

Minutes of the Management Committee of Charney Hall & Field Trust

Virtual Zoom meeting 9th February 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present	Trustees	
	Neil Dobson (Chair)	Table Tennis Group
	Christine Trotman (Treasurer)	Village College
	Annabel Brown (Secretary)	Elected Village representative
	Mary Castle	Parish Council representative
	Lucy Gildersleeves	St. Peter's PCC representative
	David Jones	Elected Village representative
David Sibbert	History Group representative	
	Members of the Public	
	Trevor Brown	Parish Clerk
Apologies	Evelyn Campbell	Parish Council representative
	Bruce Royan	Field Safety Officer

CHAFT trustees agreed that CHAFT may hold Trustee Management meetings either in person or virtually using meetings software (such as Zoom). CHAFT trustees shall collectively make the decision in advance on in-person or virtual in respect of any given meeting, and the chosen medium shall be clearly identified on the agenda and communicated to the local community so that members of the public wishing to attend may have access as appropriate in person or virtually on request to the CHAFT secretary. The minutes of Trustee Management meetings, whether held in person or virtually, shall be made available on the website. CHAFT delegated working parties may meet in whatever method the members of said working party feel is best suited to their operation, but shall report back to CHAFT trustees at regular intervals on the progress of their work.

1. Apologies for absence – Evelyn Campbell and Bruce Royan
2. Declaration of interests – none
3. Approval of Minutes of the Management Committee held in Virtual Zoom on 17th November 2021
Proposed LG/ Seconded DJ Agreed
4. Matters Arising from the Minutes not otherwise on the Agenda
 - a) Stanford FC request – ND reported that he had sent an email to the club explaining that there is no parking or changing facilities and therefore the field would be unsuitable for their needs. (as discussed at the last meeting)
5. Financial Update (CT) – reports were circulated prior to the meeting and no questions were asked. ND asked about the source of the £1000 received from the Parish Council, CT explained that this was the 2021/22 towards the felling of the Aspens. CT also reported that CHAFT had received a further Restriction Grant of £2,667 making the total received £30,574. LG reported that last amount of Fete money had now been received and will shortly be transferred to CHAFT.
ND noted that funds in excess of £20,000 were held in HSBC current account and wondered whether some of this should be moved to acquire more interest. CT explained that trustees

had agreed to leave it there as interest rates were so low at the time but since there has recently been an interest rate rise she would investigate whether it should now be transferred.

6. Woodland Renovation Project Update (LG/ND) – ND reported the woodland group have met regularly and that the replanting programme will be started next week with safety tape installed, zones and paths marked out using eco-friendly spray paint (which is water based and will biodegrade quickly). 250 whips of Birch, Alder and Oak will be planted plus 50 Holly, Hazel and Hornbeam (to add colour and interest). The number of whips was reduced from the number (400) required by the Felling Licence as the area felled was smaller than recorded by the Forestry Commission. LG noted that the stakes will be colour coded so that it will be easy to identify the species planted.

The poles are in place for the dry hedging which will be a fantastic environment for wildlife. The actual planting of the whips will start over half-term and notices will go out via Charney Chatter and the Village Facebook Page. Volunteers are asked to register their interest through charneychaft@gmail.com so that the numbers of people on each day can be regulated. AB will report responses to Stephanie Wright and Neil Dobson for collating. There will be clear guidance to ensure safety when using tools and the areas for planting will be clearly marked out. A safety checklist will be completed for each session.

A small area enabling children and families to take part in planting whips and creating of hedgehog boxes will be left for the end of half-term.

ND thanked Stephanie and John Wright for all the hard work they have already done to facilitate the planting programme. He also noted that the hedgerow along the residential side of the field had been cut back.

ND noted that on-going maintenance is an issue especially controlling the aspen suckers. LG reminded Trustees the aspen suckers that are growing on the Bridle Path Ditch banks were not chemically treated according to Trustees wishes.

The Cairn for the Platinum Jubilee, which was agreed at the last meeting was discussed at the JLG, will make another wonderful habitat for wildlife.

