

Minutes of a Meeting of East Challow Parish Council

Held on Wednesday 13th September 2023 at 19:30, East Challow Village Hall

Public Session

MoP1: Spoke regarding Flood alleviation and asked if there had been any progress.

Members Present:

Chairman Cllr V A Bosley (VB)
Vice-Chairman Cllr F Webb (FW)
Members Cllr B Millar (BM)
Cllr S Terry (ST) [Arrived by 20:00]
Cllr P Barrow (PB)
Cllr A Gregson (AG) [from Item 147.1/23]

Officers None

Public & Press At least 6 including District Cllr Y Constance (YC) who arrived after the start of the meeting.

Meeting Started: 19:30

143/23 To receive apologies for absence. [LGA 1972 s85(1)]

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Cllr T Hayes.

Cllr S Terry also apologised in advance that they would be late to the meeting.

144/23 Declarations of Interests [LA 2011 s31]

144.1/23 To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda

Cllr S Terry – Beavers and Cubs

Cllr P Barrow – also the District Cllr.

144.2/23 To consider requests for Dispensations [LA 2011 s33]

None.

145/23 To approve the minutes of previous council meetings [LA 1972 Sch 12. Para 41(1)]

Proposed updates had not been provided to the RFO to be incorporated. To move both of the below to the next agenda.

145.1/23 Meeting held on 21st June 2023

145.2/23 Meeting held on 12th July 2023

145.3/23 Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda.

None.

146/23 Chairman's Announcements

None.

147/23 Councillor Vacancy

147.1/23 To note VoWHDC has confirmed no election has been called and hear representations from Co-option candidates

Noted.

The chair invited the candidates to say a few words in support of their candidacy.

Candidate Andy Gregson: Spoke of their interest in the village, has lived here over 20 years. Had joined the Parish Council over the years in their fight against development and speeding problems.

Candidate Kiera Bentley: Spoke of the many positions she holds, and that they relocated from Faringdon some 2 years ago.

147.2/23 To approve co-option of 1 councillor to fill the vacant seat.

Resolved: Approved By Majority to co-opt A Gregson.

Cllr Gregson signed their declaration of acceptance of office. In the absence of an officer of the council, the chair of the meeting countersigned the declaration.

148/23 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

148.1/23 Oxfordshire Council Councillor

Appendix A

Comments in addition to the report:

To note that OCC are exploring the re-instatement of a limited bus service covering villages west of Wantage. Also thoughts on Taxi Sharing.

Advised of the Councillor Priority Fundy and that there is £1,000 available for a small project. **[ACTION]** VB to get information.

Cllr Constance asked if any correspondence had been received from Vale from a Mr Travers. No communication had been received.

148.2/23 Vale of White Horse District Councillor

Appendix B

Comments in addition to the report:

Cllr Barrow spoke on the speed of our roadways again and on the B4507 (specifically which runs from Wantage → Childrey). PB also provided an update on:

- the Challow and Childrey Hedgerow Group
- the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal Trust
- survey which would be going out in Challow News regarding a Community Bus Service
- Wantage Hospital
- The state of the Childrey Bridlepath.

149/23 Staffing Matters

149.1/23 To approve appointing members to an interview panel to conduct interviews with the applicants.

Preferred applicant to be appointed at the next meeting or an extra meeting of the Council. Handover with RFO may start prior to the Clerk's formal appointment by the Council to allow them to participate fully should they be appointed.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to appoint ST; BM; PB; FW; VB to the interview panel

Date and time of Village Hall and Councillor availability will define when the interview will be held.

150/23 Planning

To approve response to requests for consultation on applications:

150.1/23 P23/V1784/O - Grove Business Park Downsview Road Wantage OX12 9FF

Hybrid planning application comprising; An outline planning application for demolition of an existing building and development of five buildings (Gateway Building, Blocks A, B,C, and H) and a small food outlet (Block D) to provide up to 28,507 square metres (gross external area) of Use Class E and Use Class B8, together with an a multi-storey car park (14,755 square metres) - gross external area) with all matters reserved with the exception of means of access. A full planning application of the erection of three buildings Blocks E (3,080 square metres), F (2,432 square metres) and G (3,170 square metres) to provide total of 8,682 square metres (gross external area) of Use Class E and Use Class B8 with associated car parking, open space and landscaping.

