



CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18th February 2025 at Charlton Church
Foxcote Room at 7.45pm**

Present: Cllr Ward Chairman, Cllr P Wylde, Cllr N Woods, Cllr K Wilson,

In attendance: E Attwood – Clerk

1 Member of the public

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllr Smale and Cllr Tasker

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

3.Minutes - Proposed Cllr Wilson Seconded: Cllr Woods Resolved: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21st January 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman of the meeting. All members agreed.

4. Public participation – None.

5. Clerk's Report

- Cllr Hodgson gave his notice after the last meeting, TVBC notified.
- Advertisement for Parish Councillors on noticeboard and newsletter
- Notice of vacancy arisen from TVBC on noticeboard.
- Path into play park at Armstrong rise is now planned and will be completed in due course. **Clerk** to ask Cllr Lashbrook to chase.
- Kerb at Carters Meadow chased with HCC & County Cllr
- Pension regulator for employee form submitted.
- Outstanding newsletter invoices chased.

6. County Cllr Donnelly reported on the following

- None see appendix A

7.Borough Cllr L Lashbrook – None

8. Community Hub update

- **Approval of replacement terms and conditions of the working group**
Resolved: Cllrs approved the amended terms and conditions for the working group.
- **Approval to pay invoices Resolved:** The Ecology Design Invoice was not approved for payment because the first 50% had been paid, and AA need to be satisfied that the work has been completed.
- **Monthly update from Absolute Architecture (AA).** Cllr Ward reported the car park study will be completed soon, with parking for 72 cars expected. AA will report to the residents of Charlton at the Annual Parish meeting scheduled for the 18th of March 2024. **Resolved:** Parish Council approved the design which can be tweaked. AA will write to TVBC to confirm the land can be used to build the Community Hub and the carpark. Survey to be sent with information about the proposed hub with newsletter. An estimated cost will also be produced by AA. Volunteers are required for a fund-raising group.

9.Approval to change E mail service to Hugo Fox plus a gov.uk domain.

The Clerk explained the costs involved for Parish online and Hugo fox. Hugo Fox was cheaper and currently host the Parish website. The Clerk will provide contact details so Hugo Fox can have an online meeting with Cllrs Ward and Wilson to discuss the use of e mails and making amendments to the current website, so it becomes a village website.

10. Finance -

10.1 The bank balance as of 31st January was as follows:

Bank Reconciliation			
Treasurers		£	634.09
Business		£	16,389.37
Fix Term Deposit		£	20,000.00
Fix Term Deposit		£	30,000.00
Fix Term Deposit		£	25,441.10
Closing Balance as at 31st January 25		£	92,464.56

Resolved: Councillors approved the financial statement and payments for 31st January 2025.

10.2 Approval of January 2025 payments.

Stationary - Sainsbury	£7.50
Andover Glassworks - glass noticeboard	£261.86
HMRC - Clerks tax	£111.60
E Attwood - Clerks pay	£446.53
Room Rental TVBC	£27.50
Go cardless Hugo Fox Website	£11.99
St Thomas Church Charlton	£120.00
E Attwood exp Nov/Dec	£28.08

10.3 Approval of February 2025 payments to date.

E Attwood (Clerks Pay	£446.53
HMRC	£111.60
TVBC hire room meeting	£33.00
E Attwood Exp Jan	£14.04

Resolved: Cllrs approved January 2025 & February payments to date.

10.4 Quarterly Bank Statement Check

Cllr Wilson verified the bank account balances to the statement of accounts.

10.5 Financial Regulations. The Clerk had circulated an updated version. Cllrs discussed and the Clerk will make a few tweaks ready for approval next month.

11. Planning

The following decisions by TVBC were noted –

- 25/00122/FULLN Penton Sawmills Newbury Hill Penton Mewsey Andover (not consulted as not in our Parish)

Resolved: Charlton Parish Council have registered a **strong objection**. 1. Hatherden Road and Foxcotte Road are residential areas with some houses right up against the highway. There is no pavement on one side of Hatherden Road which, itself has a long corner where visibility for pedestrians is difficult and dangerous. Also, there is no pavement or footpath on either side of Hatherden road from Mercia Avenue up to the roundabout at the top of Hatherden Road therefore already a dangerous area of road for pedestrians and would be much more so with the increase in HGV traffic gaining access to the proposed industrial site.

i.e. increasingly dangerous for pedestrians.

2. Hatherden Road is already being used as the principal route for the solar panel vehicles accessing the solar farm and will continue to be used for several years to come.

3. Hatherden Road is a bus route, and local observations show that passing of buses and HGV's is often problematic with the HGV having to mount to pavement or the bus risking collision with a house on the roadside.

