

**The Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting of Lavant Parish Council held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 7:00pm in the Green Room, Memorial Hall, Pook Lane, Lavant.**

**In attendance:** Cllrs. Aldridge, Mayhead, Quest, Tucker, Whincop and Turner.

**Also present:** Clerk, CDC Cllr Brookes-Harmer; Mark Finley

**Public present:** 5

**218. Apologies for absence**

Cllr. Goldsmith; WSCC CLLR Hunt

**219. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Requests.**

None

**220. Public Session.**

An update was provided on CHIL: Paul Basham are doing the technical drawings of the proposals and a walkabout with WSCC will take place on 16th January at 8:30am. A draft document is being created, to apply for funding under the Communities Highway Scheme. Once WSCC are in support, the plans will be taken to the Parish.

A member of the public questioned the progress on electric vehicle charging points. It was recommended that Lavant Parish Council seek the support of WSCC CLLR Hunt, to contest the recently published list of proposed charging points (as discussed at the November meeting) and have Lavant added to this list.

**221. To receive and approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024.**

The minutes were proposed by CLLR Tucker, seconded by CLLR Mayhead, and unanimously APPROVED by the Council. The Chairman signed the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

**222. Update on outstanding actions brought forward from previous meeting.**

- a) Electric Vehicle update – previously discussed.
- b) River Bridge project update – still awaiting final drawings and costings. The cost of prefabricated bridges has been investigated and this is being considered as an alternative, if the initial idea comes in over budget. A decision will be made once all costings have been received.

**223. Brief Q&A from County Councillor on his report affecting this Parish.**

Cllr Hunt was not in attendance, but his report is attached at Appendix A.

**224. Brief Q&A from District Councillor on his report affecting this Parish.**

Cllr Harmer shared his report, as attached at Appendix B; he highlighted a recent presentation at Funtington PC from Portsmouth Water about the future of water meters and how the project will be rolled out over the next 8 years. This presentation will be shared with The Council.

**225. Chairman's Report**

An update was shared from CLLR Goldsmith:

- The LVAA accounts are now up to date. The annual meeting is due and a date needs to be set for this.

-A date needs to be set for refresher GDPR training for the Council with Maureen Chaffe- Data Protection Officer.

-A meeting is to be organised within the community on how to manage Great Elms- this was proposed to be held in March.

-The LVAA are still awaiting a visit from Portsmouth Water to investigate the leak at the allotments.

Defibrillator- this has been delivered and is awaiting ecclesiastical authorisation for installation.

Eastmead parking – this is still yet to be discussed- a meeting needs to be arranged to propose the use of the show home as extra parking.

Southern Water- a decision will be made on the budget available for the sewer lining project on 19th December. Following this, they intend to continue their work down the valley towards Lavant. A member of the public suggested a formal complaint is submitted due to the slow timing of the process. It was concluded that progress *is* being made and the Council will monitor the situation.

School car park- the surveys are complete; the next step is to apply to CDC for planning consent.

Camping on Sheepwash Lane- no update yet. Signs to be purchased/created.

Parish Asset Register- reminder this still needs to be updated.

Replacement marquees- these have arrived.

Footpath signs- these have arrived and will be erected.

## **226. Finance.**

The payments list (Appendix C) was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

## **227. Budget**

The 25/26 Budget was proposed by CLLR Turner and seconded by CLLR Tucker and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED by the Council (Appendix D).

## **228. To comment on and review planning applications and decisions**

- **SDNP/24/04549/TCA.** Notification of intention to fell 2 no. Bay trees (quoted as T2 & T4), 1 no. Oak tree (quoted as T1), 1 no. Sycamore tree (quoted as T3), 1 no. Conifer tree (quoted as T5), 1 no. Holy tree (quoted as T6), 1 no. Acer tree (quoted as T7). *1-2 Elm Cottages , A286 Sheepwash Lane To West Stoke Road, Mid Lavant, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0BH*

After consideration, Lavant Parish Council does NOT SUPPORT this application and requires further rationale for such wholesale felling of trees in a conservation area – especially regarding the oak.

- **LV/24/02579/TPA.** Crown lift by up to 5m (above ground level) on 2 no. Norway Maple trees (T9 and T17), 3 no Beech trees (T11, T15 and T20). *Land West Of 18 To 20 Roman Fields, Roman Fields, Chichester, West Sussex.*

After consideration, the Council SUPPORTED this application.