VB OBJECTED on behalf the council in advance of the meeting.

150.2/23 P23/V1959/S73 - Challow Hill Farm Faringdon Road East Challow Wantage OX12 9PD

Variation of conditions 2 (Approved plans) and 6 (Specified Use) on application reference number P22/V1189/FUL to accommodate larger storage units. (Change of use of agricultural land to a secure storage facility (Class B8))

Resolved: Approve Unanimously to submit the response: NO OBJECTIONS

150.3/23 P23/V1923/HH - First Light 1A Windmill Place East Challow Wantage OX12 9RT

The works consist of single storey rear extension, loft conversion and internal alterations.

VB submitted NO OBJECTIONS on behalf the council in advance of the meeting.

To note responses to requests for consultation on applications submitted under delegated powers:

All of the below were noted.

150.4/23 P23/V1689/HH - 14 Meadow Court East Challow Wantage OX12 9WQ

Conversion of existing car port to an en-suite bedroom and enclosing a walkway to provide a hallway and home office.

ECPC Response: NO OBJECTIONS, we note there may be a legal covenant on the land and presume this will be taken into consideration.

To note planning authority decisions on applications:

All of the below were noted.

150.5/23 P23/V1461/HH - 6 Sarajac Avenue, East Challow, Wantage, OX12 9SA - GRANTED

Two storey side and single storey rear extension & porch (as amended by plans submitted 14 July 2023 showing two storey side extension element reduced in height and set back from front elevation)

ECPC Response: NO OBJECTIONS

150.6/23 P23/V1145/HH - Field View Canal Farm Lane East Challow Wantage OX12 9YQ – GRANTED

Single storey extension.

ECPC Response: NO OBJECTIONS

151/23 To update on the flood alleviation proposal adjacent to LJ & CA Cannings

The neighbouring property owner has reported that they have not had any communication from Vale. The Vale representative (MR Travers) had been informed of the September meeting. It was suggested that Mr Travers be invited to the October meeting.

152/23 Finance 2022-2023

Appendix C

152.1/23 To receive the External Audit Report for the financial year 2022-2023 and agree actions.

Received. It was noted that more care will be taken next year to prevent rounding errors.

152.2/23 To note the conclusion of Audit 2022-2023 has been posted, with rights of inspection during October and November 2023

Noted.

153/23 Finance 2023-2024

Appendix D

153.1/23 To approve the payments lists for August and September 2023

Resolved: Approved Unanimously the payments as listed below:

Total Staff Costs September: **£497.17**

All other August & September Payments:

Voucher No	Date	Supplier	Description	Payment Ref	Net	VAT	Total
54	13/09/2023	Pepler Fencing	Barrier Repair	403069	395.00	79.00	474.00
53	13/09/2023	Safelincs Ltd (The Defib Pad)	Defib Pads	403068	94.57	18.91	113.48
52	13/09/2023	The Sign Shed	Tennis Court Signs	403067	24.99	5.00	29.99
51	13/09/2023	Greenfield Woodwork	Public Art	403066	2000	0	2000
48	13/09/2023	Laura White	Expenses - Various	403063	139.20	0.00	139.20
47	13/09/2023	Starboard Systems Limited	Scribe Accounts	403062	288.00	57.60	345.60
46	13/09/2023	Playsafety Limited	RoSPA Inspection	403061	138.00	27.60	165.60
45	13/09/2023	Parish Online	Subscriptions	403059	45.00	9.00	54.00
44	13/09/2023	Moore	Audit Fees	403058	315.00	63.00	378.00
42	13/09/2023	Jeremy Hanham	Grass Cutting	403056	1185.00	0.00	1185.00
41	13/09/2023	Parochial Church Council of St Nicolas East Challow	Church Clock	403055	250.00	0.00	250.00
40	24/08/2023	Jeremy Hanham	Grounds Maintenance	402851	1274.00	0.00	1274.00
39	23/09/2023	Ionos	Website	DirectDebit	15.00	3.00	18.00
38	23/08/2023	Ionos	Website	DirectDebit	15.00	3.00	18.00
TOTAL					6178.76	266.11	6444.87

The RFO has advised that the clock payment should not be paid as it was part of the fabric of the church.