LG noted that the Biodiversity Report for Charney Wick Ditch will be put on hold until the ownership of the Charney Field, CWD and the Bridle Path is clarified by the Charity Commission as this is expensive. CHAFT cannot put together a maintenance plan until this has been done. Hopefully this will all be resolved by October (prime time for carrying out maintenance work with minimal disturbance to wildlife is between October and February). Although this was very frustrating no work has been done on CWD recently and hopefully it can wait until ownership can be established and the Biodiversity Report prepared. AB noted that presumably emergency work could be carried out in conjunction with the PC should it be necessary.

7. Events – LG noted that the Fete date is set for 3rd September 2022 as agreed in our October Meeting. She reported that the Parish Council and the Church had met with Manor Trustees to discuss issues relating to the village. The Manor Representatives seemed to be keen to be part of the planning group for the Fete. This would only be appropriate if the Fete was to be held on Manor Grounds (which seems unlikely. Manor Trustees could be invited to contribute. MC felt that as the Fete is a fundraiser for CHAFT and the Church that it was not appropriate for the Manor to be part of the planning group. The mood of the meeting was that the Manor should not be involved if the Fete was not to be held on Manor land. Jubilee Week was also discussed (2nd-5th June). Some kind of tea party would seem to be appropriate. Any discussion of arrangements needs to include The Chequers. If a road closure is necessary an application needs to be made sooner rather than later. TB was

invited to comment and felt the representatives from the Manor were new trustees and wanted to be involved in the village. He also noted that the Joint Liaison Group decided that David Roberts would organise a meeting to plan Platinum Jubilee Events to which all interested parties would be invited. ND asked if the new villagers who volunteered at the last Fete would want to be involved. LG thought that this was likely and desirable. LG noted that in the last meeting it was mooted that a cream tea event would be organised in the spring. MC felt this was too soon for older residents who were still anxious in regard to Covid-19 infection and had not yet returned to the hall for Coffee Morning. AB felt that this would require the same volunteers would be likely to help out at a Village Street Party (Platinum Jubilee) and this might be asking too much of the same people. LG repeated her (request voiced in the last meeting) that if any trustees have any ideas for events to please email them to her.

8. Hall Update (CT/DJ) – Report circulated prior to the meeting.

ND felt that an ISDN line might be too expensive to install. CT said that we had been offered a copper to copper connection. She queried that there is a fibre connection at the box. LG reported that the Church has broadband by an Openreach connection directly from the telegraph pole to the church. CT says there is evidence that there is already a telephone line. Now that CT has facilitated a mailbox and therefore a Royal Mail listing for the Hall we should be able to ascertain what the broadband speed might be for the Hall. ND felt that we would need 70Mbps to be useful and shouldn't proceed unless we can have an internet connection rather than an ISDN line. CT said she will go back to BT. Action CT

DJ reported that he will update the Health and Safety Report. Action DJ

He noted that some outside painting is necessary to the Hall. The low-level work will be able to be done by the maintenance team but the higher work will require a tower to be erected and will be more expensive. ND suggested that the panelling in the hall could be painted a lighter colour. CT noted that redecorating the inside of the hall would be about a year away as there is possible work to the boarding to be done to improve the acoustics. ND noted that Letcombe Hall has had some specialist work done to improve the sound quality and he will pass on any helpful information to CT.

9. Field Update (DS) – Oral Report

a) New Bench – DS reported that the bench had arrived and is likely to be installed in the next few days. Many thanks to Amanda Graham for donating this.

a) Field Safety Oral Report (BR) – Report circulated prior to the meeting

DS noted that the fencing to the top of the field is not in a good condition and may need some work in the future although this may not be our responsibility.

10. Safeguarding (AB)- Reporting Form circulated prior to the meeting

AB suggested that some reference to the form should be attached to the Safeguarding Policy displayed in the Hall. A copy of the form could be supplied there but LG suggested that could be potentially difficult as it is important that the information supplied should not be in the Public view. AB agreed and said that electronic copies of the form should be available. AB will put a note on the Safeguarding Policy that the form is available. Also, there should be note on the form that when completed form should be passed to the Safeguarding Lead or another Trustee for action as soon as possible. Action AB

11. Parish Council Minutes – link provided for trustees on Agenda.

Points will be covered under 12.