## **229. Co-option**

The Council UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the co-option of Mark Finley on to Lavant Parish Council. CLLR Finley signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

## **230. Grant requests**

Two grant requests were made to the Parish Council; one from St Wilfrid's and one from 4Sight. Following discussion, the Council agreed they were not in the position to make decisions on behalf of the entire Parish on which charity public money should/should not be spent on; therefore, it was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to decline both requests.

## **231. Parish Council website domain**

It was agreed that more research was required into whether the benefits of moving to a gov.uk domain warranted the cost implications.

**232. Wildlife Corridors**

The Council unanimously APPROVED the wildlife corridors as set out by CLLR Whincop's proposal (Appendix E).

It was noted that the Council plans to employ the services of a consultant to investigate which parts of the Community Neighbourhood Plan no longer fit into current national legislation.

**233. Community Resilience Planning**

It was agreed that a plan needs to be put in place to support residents in the case of an emergency. The school and church were suggested as possible locations; however, more discussion is needed around the most suitable location/availability of volunteers.

**234. Items for inclusion on next agenda.**

None

**235. Date of next Lavant Parish Council meeting – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:10pm**

**APPENDIX A**  
**WSSC CLLR Hunt**  
**December report 2024**

**Operation Watershed:** This is progressing and in the last two weeks surveys have been carried out on the culverts under the A286 (by the junction with the Chilgrove Road) and the stream that runs down from those culverts to the River Lavant. As well as a drainage survey on the drains in Fordwater Road, adjacent to Lower Road and Church Farm. I am now awaiting reports on both projects from our Op. Watershed Team. The Chairman was able to attend the meeting at the A286 on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. *(Note: Apologies to Louise Tucker for the diverted traffic going along Pook Lane when Fordwater Road was closed. I am still pursuing highways to get this changed in future).*

- **Drains by Memorial Hall.** I was asked – as a precautionary measure – if I could be asked for these to be cleaned. I have put in a request but as they are on a cleaning cycle (and currently not blocked) I think they will say that they need to stick to the cleaning cycle. I will keep chasing this.
- **Replacement Bollard.** There was a request from a resident in Mid Lavant to have the bollard replaced at the end of the flint wall by the road (as you head south). Unfortunately we no longer replace bollards like this one. The purpose of the bollard is so that its reflective surface will warn motorists of the proximity of the end of the wall to the road. I have suggested to the Chairman that maybe the Lavant Volunteers would kindly consider fixing a red reflective triangle to the end of the wall, which would be equally effective. I'm sure this could be done safely from the verge, even using something like 'No Nails' to make it simple. Just an idea.
- **Community Road Safety Team.** An appointment has been arranged for myself and Mike Dare (Highways Engineer) to meet representatives of your Road Safety Team on 16<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the groups proposals.
- **County Council Budget - Public Consultation.** Just a reminder that this consultation (outlined in my November report) runs until Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December, so don't miss your opportunity to have your say. The consultation can be found at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/budget](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/budget). An Easy Read version of the consultation is also available. Anyone without access to the internet [can visit a library](#) or [family hub](#) to complete the consultation. For anyone needing further support completing an online form, help can be arranged from a digital volunteer. Alternatively, people can request a printed version is sent to them, with a freepost return envelope, by calling **01243 777 100**.

**APPENDIX B**  
**Lavant Parish council ward report**  
**December 2024**

Report author: Joseph Brookes-Harmer  
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Welcome to the December edition of your ward report. It is hard to believe that we are already at the end of 2024. It has been yet another incredibly busy year. On behalf of myself and Chichester District Council, I would like to wish everyone a wonderful Christmas and New Year, and I look forward to working with you in 2025.

**Winter fuel allowance:**

We have been urging pensioners to apply for Pension Credit to boost their income. We are all concerned that those eligible for the state pension could be missing out on payments, which could give them cash and provide access to the Winter Fuel Payment. We are especially keen to raise awareness following a government announcement that only those receiving Pension Credit, or other means tested benefits, will now be eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment. The deadline to apply for Pension Credit and still receive the Winter Fuel Payment is 21 December 2024.

To find out how to apply, people need to visit: [www.gov.uk/pension-credit](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit). If someone needs assistance, our Supporting You team are more than happy to help. They just need to visit: [www.chichester.gov.uk/supportingyouteam](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/supportingyouteam); Email: [supportingyou@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:supportingyou@chichester.gov.uk) or Call: 01243 534860.