A letter of advice on this and other matters from OALC was read out. Which contained the following:

You are quite correct the clock is part of the fabric of the church (please see attached advice note which sets out NALCs view on this matter) and therefor the Parish Council should not be contributing to its maintenance as it relates to the affairs of the church. However, if it is proven that the clock belongs to the Parish Council then it should of course be on the asset register, included in the insurance schedule and the Parish Council would need to take full responsibility for its maintenance and safety. In my opinion the proof would need to be something more than a plaque in the church for the Parish Council to take the risk of claiming ownership due to the financial implications of doing so.

The newsletter is a slightly more grey area. I agree it also relates to the affairs of the church but I feel this could come under LGA 1972 s142 (2a) the power to assist another organisation to provide information particularly as I imagine that the newsletter doesn't run at a significant profit. Though your suggestion of paying for advertising rather than a donation makes sense. If the council does wish to continue with a donation this should be resolved on an annual basis after an appropriate application for s137 funds from the church.

Unless the warm spaces initiative is run and organised by the Parish Council you are quite correct this would need to be paid for by a s137 grant and the money paid into the bank account of a constituted organisation. Is there a Womens Institute or other organisation that could act as the over arching body? This type of initiative should in my opinion be supported by the Parish Council but it does need to be done so in a lawful and budgeted manner as it expenditure comes from the public purse.

Finally the Parish Council should not be acting as a banking facility for other village organisations. As per the warm spaces initiative if the events are organised by the parish council then yes this would be an appropriate expenditure but as you indicate this is not the case then the Parish Council should not holding and distributing money in this way. At the very least this has implications for the AGAR as it skews the income and expenditure of the Parish Council and at worst has insurance/financial implications if the Parish Council could be seen as the body behind the events should something go wrong. Does the Parish Council fully risk asses these events and is the money handled in accordance with proper internal controls? It should also be noted that once money is in the Parish Councils accounts it is the councils to with as it wishes (except in the case of clearly defined grants) and not for the donating body to expect access to when it wishes. Again a donation to another appropriate body (such as the WI) could be a solution.

It was agreed that the Council wished to make the payment for the clock and the cheque was signed. It will be held back and entered on the next agenda before being handed over.

The Chairman gave a summary of the Warm Spaces project and that the costs had been borne by a villager to date, and proposed that the Council take this on, and fund themselves, and appropriate power. It was discussed that s137 would be needed for the Warm Spaces Initiative to be run externally, or to be run by the PC with appropriate risk assessments.

The Chair gave details of recent community events, and highlighted that these needed to be formally managed by the PC with appropriate Risk Assessments in order for the parish insurance to be applicable and for the parish council to manage the finances for the events. It was proposed that an EMR be set up to hold the monies raised and for them to be used for the benefit of the community and future events.

[ACTION] RFO/Clerk to enter on the next agenda.

153.2/23 To note the receipts lists for July & August 2023.

17th July 2023: £90 – Interment Costs – Dignity Funerals

07th Aug 2023: £25 – Memorial Permit – Dignity Funerals

22nd Aug 2023: £19.92 – Community Event – The Village

The receipts were noted.

153.3/23 To note the reconciled bank accounts for 24th July & 23rd August 2023 (latest bank statements)

Bank Balances, 23rd August 2023.

Cooperative: £54,353.22

Barclays: £25,803.69

Bank Reconciliation at 23/08/2023		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023	77,462.85
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2023 - 23/08/2023	23,374.14
		100,836.99
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2023 - 23/08/2023	20,680.08
A	Cash in Hand 23/08/2023 (per Cash Book)	80,156.91
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements	
	Petty Cash 23/08/2023 0.00	
	Cooperative 23/08/2023 54,353.22	
	Barclays 23/08/2023 25,803.69	
		80,156.91
	Less unrepresented payments	
		80,156.91
	Plus unrepresented receipts	
B	Adjusted Bank Balance	80,156.91
	A = B Checks out OK	

The balances were noted.

154/23 To consider correspondence received from the Village Hall regarding the grant awarded in June and decision to ask the VH to use the grant to also cover Parish Council bookings and approve any actions.

It was noted that the VH has also submitted a grant application for next year, however on the incorrect form. They have been asked to re-submit on the current form and provide the appropriate documentation. They have applied for £3000.

It was further noted that the PC normally pays £10-£20 per month for village hall bookings, therefore in a regular year the PC would normally grant £2000 and rent £240 (maximum).