12. Joint Liaison Group Minutes- link provided on Agenda. (points below relate to JLG Minutes)

6e. Vehicle access from Bridle Path to Field – PC noted that one frontage believes that

there is no right of vehicle access from the Bridle Path. CHAFT believes it has right of access but have stated that this right will not need to be exercised as long as there is access via Buckland Road.

- 6h. David Roberts has agreed to facilitate an introduction for ND to the Hanney Flood Group in order to pick up on the advice given. It was noted that CHAFT will not be commissioning a biodiversity report until ownership is established because of the expense.
8. Suggestion that part of Charney Field could be used for allotments. ND explained that this would be for 9 allotments and could be placed at the top side of the field which as the area would have to be fenced might help with the rabbit problem. There could be specified that there could be no structures such as sheds or greenhouses placed on the site. DS expressed a view that permission from the Charity Commission would have to be sought as it would restrict public access on an area of the field. ND queried this as he felt it would be only available to Charney Residents but DS felt it would be necessary to get approval. Some discussion took place regarding how much of the field would be involved. AB suggested that it would be better if the area necessary could be marked out on the ground in order to understand the impact it might have. LG agreed because she felt it would impact on plans for the field. AB also suggested the area along the hedgerow by Debar might be a better location. LG suggested that the allotments could be placed in their old site in the grassland beyond the old School site but TB explained that this is leased by Tim Fitzgerald O'Connor at present and he is not willing for it's as allotments. MC felt that it would take up too much of the field. CT agreed. LG suggested the Jubilee Orchard as a possible site and that the Jubilee Orchard trees could be moved to the field– TB confirmed that this is one of the areas the Parish Council is exploring. He said an area of 0.1/0.2 acre is necessary and also suggested he could supply a google map with the area necessary marked on it. DJ thought that area of 10m/40m would be needed that he was not keen on the idea. ND suggested that he and DS could pace it out and investigate the issue of access. LG said that it needed to be brought back to Trustees as a firm proposal at the next meeting.
9. Queen's Platinum Jubilee- Beacons
LG felt that a beacon would not be appropriate especially with the tree planting programme and the desire not to burn fossil fuels. This is in line with the view of the JLG. Agreed
10. Horse Riding on Charney Field – LG suggested direction posts be placed to identify direction of bridle path and footpath. ND reported that Horse Riding is still an issue. One rider when challenged said that she had been using the route from Buckland Road down to the Bridleway for years. He felt that a notice should be placed at the entrance to the track and one at the entrance to the field from the bridleway. AB said that we did not own the track and so would have to ask OCC permission to place a notice.
Suggestions were made that a Kissing Gate could be placed in the gap between the field gate and the fence on Footpath 158/8. ND thought that Kissing Gate on the way to Cherbury Camp was provided by OCC. MC thought it was funded by the Landowner and Parish Council. It was noted that this could make pushchair access difficult. LG was concerned that if we blocked this access riders from the bridleway might then travel across the field to the pathway by the old school site or cut across the woodland. ND noted that most horses appeared to travel from the Buckland

Road to the bridleway. LG thought it was best to start with notices. MC thought that we could talk to OCC about signage as it is their land.

TB noted that Tim Fitzgerald O'Connor leased the land and his permission would need to be sought. ND agreed to do speak to him. Action ND

CT thought the horses from the stables at the end of the village might be using this route and it might be worth talking to them.

13. Management of CHAFT Properties – Governing Document Review

ND recorded thanks to CT for all the work that she has done on this review. CT noted that no decisions can be made until the ownership of the CHAFT properties is resolved by the Charity Commission.

The main consideration is the composition of the Management Committee. It was desirable for all Trustees to have a delegated role. The MC could be made up of all elected members rather than 6 Village Group Representatives plus 2 elected trustees. At present Table Tennis Club, History Group, Village College, PCC and the Parish Council (2) all have representatives. Other village groups have chosen not to have representation (Coffee Morning, Vale Islanders, Ukulele Group). The Village College has been wound up.