**Community orchard initiative:**

We have also opened the second round of the Tree Chichester District scheme's Community Orchard initiative. Community groups and parish councils are being encouraged to apply for a share of the £9,000 funding by 17 January 2025 to help pay for trees and items such as stakes, cages and tree ties. The funding will be issued on a first come, first served basis — and all planting must be completed by the end of March 2025. Those wishing to apply should request an application form by emailing: [treescheme@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:treescheme@chichester.gov.uk)

**Chichester District Council App:**

Around this time of year, and on the run up to Christmas, we often experience severe weather, which can sometimes disrupt our waste and recycling services. This is why the app is so useful. If you have your notifications on, personalised updates can be received on waste and recycling collections. This means that updates can be received if crews are running late, and it allows notifications of planned changes to collections – such as any changes to collection dates over the Christmas period. The app also allows people to view their personalised waste and recycling dates and provides recycling advice and helps you to identify which items should go in which bins.

Thousands of residents are already benefitting from this service. The app allows you to complete 'Report It' forms for issues such as street cleaning and fly tipping, or even to request a new bin. It also allows you to find your nearest facilities, such as recycling centres, car parks and public toilets. To access this, all you need to do is visit either the Apple app store or the Google Play store and search for the Chichester District Council app.

You can also find out more about this at: [www.chichester.gov.uk/chichesterdcapp](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/chichesterdcapp)

**Citizen's advice bureau:**

Please do not forget about the drop-in service that is available to anyone who may need help and advice, this is available from East Pallant House that operates Monday-Friday 10.00-4.30 (available for drop-ins 10am-1pm)

**Events:**

The Christmas market will arrive in North Street and East Street on 7 December and will stay until 15 December. It will feature a range of entertainment and food stalls, plus a Santa's Grotto. The market is being

organised by external company Bray Associates, with support from our council, and will run 9am-5.30pm every day except Thursday 12 December (9am-7pm) and Sunday 8 and 15 December (10am-4pm). The Novium Museum has also arranged an indoor market for the first time on Saturday 30 November.

Midhurst is holding its light switch on event on Friday 6 December, with the event running from 5pm until 8pm; including live music, fairground rides and late-night shopping. While Petworth's Christmas Cracker event takes place on Saturday 7 December from 11am until 7pm with a variety of stalls and musical entertainment throughout the day, with the light switch on taking place around 6pm.

We are offering a range of parking offers over the Christmas period. Customers using the MiPermit app will be able to take advantage of a weekend offer — if they select two hours during weekends in December, they will receive a third hour for free. This will apply across the majority of council car parks except the Avenue de Chartres car park in Chichester. In addition, there will be free Sunday parking in Avenue de Chartres car park in Chichester during December.

As you will have seen, there are plenty of festivities taking place across the district in December, including a range of activities that we have arranged at The Guildhall in Priory Park to complement the Chichester Christmas Market. There is something for everyone – from a family pantomime, through to silent discos. You can find a full list of events and details at: [www.chichester.gov.uk/article/39314/Events-in-Chichester-s-Priory-Park-will-make-Christmas-magical](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/article/39314/Events-in-Chichester-s-Priory-Park-will-make-Christmas-magical)

Please also visit: [www.chichester.gov.uk/countdowntochristmas](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/countdowntochristmas) for more events for all the family.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can help in any way.

With my best wishes,  
Joseph Brookes-Harmer



**APPENDIX D**  
 APPROVED Budget 25/26

<b>TO ACHIEVE A BALANCED BUDGET</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Balance b/f	£119,774.00	£87,103.87
annual precept	£47,875.32	£53,992.32
grants		
village green donations		
CIL receipts		
other income		
<b>Receipts</b>	<b>£47,875.32</b>	<b>£53,992.32</b>
<b>Total Receipts plus Balance b/fwd</b>	<b>£167,649.32</b>	<b>£141,096.19</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<b>Parish Clerk</b>		
Clerks Salary	£21,432.32	£20,023.20
Payroll costs	£100.00	£102.50
Home Working Allowance	£360.00	£0.00
<b>SUB TOTAL - PARISH CLERK</b>	<b>£21,892.32</b>	<b>£20,125.70</b>
<b>Administration</b>		
postage stationary admin	£300.00	£200.00
telephone	£200.00	£100.00
heat/light	£0.00	£0.00
travel mileage	£150.00	£150.00
Audit Fees	£900.00	£1,000.00
GDPR & Data Protection	£35.00	£200.00
chairman's allowance	£200.00	£200.00
council room hire	£625.00	£500.00
neighbourhood watch	£150.00	£0.00
insurance	£1,250.00	£1,500.00
Software packages/Scribe/Hugo Fox/Scanstation	£1,550.00	£2,000.00
pubs/subs/salc/nalc/wsalc/airs/printer ink	£850.00	£850.00
Councillor/Clerk training	£650.00	£500.00
IT Equip	£100.00	£500.00
Website/Lavant News	£250.00	£0.00
Elections	£500.00	£500.00
<b>SUB TOTAL - ADMIN</b>	<b>£7,710.00</b>	<b>£8,200.00</b>
<b>Grounds and Maintenance</b>		
play ground maintenance	£750.00	£1,000.00
playground inspection	£100.00	£150.00
Natural environment and tree maintenance.	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
grounds maintenance	£1,923.00	£6,000.00
general maintenance (bus shelter etc)	£3,000.00	£6,500.00
equipment - tractor	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
legal fees	£1,750.00	£500.00
emergency plan	£0.00	£500.00
lavant volunteers	£1,000.00	£1,025.00
fuel	£2,000.00	£2,050.00



