Minutes of Cheselbourne Parish Council at Cheselbourne Village Hall 7pm on 4th January 2016

1 **Apologies**: Cllr Warren, Cllr Roberts.

**Present**: Cllr Greenwood (Chair), Cllr Hotblack, Cllr Bere and Cllr Timlin.

**In attendance**: M Treccani-Chinelli (Clerk) and several members of the public.

Cllr Greenwood explained that Cllr Warren has to be asked to resign his position on the council, having missed three meetings this is a legal requirement. She also reported that there are two vacant positions on the Parish Council and if anyone was interested or knew anyone who was interested to get in touch with her to find out more.

2 **Open session**: Cllr Greenwood explained that the open session was now be at the beginning of the meeting so that any issues raised could be added to the agenda and discussed during the meeting.

A member of the public explained that weeds from the stream bed were not being disposed of responsibly but left on the bank and that during recent bad weather they had washed downstream and blocked culverts leading to the flooding of the road and several vulnerable properties.

Cllr Greenwood reported that she had investigated possible solutions that day and reported the information she had been given.

* The environment agency and district council have no responsibility for the stream as they deal with rivers and that it is comes under county council regulations as it is considered an ordinary water flow.
* The stream peaks twice firstly due to rainfall then a later peak as the withy beds release water upstream once they can absorb no more.
* Clearing of the stream bed is important but due to mild weather weeds have continued to grow and must be tackled at the right time of year.
* The County Councils powers are limited but if anyone needed advice the person to speak to at the County Council is Gary Cleaver.
* There is a leaflet available called ‘Living on the Edge’ which explains how homeowners with the stream running through their property can help prevent flooding and their rights and responsibilities.

Some members of the public said they had sought Gary Cleavers advice and it had been very useful.

A member of the public asked if the leaflet could be distributed to homeowners in the village.

Another member of the public asked if the withy beds could be cleared of debris as this washes downstream too. Cllr Bere explained that permission is needed to dredge the stream and homeowners must apply for it from the county council and the same would apply to the withy beds but these are a natural feature. Cllr Bere reported that the Council used to dig out the stream but had stopped doing it. A member of the public asked whose responsibility it was to clear piles of weeds left round the village after the heavy rain had washed them downstream and another member of the public asked if they should be cleared away or if it was ok to leave them. Another member of the public asked could the council do anything about getting the weeds cleared?

Another member of the public asked if these events are to be more frequent because of climate change could a response team be organised as they would be willing to help others.

Cllr Timlin suggested a letter from the parish council be distributed with the leaflet and that people who were unable to maintain their section of the stream should be able to ask for help. Cllr Greenwood said that if the village were to form a clearing group there should be no consequences as long as the landowner’s permission was sought.

It was decided that the leaflet and an accompanying letter from the parish council would be distributed to everyone living beside the stream.

Names and numbers of people who agreed to be called in an emergency were collected at the suggestion of Cllr Timlin as next meeting two months off, but also advert to be put in the village news asking if anyone else would be willing to be put on the list to be kept by the Flood Warden Cllr Hotblack. A member of the public asked who was responsible for dredging the stream. Cllr Bere said that the stream had pipes and cable underneath in some areas so digging out was not possible.

A member of the public asked if Gary Cleaver could be invited to attend a meeting. Cllr Greenwood to look into this.

3 **Minutes of previous meeting:** Approved and signed

4 **Matters arising:**

**Finger Posts:** Quotations not received yet, Cllr Greenwood to approach other people.

**Flooding at Chebbard:** Seems to be solved now.

**Overgrown Trees at Drakes Lane:** Still not doneCllr Greenwood to chase up.

**Broadband:** Cllr Greenwood reported that Wessex Internet were gradually installing to those households wanting it.

**Sandbags:** Cllr Hotblack reported that the sandbags are now available and anyone who needed them could come and collect from Cllr Greenwoods barn.

**Bus stop:** Cllr Greenwood reported the works had been ordered but she didn’t know when they would be done.

5 **Reports from District or County Councillors**: Had been requested but none received.

6 **Correspondence:** Chair read out a letter about Dorset Home choice for everyone’s information.

**7 Planning**:

Rivers Arm appeal was expected to last an hour but turned out to be a full hearing which lasted two days. Cllr Greenwood reported that the appellant made a very good case and presented lots of documentation to support it. The Parish Council had answered the case to the best of its abilities but the decision may be 2/3 months away and that she was not confident of the final decision. Cllr Greenwood expressed her thanks to all those who had attended to show their support.

8 **Finance:**

The amount of precept to be requested was discussed and all agreed to keep it the same as last year. Clerk to send off forms.

Cheques to be paid out to: C Haskett for grass cutting at the playground (£200); Village hall rental (£30); Christmas tree, decorations and lights (£118.50); and Clerk’s salary (£200).

9 **Highways and Rights of Way: N**ew salt bin to be installed at the bottom of Streetway Lane, Cllr Greenwood to approach Tony Kellaway.

10 **AOB:**

**Xmas tree:** Cllr Greenwood reported that many compliments had been received for the village Christmas tree and she wished to express everybody’s thanks to Simon, Hannah and Brian for sourcing the tree, putting up, looking after and taking it down again.

Cllr Bere reported that the hedge outside Ashton House had been cut back low down but not up high so it was still an issue for tractors passing, Cllr Greenwood said she would approach the owners.

11 Next meeting: 7th March 2016 at 7.00pm