at the beginning of the financial year.
 - b. Salary Budget - £12,000, actual spend £12,672. Again, this overspend was primarily due to additional salary costs incurred during the handover period in April and May.
 - c. Room Hire/Accommodation Budget - £600, actual spend £1,822. This overspend was due to additional costs for Charfield Neighbourhood Plan Meetings and Youth Group sessions. Going forward, a local business has agreed to pay for the room hire sessions for the Youth Group – thank you.
2. **Receipts** – The Precept for 2016/17 was £55,700 together with a South Gloucestershire Council LCTR (Local Council Tax Reduction) Support Grant of £1,069.50.
 - a. The LCTR Support Grant is paid to Parish Councils to offset the extra expense that Parish Councils incur after taking on additional responsibilities that have been passed from Local

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Authority level to Parish level. This includes things like grass cutting, bus shelters etc. South Gloucestershire Council, along with most other Local Authorities will be phasing out this Support Grant by financial year 2019/20.

- b. Other Grants received included a Locality Grant of £4,500 for the development of the Charfield Neighbourhood Plan; although £1,770 was returned as it has not been spent within the stipulated timeframe.
 - c. Income from the Burial Ground was £850 for the year; expenditure was £771.50 making a net surplus of £78.50.
 - d. VAT refund of £1,148.79. As you will see from the attached Bank Reconciliation the Parish Council anticipate a VAT refund in 2017/18 of some £4,232.96 which is primarily due to the expenses incurred in the refurbishment of the tennis court.
3. **Payments** – The total amount of payments made during the year was £62,191.34 which was just slightly below the total income of £63,291.78, being a difference of £1,100.44. It is therefore safe to say that Charfield Parish Council spent within budget.
4. **Grants (Section 137)** – In financial year 2016/17 Charfield Parish Council granted a total of £3,200 to the following parish organisations to support their continued activities:-
- Citizens Advice Bureau - £100
 - Charfield Amateur Dramatic Society - £100
 - Charfield Cricket Club - £100
 - CuGuC - £500
 - Charfield Memory Group - £500
 - Football Club - £200
 - Junior Football Club - £200
 - Friends of Charfield Primary School - £500
 - Luncheon Club - £200
 - Memorial Hall (Fete) - £300
 - MS Therapy Centre - £200
 - Charfield OOCs - £100
 - 1st Woodend Scouts - £200

The Parish Council also used Section 137 monies to contribute towards the Annual Remembrance Day Service - £40 for the wreath and the hire of the PA system at £25.

5. At their Annual Budget meeting in January 2017, the Parish Council reviewed their projected spending for the forthcoming year and agreed to keep the Precept at £55,700 for 2017/18.

Attached is a copy of the Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2017. Unfortunately, a hiccup at the bank and the forwarding of a replacement cheque book resulted in a number of cheques being unrepresented, totalling £5,548.90.

I would be pleased to receive any questions you may have about this report or the 2016/17 Bank Reconciliation.

Paula J. Evans (Mrs)
Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

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Charfield Parish Council Bank Reconciliation As At 31st March 2017

Opening Balances	Current Account	£500.00	
	NatWest Business Reserve (1)	£14,350.60	
	NatWest Business Reserve (2)	£45,379.47	£60,230.07

RECEIPTS	2016/2017	£	
Precept	£55,700.00		
Interest	£23.99		
Rent - PC	£0.00		
Rent - The Pound	£0.00		
Burial Fees	£850.00		
Grants	£5,569.00		
Section 106	£0.00		
VAT Refund	£1,148.79		
			<u>£63,291.78</u>
			£123,521.85

PAYMENTS			
Grants/Donations (s.137)	£3,265.00		
Courses/Subscriptions	£1,174.62		
Clerk's Salary/PAYE	£12,672.81		
Administration	£1,760.96		
Stationery	£64.02		
Audit Fee/Accountancy	£390.00		
Office Equipment	£284.92		
Accommodation	£1,822.00		
Travel Expenses	£18.00		
Telephone/Post	£296.86		
Insurance Premium	£1,233.86		
Playing Field Expenses	£12,923.86		
Open Spaces	£4,242.19		
Dog Waste Bins	£685.23		
Chairman's Expenses	£0.00		
Repairs & Renewals Contingency	£0.00		
Burial Ground	£771.50		
New Play Equipment	£0.00		
Election Expenses	£0.00		
Memorial Hall	£6,190.00		
Allotments	£0.00		
Youth Group	£6,373.50		
Storage of Records	£0.00		
Other Items	£0.00		
Contingency for Youth Group	£0.00		
Neighbourhood Plan	£3,789.05		
VAT Recoverable	£4,232.96		
			<u>£62,191.34</u>
			<u>£61,330.51</u>