bridge project	£0.00	£0.00
<b>SUBTOTAL - GROUNDS &amp; MAINT</b>	<b>£16,023.00</b>	<b>£23,225.00</b>
<b>Other Costs</b>		
litter and dog bins	£500.00	£512.50
street lights	£150.00	£153.75
other spending / legal	£1,000.00	
Jubilee/ Coronation Costs	£0.00	£0.00
Memorial Hall works	£0.00	£0.00
Village Fete	£100.00	£100.00
credit card fraud payment	£0.00	£0.00
Highways works	£0.00	£0.00
Other expenditure	£500.00	£5,000.00
<b>SUB TOTAL - OTHER COSTS</b>	<b>£2,250.00</b>	<b>£5,766.25</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£47,875.32</b>	<b>£57,316.95</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£47,875.32</b>	<b>£57,316.95</b>

**NOTES**

Taxbase (from Chichester DC)	715.70	776.5
Average Council Tax for BAND D	£66.89	£73.81
Cost per week	£1.29	£1.42
Increase per week		

## APPENDIX E

### Strategic Wildlife Corridors in Lavant Parish 10 December 2024 (Proposer: Richard Whincop)

#### Background

The term 'wildlife corridor' is typically used to refer to any linear feature in the landscape that can be used for migration or dispersal of wildlife. Wildlife or *biological corridors* offer the possibility of linking habitats and reducing the isolation of populations.

There is some variation in how the term is interpreted. Chichester District Council has developed broad areas called Strategic Wildlife Corridors (SWCs) and published maps which show them extending to the boundaries of South Downs National Park (SDNP). Part of the SWC along Centurion Way already lies within Lavant Parish.

South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) is doing a lot of work to promote hedgerows, waterways etc. as wildlife habitats but does not use the broad SWC concept within the park. In its position at the border of CDC and SDNPA, LPC is in a unique position to liaise and encourage the two authorities to take a common view of wildlife corridors.

LPC also has an opportunity to link together CDC SWCs to the southeast and southwest of the Parish and add further areas such as along the River Lavant. This would be in line with our environmental policy, with its stated aim to promote biodiversity and to *'increase opportunities for nature to thrive on the assets it owns or manages.'*

Goodwood Estate also has a strong sustainability policy and has recently carried out significant tree planting. This includes an area along the permissive path to the north of New Road, which could form part of an east-west SWC in the south of the Parish.

Introduced with support from CDC, SWCs within the parish would carry a certain weight in planning and help to determine areas not suitable for new housing or road development.

Assistance is currently available from CDC for establishing SWCs areas that adjoin those of CDC. Grants are available for planting/thickening hedges, adding dead hedges, barn owl boxes etc. Finance is also available for local landowners to develop habitats.

Dead hedging is best laid between October and May, so an application early in the New Year 2025 would enable a first phase in Lavant to go ahead in the spring. Dead hedge stakes and binders, purchased by CDC from a business in West Dean, are laid in sections in a series of sessions. CDC can oversee and give some help, but we would need to provide volunteers.

#### Aims and objectives

- Survey and map natural habitats and wildlife species within the parish; this would include ancient woodland, SSIs, TPO's, ponds and waterways, bat flightlines, sightings of newts etc.
  