In addition to the above it should be noted that Charlton Crematorium is open again after a period of closure. Hatherden Road is the main access route to it with funeral corteges 4 or 5 times a day. It's not the frequency of the funeral traffic but the nature of it that is an issue. Funeral hearses and supporting vehicles require respect and dignity for the deceased and in consideration of the families concerned. Care is always taken by funeral directors and others in the transporting of the deceased which is incongruous to the use of Hatherden Road as an industrial access route with large, heavy and noisy vehicles sometimes requiring hearses to mount the pavement or take other evasive action.

We believe the best access route for the SO vehicles, if there is to be one at all, would be A343, Mays Down Lane, Newbury Lane.

The quantity, size and speed of the vehicle's transiting Charlton has always been an issue – one that is highlighted in our Neighbourhood Plan - and the situation has got worse year on year. We are already a 'rat run' for traffic linking to the A343. We are a route for the Solar Farm north of Penton as stated above. And Hatherden Road is an important route for funeral corteges. The SO vehicles just add to an already over-stressed village road and the size and speed of truck make it ever more dangerous for the many residents that live, drive and walk this road.

In addition to the traffic concerns relating to So recycle, if planning permission is given for change of use to B8 including distribution and distribution centres) there will be nothing to prevent other major distribution businesses with bigger and more frequent vehicles using these unsuitable highways.

12.Councillor Reports

12.1 Traffic Liaison – Nothing to report.

Cllr Ward will brief Cllr Wilson of the duties involved.

12.2 Footpaths & Rights away/Lengthsman scheme- Cllrs were disappointed that TVBC did not inform Charlton PC of the removal of the trees at the entrance to the Salto centre. Cllr Ward has a meeting with the TVBC Officer on the 25th of February when he will mention that the PC would like to be advised of future work within the Parish to be carried out by them..

Councillor Ward will inquire with Andover Garden Machinery for additional details regarding the Torosscm Recycler self-propelled lawn mower.

12.3 Emergency Resilience Planning – Cllr Ward will pass the current plan to Cllr Woods

12.4 Charlton Village Community Association – Cllr Ward reported that the CVCA had recently met, and a grant application will be forth coming.

- 25th February Wellbeing event in Salto Centre
- 22nd March quiz & tombola
- 8th May VE day £5 ahead 7-10pm Beacon lit at 9.30PM
- 5th July Charlton Village Community Day

Grant application expected for VE day and CVCA.

12.5 Communication update with proposals – The noticeboard will be ordered next month.

The upgrading of the website was discussed, and it was agreed to change the website to accommodate the whole village. Cllrs profiles and pictures are in the March, edition of the newsletter. The Clerk will arrange for Cllr Ward to have an online meeting with our current website provider.

12.6 Action Tracker – The Clerk will update. It was reported that a number of items had been completed.

13.1 Start meetings at 7.30pm: Cllr Ward will go back to the Church and request that PC meetings can start 15 minutes earlier.

13.2 Annual Parish Meeting 18th March 2025

- The Annual Parish meeting will take place followed by a smaller Parish Council meeting. The Clerk will advertise the format, Community Hub with Absolute Architecture presentation, Q & A

14. Correspondence & Meetings. The following items were received.

- A resident highlighted the planning application at Penton Sawmills. They were advised to submit their own response.

15. Items proposed for April agenda was to revisit 20mph on Hatherden Road:

16. Date of next meeting: The Annual Parish meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th March 2025 at St Thomas Church, Charlton followed by a brief Parish Council meeting.

Appendix A Devolution & Local Government Reorganisation

I know from personal experience, and speaking with my colleagues as both elected members and officers, that everyone has had an utterly exhausting two months with the surprise announcement before Christmas that the Government had decided to embark on both devolution and local government reorganisation at the same time, before investigating sustainable funding models where the immediate pressure is faced.

To do this to staff just before Christmas struck me as insensitive to say the least, but the requirement for a decision before January 10th meant that there was very little time to consult and take these weighty decisions.

We were told in no uncertain terms by the Minister that we had two options: Bid to be on the fast track for devolution, postpone the elections in May and draw up our own preferred boundaries for Hampshire's local councils, or continue as normal with no devolution, no funding and the government would impose new councils upon us in a shorter timeframe. We therefore had no option but to choose the former.

The good news is that our bid was successful, and we are one of the Fast Track counties. This will mean the following timeframe:

- ◆ March 2025 – Hampshire district councils must submit their initial plans for reorganisation to government. This means a lot of work by officers to work out what council arrangements would be sustainable.
- ◆ April – Sept 2025 – detailed work will be done to examine in depth how the boundaries of the new councils will look, and what the future of services will be, for example whether we split Childrens' Services into four, or keep it as one? Where do different powers sit with the new Mayor or with the new councils? This is a huge piece of work, and we have brought on board external and impartial experts to help advise us on this.
- ◆ Sept 2025 – the plans are submitted to Government. They will then consider them. If they are approved, the necessary legislation and statutory instruments will need to be prepared for Parliament.

