

Minutes of a Meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 13 January 2009 at 7.30pm in the Village Library
Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Present: Cllr M Dale; Cllr B Drew; Cllr C Gibbs; Cllr C Ingham; Cllr G Smith; Cllr F Wilkinson (Chairman)

In attendance: Mrs J Mason (Clerk); Cllr M Smith (Chiltern District Council); Mrs K Sterling (Assistant Clerk)

Members of the Public: Mrs L Hunt; Mr J Hinkley.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A. Tate.
2. **Approval of the minutes of meeting held on 2 December 2008:** The minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2008 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.
3. **Suspension of standing orders enabling members of the public to speak:** The Chairman suspended standing orders and Mr J Hinkley advised the Council of damage to the verge on Amersham Road caused by contractors working on a house near the Church Grove turning. Cllr M Smith drew the Council's attention to a consultative document with the title "Buckinghamshire in 2026". The Chairman reinstated standing orders.
4. **Declarations of interest:** There were none to declare.
5. **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman took the opportunity to reflect on events over the past year that had enhanced the service the Council is able to offer the residents of Little Chalfont. In particular, the Parish Council office is now fully staffed and the Village Hall has been improved by the recent programme of works. The Council web-site had been developed over the year by former Councillor Don Marshall and was of a very high standard and very easy to use. Gary Smith had taken over from Cllr Dykins on her resignation and had made a great contribution to the work of the Council. Practical services to the Village were high priority. For example, cycle racks had been ordered for Chenies Parade and arrangements had been made for the pavements in the centre to be gritted in a timely manner during the recent cold weather. The precept submission for 2009/10 had been sent to Chiltern District Council and, in conclusion, the Chairman felt the Council's finances were in a much more settled state, giving confidence for the future.
6. **Clerk's Report:** Updating the Council on actions placed on her at the last meeting, the Clerk reported that the hall refurbishment was practically completed apart from some minor adjustments to be made to the kitchen cupboards. A letter had been sent to Chris Schwier on 11 December setting out project proposals under the delegated budget. A letter had been sent to the Mobile Operations Manager at BCC on 5 January and a response had been received from the Senior Operations Manager dated 7 January. Finally, Cllr Wilkinson had been accepted as a member of the Chiltern Community Partnership.
7. **Financial matters:** (i) *Budget* The budget proposals agreed at the last meeting had been entered on the computer and would be reviewed at the March meeting. (ii) *Precept* see Chairman's report (iii) *Audits* the final sign off for the 2007/08 accounts was awaited from the External Auditors although they had indicated that this was imminent. The internal auditor had an appointment to carry out an inspection on 16 December 2009. (iv)

Retirement of Internal Auditor sadly the Council's Internal Auditor had indicated that he would be retiring and the visit on 16 January would be his last. The Clerk would seek a possible replacement for discussion and approval by the Council at a future meeting. (v) *Bank Reconciliation and Income and Expenditure Accounts* the bank reconciliation was signed by the Chairman and the accounts were circulated to members. It was agreed the latter be circulated a few days before Council meetings in future. (vi) *Westwood Park Pavilion* as agreed at earlier meetings, the repairs and maintenance work required at the Pavilion would be carried out shortly. Quotes were currently being sought by the Assistant Clerk.

8. **Reports from the following groups** *Revitalisation Group* Cllr Drew confirmed that this year's Village Day (13 June) would be focused on the Centre of the Village and the grounds and hall of Dr Challoner's High School. It was hoped that the Parish Council would be able to provide support at a level similar to that provided in 2008. Cllr Drew would put a formal proposal to the February meeting of the Council. (c) *NAG* Cllr Smith reported that the next meeting was scheduled for 27 January and that both dates for speed checks in Bell Lane had been cancelled by the Police at short notice. (d) *Village Hall Management Committee 12 January Meeting* Cllr Drew reported that the Committee were very pleased with the improvements to the Hall and that they had requested a new cover for the piano. They had also continued their discussions about simplifying the Hall hire charges and the possibility of introducing a reduction for locals. The Clerk had raised the legality of this with the senior team at CDC who had agreed to ask the Head of Legal Services for advice on her behalf. It was hoped that the Committee would be in a position to put proposals to the Council in February. Publicising the hall facilities had also been discussed. Finally, the Committee had recommended a colour for the new chairs (see item 11 below).
9. **Freedom of Information Act. Proposed Schedule of Charges:** It was agreed that 5p per copy plus any relevant postal or packing charges would be charged and that applications to receive or view information under the Act should be put in writing to the Clerk. The Model Scheme adopted at the last meeting together with details of charges would be displayed on the web-site.
10. **Delegated Budget – Grit Bins in Village:** It was agreed that the Clerk should apply for additional bins to be placed in the village under the delegated budget provisions. If necessary, bins would be purchased before next winter. This would cost £475 per bin although once purchased they would be filled free of charge by BCC. It was anticipated that three bins would be required.
11. **Village Hall Refurbishment- Purchase of Tables and Chairs:** It was agreed that 100 Gopak chairs with brown frames and "shell" coloured upholstery be purchased together with fifteen large, folding tables and four smaller sized tables. The cost would be approximately £35 per chair and £107 per large table, although Gopak had indicated they would give a discount of 10%. There were other, cheaper suppliers, which might save a few pounds per chair but they did not provide the same range or, possibly, robustness. Some of the old chairs and tables would be transferred to the Pavilion. In addition, the Council gave the Clerk approval to have new floor coverings fitted to the kitchen. The Clerk anticipated that the final cost for the hall refurbishment would be in the order of £21000 which was within the original budget.

12. **Reports and Notifications:** (i) Communities and Local Government – Code of Recommended Practice on local Government Publicity – A consultation. Responses due Thursday 12 March 2009: Cllr Smith and Cllr Dale took a copy and it was agreed they would pass comments to the Clerk in a fortnight allowing her time for her to collate a proposed response to put before the 3 February meeting of the Council. (ii) Communities and Local Government – Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members and Employees: It was noted that it had not been possible to prepare a response (iii) BCC - The Chalfonts Area Newsletter December 2008 (iv) Chiltern District Council Off-Street Parking Places Amendment (No. 6) order 2008: This was circulated. (v) CDC 6 Jan 2009 e-mail Chiltern CoP Cards: Cllr Smith undertook to report back to the February meeting with regard to possible input to the scheme by the Council.
13. **Council Meetings and Planning Committee meetings 2009/10** The draft schedule of dates was circulated and it was agreed that the Annual and Parish meetings would be held on 13 May 2009. In the meantime, the Clerk would make enquiries regarding the most appropriate time scale between consideration of planning applications by the Council’s Planning Committee and subsequent discussion by CDC. A revised schedule would be prepared for the February meeting.
14. **A resolution that in view of the confidential nature of the business** to be transacted, it is advisable, in the public interest, that the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting and be instructed to withdraw, was agreed.
15. **Update on Discussions with ATC:** The Chairman briefly updated the Council on this matter and hoped that further progress might be possible following the 26 January meeting of Amersham Town Council.
16. **Vacancy for Councillor** It was reported by the Chairman that if no requests for an election had been received by the Returning Officer, the vacancy would be filled by cooption.
17. **Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 3 February 2009 in the Village Library at 7.30pm.

Signed.....

Date.....