- Liaise with CDC, SCNP and Goodwood Estate to coordinate SWC's across the parish and in adjacent areas. This would include working towards a common definition of SWCs and striving to integrate adjacent corridors so that they operate across administrative boundaries.
  - Outline proposed SWC's within Lavant parish
- Review management of Public Open Spaces (POSs) within the parish with a view to their role in the wider network of SWCs. Here we can follow the lead of other local parishes such as which are developing wildflower areas within Village Greens and other open spaces.
  - Link and enhance existing natural habitats within the parish. This can be through thickening existing hedgerows, as well as adding new hedgerows and dead hedges.
    - Encourage local landowners to consider enhancing habitats adjoining SWCs.
- Publicise maps, surveys and local SWCs to increase local engagement and environmental awareness.

#### Actions:

Public Open Space Management  
Village Green

Develop a dead hedge along western border of Lavant Village Green. This would link the habitats at the Village Pond and the River Lavant with Great Elms to form a wildlife corridor linked with that of CDC along Centurion Way.

Introduce cutting management to promote wildflower areas along the perimeter of the Green, thereby enhancing the wildlife corridor. Spaces would be left for benches and access points. At cricket matches slightly thicker vegetation would help to stop the ball and prevent it bouncing into the road.

#### Village Pond Area

Establish a management plan that will encourage wildflowers and protect endangered wildlife such as amphibians. Recommendations by pond experts:

- Leave the area surrounding the pond uncut from March to October.
- Cut the existing pathway (1m width) but leave the area adjoining the pavement for amphibians etc. Wildlife then recognises human track and remain in their territory.

#### Playground

Manage cutting to enhance wildflowers and wildlife habitats. Leave the banks with just a March and September cut and collect.

Liaison with CDC, SDNPA and Goodwood

- Arrange for Mark McManus (*CDC Strategic Wildlife Corridors Project Officer*) to meet Lavant Volunteers at the Green to explain the reasons for introducing dead hedging in the western edge and for introducing controlled cutting for specific areas within POSs within the Parish.
- RW to arrange a meeting with Sophia Llewelyn (Goodwood Estate Project Manager – Sustainability) to discuss liaising with Goodwood on SWCs
- RW to arrange a meeting with SDNPA representatives Lewis Ford or Kevin Wright to discuss establishing SWCs in the parish and liaising with CDC

#### Future developments

##### Great Elms

When developing the management plan for Great Elms we should think about its potential role as SWC.

We might consider:

- thickening the existing native hedgerow (funding is available for this).
- encourage wildflowers, wildflower plugs, areas of yellow rattle, red bartsia.
  - Introduce Mats or tins as reptile shelters.

##### River Lavant

Look at establishing a wildlife corridor along the river, linking to adjoining areas where possible (e.g. St. Nics and St. Mary's graveyards), and forming part of east-west and north-south SWCs.

##### Lavant Gap

Look at extending a wildlife corridor south along Hacket's Rue.

#### Appendix 1:

##### Village Green Wildflower areas

##### Aldwick

In 1995 Aldwick Green was officially registered as a "Village Green". It is managed by the Aldwick Green Conservation Society whose work party members have laid paths, kept the drainage ditch clear, planted trees, hedges and wildflowers including Daffodils, Bluebells, Crocus and Aconites. The Snowdrop Walk and Bluebell Wood have become spring spectacles. A new wildflower area was recently planted with Yarrow, Geum, Teasel, Red Clover, Black Knapweed, Meadow Buttercup, Ox-eye Daisy, Meadow Clary, Red Campion, Sneezewort and Lady's Bedstraw and meadow grasses from Kew gardens were sown. The addition of nests, bat, lacewing/butterfly and bee boxes, bug hotels and dead hedges has encouraged a wide variety of birds and

insects and the sound of the resident woodpeckers and tawny owls can often be heard. Egrets and kingfishers have also been sighted.

#### East Broyle village green

Last autumn tonnes of earth were brought in to build protective banks, known as bunds, around the East Broyle village green. They were sown with grass seed, and that was that – or so the residents thought. The past few weeks, though, have seen the plain green bunds transformed by a succession of wildflowers bringing colour and scent (breathe in and think of chamomile tea), attracting bees and butterflies and a host of other winged and creeping wildlife. All these flower seeds were lying dormant in the imported soil but now their chance has come! Red and white champions, some pretty mauve cut-leaved geraniums, the little white stars of lesser stitchwort creeping among yellow bobbles of black medick, trefoils and teasels, clover and yarrow ... the list goes on. Most exciting were spires of weld, used as a natural yellow dye, and the beautiful pink-purple corncockle.

Other examples of Wildflower areas in Village Greens in West Sussex include Storrington, Woodgate nr. Pulborough, Warnham, Pease Pottage and East Preston.