- ◆ Oct 2025 – April 2026 – work continues on the new Mayor and Combined Authority and legal powers are transferred to them.
- ◆ May 2026 – Elections for the new Mayor of Hampshire and Hampshire County Council.
- ◆ May 2027 – New shadow unitary authorities are set up to gradually take over services and work out a budget.
- ◆ May 2028 – Hampshire County Council and Test Valley Borough Council cease to exist, and all powers are transferred to a new council.

This is all assuming that the Government's timetable holds. It may well slip and there may well be wrought to be done with the Boundary Commission which stalls progress, but that is the best estimate at the moment.

I am working with Richard Waterman to set up some meetings with Parish Councils in my division to do a Q&A and dates will be announced shortly. Parish Councils do not feature heavily in the legislation. I know that there has been some concern that parishes may have to take on extra powers with no resources – there is no proposal for that to happen at this time and it is unlikely that any statutory services would be devolved. It is possible, however, that the unitary council may wish to enter into service delivery contracts with parishes in order to achieve local policy delivery, but this would need to come with the requisite officer support.

Hampshire Highways – New Disruption Charge for Utility Companies

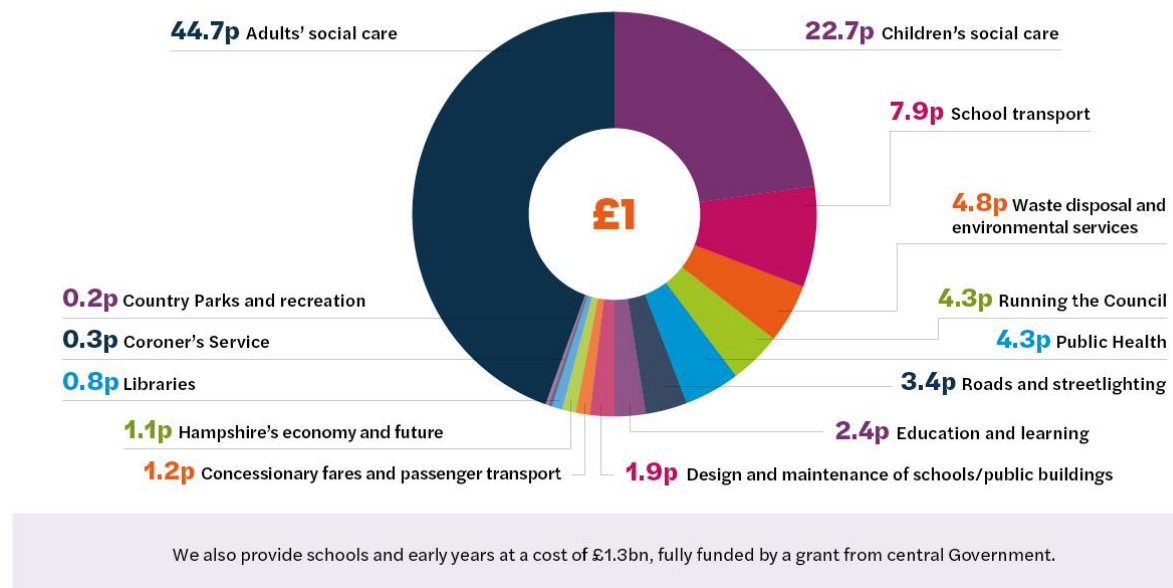
I'm very pleased to be able to announce that we have unveiled plans for a new disruption charge scheme aimed at reducing delays on the county's busiest roads during peak times.

This initiative, designed to complement the existing permitting scheme, would encourage companies and agencies to better plan their work, operate outside peak hours, and shorten the duration of their projects.



- ◆ How It Works: A daily fee would be charged for the duration of the work, including any delays. Surplus revenues would fund innovative projects to reduce streetworks and roadworks disruption and will also be reinvested into highway maintenance.
- ◆ Already in use in parts of the UK, 'lane rental' charges apply to the most congested, strategically important local roads. Hampshire could charge up to £2,500 per day, the maximum allowed under current legislation.

Budget 2025/26



The Budget for Hampshire County Council was passed at Full Council on Thursday 13th February. This year, we have had a gap between revenue and spend of £180,000,000 to bridge. Put simply, our council tax cap of 5% means that we cannot increase our precept any further. Last year inflation was 10%, so we still ended up with a bigger deficit even with a maximum raise.

I'd just like to put some meat on the bones of this, as it is difficult to explain sometimes without getting caught up in all sorts of jargon and revenue/capital expenditure and income.

We are not bankrupt and are not going bankrupt. We have the strongest capital reserves of any county in the country. The issue is one of setting a balanced budget, and if this cannot be done, we have to tell the Government via a s114 Notice. That doesn't mean that statutory services will stop or that we cease to exist. I know some literature has gone round saying that we are "bankrupt", but it is not the case. I am concerned that our most vulnerable residents read this and worry that their meals on wheels, home to school transport or schools will close. They will not and please reassure anyone who comes to you with this concern.