The hall was very disappointed that the £2000 awarded this year, needed to also cover the costs of any bookings. The following discussion points were also raised:

- It was proposed that an increase of only £500 would be appropriate, to £2500
- It was confirmed that the VH has always accommodated meetings of the PC when asked.
- It was noted that the next VH committee meeting was scheduled for the 27th September and they looked forward to seeing how the VH will move forwards as the regular committee is standing down.

155/23 **To consider list of allotments, note vacancies, approve any notices to be served on unkempt plots.** **Appendix E**

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to send an additional note on the unkempt plots.

Waiting list to be considered at a later date.

156/23 **To consider a proposal to cover the cost of Challow's Warm Spaces expenses, agree actions.**

NOTE: ECPC does not have powers of competence, this would be an S137 grant, an appropriate body with its own bank account would need to apply for a grant.

Discussed in finance section.

[ACTION] VB and PB to bring proposal to the next meeting

157/23 **To approve purchase of any Salt or Salt Bins (Winter Preparedness)**

[ACTION] PB to ask for reinstatement of previously moved salt bin on the A417 opposite Old School House.

158/23 **To approve attendance at training courses and budget for Councillors and Staff** **Appendix F**

Move to a future meeting.

159/23 **Standing Agenda Items, to receive update and agree actions**

159.1/23 **Parish Cemeteries**

The contractor is aware of the complaints. The PC needs to look at the schedules going forward. The reclaimed land is not being cut. Landscaping of Vicarage Hill Cemetery needs to be done. The Beech hedge at the new cemetery need to have work done – long brambles are overhanging the footpath.

[ACTION] VB to contact contractor again.

159.2/23 **Traffic / Highways including**

- Speedwatch Group Meeting update.

A meeting was held on July 26th between residents to discuss setting up a Speedwatch unit for the village. A presentation was made by David Sibbett who runs Speedwatch in Charney Bassett. To do this for East Challow will require teams of three, one to operate the speed detection apparatus, a second to confirm readings and a third to note make, colour and registration number of offending vehicles. Given that we have persistent speeding through the village mainly in Main St (20-30% vehicles exceed the speed limit despite the presence of the functioning VAS outside the Old School House) but also Letcombe Hill, it was felt that something needed to be done.

However, the comment was made that in comparison with Charney Bassett, the rate of speeding in East Challow is so high that it would be difficult to catch and note down all details for the large number of vehicles that exceed the speed limit. Crest Nicholson have confirmed that they are to supply us with solar-powered SIDs as agreed with Oxfordshire County Council and which should be in place later this year. In addition, we should have a 20 mph speed limit sometime in 2024 for the rest of the village (not Main St which sensibly will remain at 30 mph). The general consensus was therefore that we should wait to see whether the installation of the SIDs slows traffic down. Dickon Green who monitors speed in East Hanney has assured us that SIDs do reduce average speed. We have therefore decided to postpone a decision on setting up Speedwatch for the village until we ascertain how effective these other measure are likely to be.

- HGV's using Vicarage Hill – Update from DCllr.

PB updated the Council on new signage on Letcombe Hill. Sadly there is no weight limit. PB to speak to OCCH re: "Speed Cushion".

Earthline HQ has been contacted, requesting that they keep to the speed limits and avoid travelling in convoy.

- To consider pressing Crest for installation of SIDS and agree actions.

PB has contacted multiple contacts at OCC regarding putting pressure on Crest to install SIDS as soon as possible, there was not more information.

159.3/23 Grounds Maintenance

Contractors have been asked again to cut back the reclaimed land (weeds are taking over again), they have confirmed that it is not in their works schedule.

159.4/23 Public Art

- To receive the draft planning application for the Public Art and approve suitable for submission, approve to pay planning portal costs – likely less than £400, but subject to calculation on application. **Appendix G**

The Planning Application was not available, but an update was provided.

The sub committee met representatives from the Vale to confirm that in the absence of a Clerk all the necessary procedures to comply with a S106 project had been met. This was confirmed and the steps to completion agreed.

