

**Annual Parish Meeting**  
**Charlton Down Village Hall**  
**Tuesday 1st May 2018 at 6.45pm**

**Draft Minutes**

Present: Mark Simons, Chair (MS), Carol Matthews (CM), Keith Beeson (KB), Amanda Edwards (AE), Richard East (RE), Gill Reese (GR), Peter White (PW), Sandie Woodrow (SW), Tim Yarker (TY) and Iain Young (IY)

In attendance: Sarah Davies (Acting Clerk) and 1 member of the public

1. To receive apologies for absence  
MS opened the meeting. No apologies had been received.
2. To approve the minutes from the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017.  
KB proposed accepting the minutes. CM seconded. Majority in favour.
3. Report by Mark Simons, Chair of Charminster Parish Council on the Council's activities in the past year (See attached)
4. Comments, observations and suggestions from electors to the Councillors.  
None

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.52pm

## Chairman's Report 2017/8

There never seems to be a quiet year for the parish council and this last one certainly wasn't. However, is probably a good thing – it keeps it interesting. The last year has thrown up some big issues - with the biggest of these being the issue of development pressures, with both planning applications to deal with and consultations on the emerging local plan. No doubt this will be the biggest topic for the coming year.

The parish council and residents took a strong position against the speculative proposals on the Strawberry Fields for 120 houses. Despite being supported by the planning officers, respite has been given (for now) with the most recent planning committee refusing the application. However, it is likely to return in some form or another (either as an appeal or alternative application) but whatever the final outcome every effort was made to highlight the negative impacts of this proposal.

A new proposal by Wyatt Homes has been submitted for a further 52 homes at the back of the site, adjacent to Wanchard lane. This application was discussed at a recent public meeting and, whilst the proposals overall are more acceptable than the Strawberry Fields, the parish's concerns over the traffic accessing the site from Weir View have been raised with the District Council.

Meanwhile the local plan preparation continues with a further round of public consultation due later this summer.

Highway issues have always been high on the parish and village agenda and the last 12 months have been no different to normal. After many years of battling the speed limit on the C12 was finally reduced from 50 to 40mph. This was a significant success in a time when very few speed limit changes are progressed. It does already seem to have had an impact on the traffic speeds and potentially resident's safety. Also after many years of lobbying and discussion the county council have come forward with a proposal for a community led 20mph speed limit zones in two areas of the village and the parish council have agreed to go ahead with these. In the past year the parish council have also had a new gateway feature installed at Charlton Down, increased our ability to deploy our SIDs, cleared the entrance to improve the visibility for the cricket club/open spaces, supported Speedwatch, just to mention a few of the many highway things going on in the parish.

Progress on some areas have been less positive. The cycleway footway between Charlton Down and Charminster being progressed by the county council has been slow and difficult. We remain hopeful that this important project will go ahead. The North street footpath, where the parish council bought a strip of land has been equally frustrating. Whilst the county council have agreed to create the footway they have passed the responsibility of getting planning permission back to the parish council.

The parish council has been actively supporting local organisations with donations to: Charminster Village Hall, the Pre-school for its garden project and the Church for tree work.

Meanwhile, development progresses on Charminster Farm with the new community hall making slow but steady progress.

All these things have been achieved whilst keeping strong bank balances despite now having significant assets to manage. By careful management we have ensured our parish precept remains at an affordable level – quite an achievement.

Finally, a big thank you to our elected representatives for their efforts to enhance the village as a place to live, and to the clerk/financial officer for their hard work and for stepping into the breach when our previous clerk resigned. And also particular thanks to members who have stood on the council and stood down in the last year. Further this year we lost a strong supporter of the council and its achievements, with the passing of John Masters. He did a lot of work in the parish for little recompense.

We now look forward to the coming year and all it brings.

M. Simons  
Chairman May 2018