This is the financial pressure which is causing the issue:

- We have around 30 older people every month who were funding their own social care but run out of money and become our responsibility. That is 360 per year at £1,000 per week.... £18.7m extra costs in a full year.
- In the last year, the number of Younger Adults needing a care package of more than £3,000 per week has more than doubled. That is 78 extra people each costing at least £156,000 per year.... A total of £12.2m.
- Since 2011 the percentage of the population over 85 years old has increased by 31% to 3.52%.... by 2030 this is expected to be at least 4.40%. These are typically the residents that most need our help.

- The number of children's social care referrals has more than tripled since 2011, requiring significant investment in new social workers, we added £7m to next year's budget to deal with this.
- The number of Education Health and Care Plans issued in 2015 was 3,884, for the current year it is 17,314.... This has increased the costs of school transport for SEN children from £8m to £75m per annum.
- In 2019 we had one child in our care whose package cost was greater than £0.5m, in the current year we have 37. The cost to Hampshire of just these 37 children is some £26m per annum.

This does not include inflation at around 4%.

Now to put it in context, a maximum council tax rise for us brings in only around £65m against an increase of around £140m.

We also have to increase salaries with the National Insurance increase which will cost us £10m, the Government will only cover £7m of that, which means that we have to find an additional £3m.

These are enough figures to make your head spin. However, I hope that it graphically illustrates the issues with which we have to grapple. Without serious and wide-ranging reform of Adult Social Care and Childrens' Services, any new councils which the government create will find themselves in exactly the same position, which begs the question why reorganisation is taking priority over structural financial reform.

Southern Water

Last Friday, Southern Water applied for an emergency road closure in Appleshaw to pump water. Unfortunately, they did not consult the Parish Council, nor me or TVBC. As a result, residents were up in arms.

The Parish Council did a sterling job in a very difficult situation to arrange a meeting with Southern Water and get information out. Thanks also to Caroline Noakes MP for her assistance.

For our part, I am unhappy that HCC officers did not let me, or the Parish Council know about this request. Although it is Southern Water's responsibility, there needs to be more joined up working between agencies and the parish council should not have been left in the position which they were.

I'm pleased to say that the road is now open again with a traffic light system.

Major Investment in Special Needs Education for Next Academic Year.

One of the greatest pressures on Hampshire County Council's budget is the cost of the increasing number of school pupils with Special Education Needs. Therefore, we have announced exciting plans to transform specialist education at four primary schools, significantly boosting support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Gosport, Eastleigh, and Basingstoke.

Holbrook Primary School, Gosport:

Expanding provision for children with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) by an extra nine places from September 2025.

Refurbishing an unused meeting room and improving hygiene spaces with a capital investment of £350,000.

Cherbourg Primary School, Eastleigh:

Expanding Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) provision from seven to 11 places. Receiving revenue funding for the additional places, with no associated capital costs.

Bedenham Primary School, Gosport:

Increasing SEMH resourced provision from 12 to 18 places by September 2025.

Refurbishing an unused classroom, toilets, and external area with a capital investment of £360,000.

Saxon Wood School, Basingstoke:

Adjusting existing specialist provision to also meet the needs of children with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).

We are committed to supporting Hampshire children, whatever their needs, with educational opportunities to achieve their potential within their home communities wherever possible. Keeping such provision within our own successful schools saves costs that would otherwise be spent on special needs provision in the independent sector, often taking children far from their peers and families.

These expansions are in addition to plans for a new SEMH special school in Eastleigh, set to open in September 2026, and further specialist places at three other schools from September 2025.

Join the Movement Towards a Smokefree Hampshire!

Smoking remains a significant health challenge in Hampshire, with approximately 118,000 smokers contributing to an estimated £988 million in lost productivity and social and healthcare costs. To combat this, Hampshire County Council has set an ambitious goal: to become a Smokefree County by 2030.

Introducing Smokefree Hampshire: A free and highly effective quit-smoking service available to all residents and those working in the county. Smokefree Hampshire offers free, personalised support tailored to your needs, increasing your chances of quitting successfully.

Why Join the Movement? By quitting smoking, you're not only taking a significant step towards improving your health but also contributing to a healthier, more prosperous community.

Inspired to Quit? Text, I QUIT to 66777 for your free quit kit.

Reporting Highway Problems

Links to report road issues are here:

Missing or damaged signs:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/brokensigns>

Potholes:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/flooding>

Pavement problems:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/paving>

Problems with rights of way:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

When reporting an issue, you'll be sent an email confirming a reference number for the report. If you would like me to follow this up for you then do, please forward that message to me and I will chase for you.