Represented by:-			
NatWest Current Account	£850.00		
NatWest Business Reserve (1)	£14,355.52		
NatWest Business Reserve (2)	£51,673.89	£66,879.41	
Less Uncleared/Written Back Cheques			
Total Uncleared Cheques	£5,548.90		
			<u>£5,548.90</u>
			<u>£61,330.51</u>

Signed by : _____ Date: _____
 Signed RFO: _____ Date: _____



REPORTS FROM PARISH ORGANISATIONS

Charfield Amateur Dramatic Society

CADS are taking a well-earned rest over the summer. After the huge success of our latest production we were proud to host the whole of Stone Primary School on their annual field trip. On behalf of everyone involved with CADS we continue to value the on-going support of the village and surrounding area, and we look forward to bringing more laughs and good times in the future. We would also like to thank the Parish Council for their Grant of £100.

Friends of Charfield Primary School

The Friends are a registered, non-profit Charity made up of parents/carers and teachers who work together to raise money for equipment and resources to enrich our children's education. We arrange a variety of events throughout the year for the children and wider community to enjoy - the highlight of the year being the spectacular fireworks night. We also support the community with village events and fairs. All of the money raised goes straight back into the school. This year the funding has been centred on enhancing the outdoor and forest areas of the school. The children love to learn outdoors and the equipment we provide can assist with this. One project in particular is to build an Amphitheatre in the natural bowl area at the bottom of the school field. We are actively looking to work closely with other groups within the community, including looking at other sites to host the fireworks night for future years – the school field will not be able to be used once the new Bellway Homes are built and occupied.

Funding is extremely tight for schools and we are here to ensure the children don't miss out on amazing experiences and opportunities to enrich their learning and lives. The school also raises other funding requests to the Friends which are then reviewed and funding provided for the extras that the school cannot provide from their standard budget. Our team is involved with raising grant applications to contribute towards fund raising efforts. The £500 Grant received from the Parish Council will go a long way to help towards our outdoor projects and is gratefully received. We also currently have token voting in the Tesco stores in Yate (up to the end of June), and Waitrose in Chipping Sodbury during June. So if you are shopping in these shops please make sure you pick up a token and vote for us!

The Friends enjoy helping the school and are always looking for new members. We hold regular committee evenings and all are welcome, with no obligation to commit to regular involvement. We also arrange the odd social event too! If you would like to come along to see what we are all about please see details of our next meeting on our Facebook page on <https://www.facebook.com/Friendsofcharfieldprimaryschool>.

Friends of St. James Church, Churchend

The Parish has a new organisation! We are very excited to announce the formation of our new group 'The Friends of St James Church'. Hopefully many of you will have visited the church on the hill at the far end of Churchend Lane and if you haven't, it really is worth a visit. It is normally open during daylight hours.

On your visit, you will find an outstandingly beautiful ancient church in a picturesque setting with a very lovely churchyard bounded by old stone walls. The inside of the church is a light and open space and unusually it has no fixed pews. It is how the church would have been when first built as churches were not solely places of worship but the hub of the village and used for quite a range of community activities; the original village hall. Its main use at the moment is to host the wonderful, atmospheric Carol Service each Christmas which is so very popular with villagers.

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St James is now a closed church under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT). The CCT is a good custodian and keeps an active maintenance programme going on the building. The churchyard is under the management of South Gloucestershire Council, which has a limited remit of what it is regulated to do.

The Churchyard is in quite a poor state with the very old and rare chest tombs and tombstones in a parlous state. The Friends were formed in particular to "help conserve, maintain, and improve the grounds of St James Church". We also hope to help conserve the Church itself but our immediate priorities are the grounds.

The CCT are very keen to see the Church being used by and for the community and emphasise that such activities do not need to be restricted to religious activities. It is also important to say that our group is a non-denominational one and although we will have to liaise with the Church authorities in getting repairs done we are focused on making this village heritage asset a useful **community asset** which can be used more regularly by local groups and individuals. In the past it has been used to host musical recitals and art exhibitions.