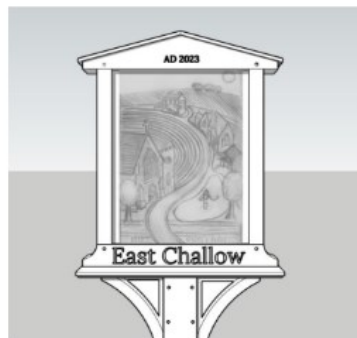
At the last meeting Cllr Hayes was asked to prepare a planning application for approval at this meeting. A scale drawing in DXF format is required so we will have to engage a planning agent. Cllr Hayes has contacted three agents and received their quotes. There are still some items to resolve so it is proposed to approve a planning agent at the October meeting.

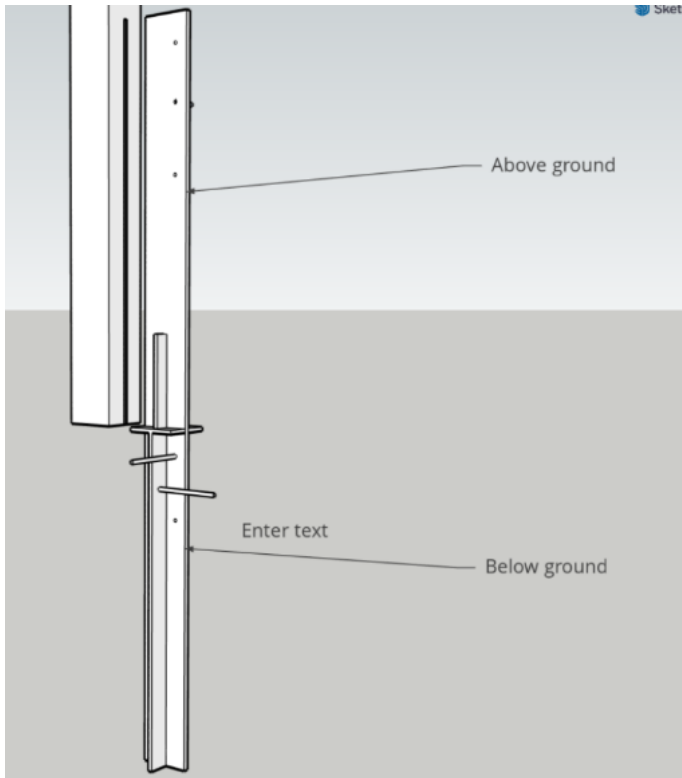
Cllr Hayes has circulated a copy of the revised image for the Suffolk sign which shows a windmill. Cllr Hayes proposes that this image is approved.

The final page of the presentation circulated to councillors over the weekend contains a quotation from the artist. Cllr Hayes proposes that Peter Greenfield quotation #374 dated 17 May 2023 is approved and the RFO raises the order.

Illustration of village centre

- Details include:
- Prominent historical buildings
- Village green & Water pump
- Wilts & Berks canal
- Court hill in distance
- Ridge & Furrowed contours on fields
- Illustration to be carved in wood on both sides in relief Style
- Relief illustration to be painted
- Post and frame to be made from oak, left without finish to acquire a natural silver grey patination.





Proposed Ground fixing

Illustration of a possible footing :
 A galvanized metal footing inserted and bolted into the post above ground.
 Metal footing inserted below ground to prevent the wooden post from decay.

Actual design of footing to be specified by RJ structures.