AB felt that there should be PCC and PC representation as CHAFT is a village charity and it is useful for groups who have an overview of the village to be involved. ND felt that it would be useful if all trustees accepted a portfolio. CT felt that we should not be too specific in the governing document about required roles. Discussion took place about how many trustees there should be. ND suggested it could be a hybrid of elected and representative Trustees. LG pointed out that even if the Parish Council was allocated only one representative Trustee it could put up a further person for election. She was also concerned about the possible number of co-opted members through the year. CT replied there was no need to change the current situation when 2 may be co-opted. DJ thought that the PC and the church should have a Trustee and that other groups are welcome to join our meetings and join the discussion without being able to vote. A Management Committee of 7 elected Trustees and 2 representative Trustees would give an odd number of Trustees which gives clear voting outcomes. CT noted that if we want to change the Constitution of the Committee of Management then we would need written permission from the Charity Commission plus the agreement of third-party organisations (Village Groups) who nominate trustees in order to move from representative trustees to elected Trustees.

Other changes proposed by the group, which will need agreement of the Trustees and approval at the AGM (but not needing approval of the Charity Commission) are:

- Virtual Meetings – one meeting must involve the physical presence of Trustees but other meetings may be virtual.
- Number of Meetings per annum- an increase from 2-4 per annum as minimum requirement
- Creation of subcommittees and rules – rules and powers to be clarified
- Tightening up the rules around some financial matters

No objections were made concerning the above 4 points but no vote was taken. ND commented that bimonthly meetings would continue although the minimum necessary would be 4.

CT suggested that all existing Village Groups would be written to explaining the proposed changes and asking for their consent. The letter would be composed by the sub-group looking at the Composition of the Management Committee. TB noted that it was important

to explain why these changes were being proposed. Once the responses have been received then these can be discussed at the next meeting when a vote can be taken. Written consent would also be required from the Charity Commission. Action CT/ND/DS

Some frustration was expressed regarding the length of time it was taking to get clarification from the Charity Commission regarding the ownership of CHAFT properties. ND suggested a letter from CHAFT to CC to try to expedite the process. TB noted that the CC does not welcome such communication. He also noted that the question asked of the CC is a joint question from CHAFT and the PC regarding the processes that were followed in 2002 when the land was transferred. He also stated that if CHAFT doesn't want the question asked the letter has to be withdrawn. ND felt it was difficult managing the field while the ownership is not clear. DS felt that the ownership is clear. ND felt that it was better to wait for clarification. MC agreed it is frustrating but it was inappropriate to send further representation to the CC at the present time.

ND referenced the document "Addressing Change- A Positional Statement' which had been attached to 9. He explained that it had been written in preparation for JSG Meeting. He felt that there was not time to discuss it now and that it needed to be tightened up in some areas. Trustees should familiarise themselves with the updated version that will be circulated for the next meeting. Action DS/AB

14. Questions from the Public- none

15. A.O.B - Outstanding Items

- a) Review of Equal Opportunities Policy- AB agreed to look at this. Action AB
- b) Review of Environmental Policy – LS noted that this should be looked at in conjunction with the field safety policy. DS agreed to look at it. Action DS
- c) Updating Google Docs and Trustees Briefing – some discussion took place around this subject. CT said she would update Google Docs Action DS
- d) Footpath 158/8 and horse-riding- already discussed in item 12.
- e) Updating and quality auditing of CHAFT menu on Village Website – some discussion took place around this subject. It was noted that the format of the Meetings menu had been changed. Suggested that all Trustees have at look this and make suggestions at the next meeting. To be put on next Agenda. Action AB
- f) Terms of Reference of Woodland Renovation Group for consideration
- g) Update of Field Safety Policy for consideration
- h) Data audit Action CT
- i) Rabbits on the Field – ND to approach McBains as most of the rabbits appear to be coming from their site. Action ND

16. Next meeting – will be held on Wednesday 6th April at 6.30pm in the village hall unless there is an escalation of Covid19 risks. Agreed

Signed

Date

Minutes submitted by AB on 15.2.22