Our first task is to raise about £1500 to pay for a full survey of the Churchyard to understand what needs to be done with a prioritisation of jobs. We would welcome pledges of money towards this sum – any contribution no matter how small would be very welcome as currently we are starting with a zero bank balance. If every household in Charfield could give £1.50 that would be this first major milestone complete. Any larger sum goes towards getting the specialist help that will be needed.

If you want to use the space you will need to contact the CCT. We have their contact details and can easily put you in touch.

Clean Up Green Up Charfield

I am glad to have the chance to thank the Parish Council for their support – the grant we receive helps us to keep CUGUC things going.

I took over as the new Chair of Clean Up Green Up Charfield in January 2017 after Yvette decided to take a break having been the groups very capable Chairlady since its formation. We are pleased that she has agreed to stay involved with some of our working groups.

I have reiterated the groups aim is to try and brighten up the village by gardening, planting and clearing up where we can – the clue is in the name!

Other donations are valuable too: - You may have seen lots of little purple crocuses popping up all round the village at the start of March. We were donated 5000 crocus corms by the Rotary Club of Dursley as part of their Purple for Polio awareness campaign. We spent several hours back in October time and we hope they will sprout again in coming years. Thanks to those that helped plant them all. We also receive regular donations through our standing order scheme – just a couple of ££'s a month is really lovely especially if you don't have actual time to do the work – you can help us financially.

When we have events – teas or open gardens the support is lovely and again raises the much needed funds. Clean Up Green Up Charfield holds monthly working groups on the hill from the roundabout down to the Viewpoint where we installed a new seat a year or so ago. We are delighted to have new helpers to keep the school frontage looking good and the corner of Little Bristol Lane which is a difficult piece of ground and we hope to improve it this year after the beautiful poppies finish.

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If you would like to join our band of helpers you would be very welcome. Just drop your details on an email to cugucvol.2014@gmail.com. You don't have to be available every time – we just send an email when something is coming up and we supply the tools, etc.

We are really hoping to find someone interested in starting a village Christmas Tree group. If you are interested please get in touch. We would then hope to identify a place, get the necessary permissions and funds in place in time for December.

Whether you are involved with our group or not, or just have your own garden to tend to, or even just a small window box – I hope you enjoy seeing our village, and your own plants, getting greener and flowering as Summer approaches.

You may also spot an exciting upgrade to the bus stop by the Primary School that is happening right now – another of Yvette's legacies.

On a sad note our working groups have often enjoyed elevenses with Mo at her bungalow behind the Viewpoint and we are so sad to have to say goodbye to her following her recent death. I know she will be up there watching our activities and hopefully sending us just the right amount of sun and rain to keep Charfield looking beautiful – we'll miss you greatly Mo.

Charfield Memorial Hall & Playing Fields Committee

Firstly I would like to thank everyone who has supported the Memorial Hall and its committee this year. Most importantly thanks need to go to the residents of Charfield who support us financially through the annual precept money, the Parish Council who continue to support the committee and our plans for the continuing development of the hall, the team of volunteers who work endlessly to plant and improve the gardens around the car park and the rest of the building, and, finally, thanks to the groups and classes who continue to use the hall on a weekly basis. Without this support the hall would simply not exist!

This past year has again seen large expenditure on developing the building with our focus specifically on the outside of the building. In the last 12 months we have redesigned the back of the building adding a patio spanning the whole width of the building with picnic benches and seating, we have installed brand new windows and doors around the entire building improving both security and the look of the building, and we have added new rendering to the front and side of the building giving it a well needed facelift. If that wasn't enough, on the internal improvements we have decorated the sportsman's lounge toilets and changing rooms, and in the main hall side we have decorated the kitchen giving both areas a new lease of life and a new fresh look.

If that felt like a lot (and it did to us!) we still have lots to do and lots of plans for the future including, new lighting in the car park, continued focus and development of the gardens including planting at the rear of the building and the potential for large building work inside the main hall which will increase our capacity and potentially add a 3rd room which would be available for hire.

We have also been rolling out a consistent programme of fundraising and entertainment events with our aim being to provide something once every other month. Since January we have had 3 massively successful events from live music through to our recent Comedy Night. Our next event is the annual Community Fete Day on Saturday 29th July, 12-5pm with plans to potentially run an event in the evening too which will offer the whole community a full day of fun for the whole family!

If you want to get involved and help us drive forward our plan for the development of this vital community building, and help us develop ways to bring the community together please feel free to get in touch.