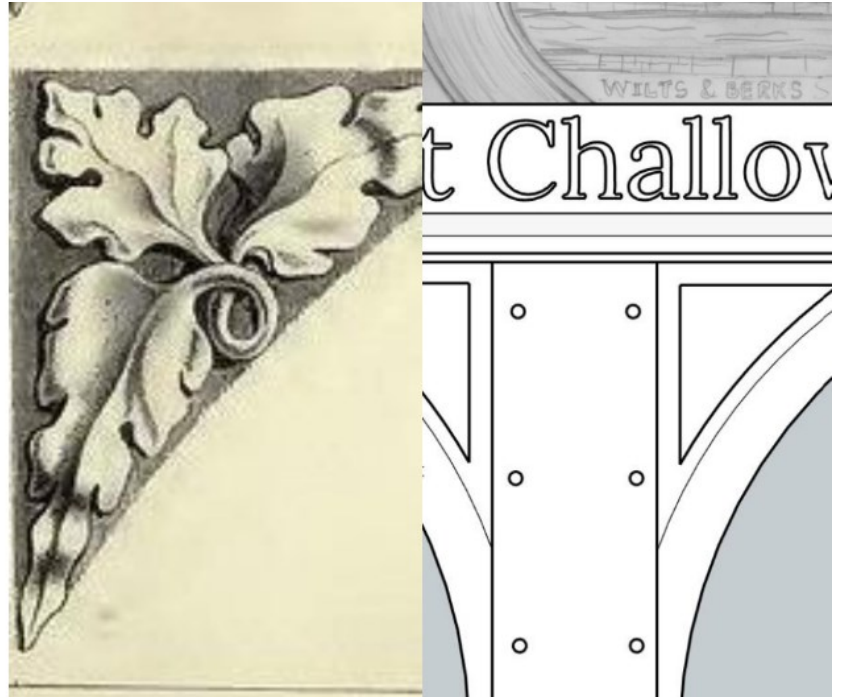
Entrance sign

- Entrance sign
- Location Top of Challow hill
- Central part of the design based on the place names and on a 1761 map of Berkshire by John Roque
- Top and bottom banners have a scroll design.
- These could be possibly painted or left unfinished with the central part to acquire a natural silver grey patination.

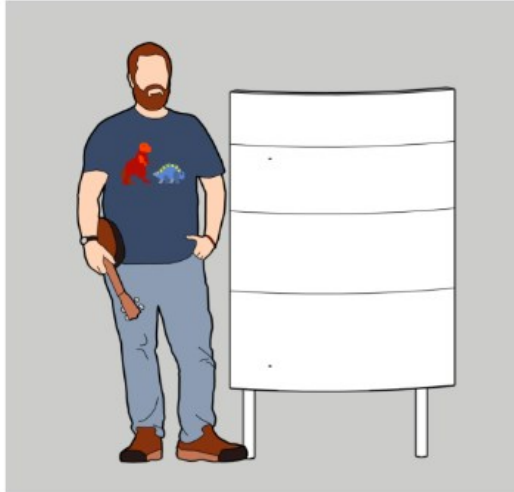


Additional details

- A simple foliage carving in the brackets.(based on a the illustration.)



East Challow entrance sign



Resolved: Approved Unanimously to proceed with the project, budget £2000 for design and consultation, £10,000 for the Suffolk Style Village Sign, £4,500 Entrance sign at the top of the hill.



159.5/23 Waste Recycling

To revisit later in the year.

159.6/23 Recreation Areas

- Pavilion Project

BM brought to the attention of the Council, additional funding he had been made aware of.

- To approve repair of vandalised barrier, budget £294, and approve seeking to recover the costs from the perpetrator.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously. **[ACTION]** RFO to draft letter to perpetrator.

- To receive RoSPA Report and agree actions

Appendix H

A RoSPA inspection took place on Friday 11 August. Cllr Hayes, who attended the inspection, has contacted Wickstead (the manufacturer) to see how much it will cost to reinstate the correct gap between the underside of the carousel and the surrounding paving. They have suggested re-laying the paving but a quotation has not yet been received.

160/23 To receive Correspondence and agree actions or approve response
160.1/23 To approve response to request to consult on Unpaid Work from the South Central Probationary Service **Correspondence 1**

To seek advice if Childrey Lane could be used for this, the VH are also looking for internal painting.

160.2/23 To consider a request from Challow & Childrey Cricket Club to meet with the PC to consider their updated Business Plan for the benefit of the club and the community.

The Clerk/RFO was asked to respond with; Thank you for the invitation. Please can we have a copy of the updated business plan?

160.3/23 To consider a request from OCC regarding tree planting projects to expand the county's tree cover and promote social and environmental benefits **Correspondence 2**

A good idea – please can we have more information.

160.4/23 To consider a request to contribute to the repairs to Childrey Bridlepath which OCC are currently planning to repair. **Correspondence 3**

The Council declined the request.

161/23 **Matters for Future Discussion**

- To consider a new salt bin?
- New Waste bin opposite Goodlake House
- No green light in the Defib Case, pads need replacing still.
- Speed on the B4507.

162/23 To agree list of items from this meeting to be included in the next edition of Challow News

- Date of the next meeting
- Fly Tipping
- Dog Fouling
- Autumn Clear up
- Considerate Parking
- Welcome new Cllrs.

163/23 To agree date of the next meeting: 11th October 2023

Confirmed.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at **21:55**.

Signed Chair..... **Date**.....