

Notes of Little Chalfont Parish Meeting
Held on Wednesday 7 May 2014 at 7.45pm
In the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Members of the Parish Council Present: Cllr B Drew (Chairman); Cllr J Hinkly; Cllr L Hunt; Cllr M Parker; Cllr V Patel; Cllr D Rafferty and Cllr J Wyper.

Speakers: Kate Lewis, Communications Specialist, GE Healthcare; Geoff Hobbs, Head of Transport Planning, Transport for London; Superintendent Steven Hockin, Area Commander, Chiltern and South Bucks Local Police; Cllr Martin Tett, Leader, Bucks County Council; Cllr Drew, Chairman of Little Chalfont Parish Council.

In Attendance: Mrs J Mason (Parish Clerk); Mrs K Sterling (Assistant Clerk).

Members of the Public (list only includes those who signed the attendance sheet): Mr D Goble, Mrs P Goble, Mr P Coker, Mrs D Coker, G Nicol, Mr K Draper, Mr D Redmayne, Ms S Christie, Ms D Santon, Mr M Barnes, I Milkhu, Ms L Mowat, Ms L Horne, Mr T Ranauta, Mr C Ingham, Mr K Greatbatch, Mr G Biring, Mr A Lockyer, Mrs R Lockyer, Mr P Burgess, Mrs E Burgess, Mrs G Hone, Mrs B Jones, Mr K Jones, Mr M Rogers, Mr T Duparc, Mr S Palfreyman, Mr B Knight, Miss R Berkerey, Mrs M Berkerey, Mr J Dolman, Mr I Viehoff, Ms C Hamilton, Mr G Lewis, Mr P Glynn, Ms G Habgood, Mr B Tyers, Mrs J Collins, Mrs M Wilkinson, Mr J Wilkinson, Mr M Wadsworth, Mr M Durkin, Mrs M Weston, Mr J Weston, Ms A Dorme, Mrs V Way, Mr P Way, Mr B Dorme, Mr M Fonseka, Mr S Allen, Mr M Browne, Mr K Hoffmeister, Mr S MacGill, Mrs R MacGill, Ms E Harris, Ms O Mead, C Mead, Mr J Harrison, Mr N Hamilton, Mrs D Drew, Mr M Thorndike, Mrs W Thorndike, Mr A Blatherwick, Ms P O'Connell, Ms D White, Mr T Davis, Mrs J Davis, Mr R Rolls, Mr P Martin, Mr D Phillips, Mrs K Hinkly, Mr R Funk, Mr D Chhabra, Ms H Berry, Ms S Strange, Ms J Carr, Ms E Allen, Mrs M Kerr, Mr D Kerr, Ms M Corley, Mr B Turney, Mr T Cooper, Mr J Ison-Stierer, Mr I MacKay, Mrs B Ollive, Mr R Ollive, Ms C de Charmant, G Batch, Mrs M Bartlett, Mr P Bartlett, Mrs D Parker, Mr R Parker.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr J Walford, OBE

2. **Notes of the Parish Meeting held on 15 May 2013:** Cllr Drew welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced each of the parish and district councillors as well as the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk. He outlined what was contained in the notes from the last Parish Meeting held on 15 May 2013 and explained that there were copies available in the hall and that a copy had been put on the website at www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk. The notes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Cllr Drew then explained the format for the evening and introduced the first speaker.

3. **Guest Speakers:**
 - a. **Kate Lewis – Communications Specialist, GE Healthcare:** Kate gave a summary of her background followed by an overview of how GE has changed over the past few years and the main sections within the company. She explained how GE interacts with the local community and the local charities it supports through fund raising. The next local event that is being sponsored by GE is the Chiltern Cycling Festival on 13 July.

Cllr Hinkly asked about possible grants from GE to which Kate responded that grants are given through the foundation and sometimes one off donations are given. However there is not a defined percentage or sum available.

Cllr Drew thanked Ms Lewis for her informative talk and reminded the audience that his badge of office had been paid for with a donation from GE. He also mentioned that the wooden train in the playground at Westwood Park had been donated by GE.

- b. Geoff Hobbs – Head of Transport Planning, Transport for London (TfL):** Geoff has been in his role for the past 20 years and it involves the initiation and development of ideas to improve journeys for the travelling public. Recently on the metropolitan line there has been a new fleet of trains and the track has been upgraded. The next significant upgrade will be to the signalling which should be completed by 2018. Also, Chiltern Railways plan a change to the timetable in 2015 reflecting feedback from stakeholders and the new route between Marylebone and Oxford. He addressed the concerns of local residents that the London Underground timetabling change that was made at the end of 2011 reduced the number of fast trains from Chalfont and Latimer station to central London. At the end of 2013 a further change was made to increase the number slightly and to speed them up (from 50mph to 60mph). Geoff explained that the timetable is developed to try to maximise the sum of happiness to all network users and that the change was very beneficial to the majority of metropolitan line users although he did recognise that for those travelling from Chalfont and Latimer station the journey time to Baker Street had been increased from 43.5 minutes to 47 minutes.

Peter Martin asked if there were any plans to improve the off-peak service from outlying stations in the future. Mr Hobbs replied TfL consults passengers and makes decisions on the basis of “meeting needs of the majority and fair application of timetabling rules”, so no.

TfL’s website statistics on passenger use of the line at different stations were strongly disputed by Ivan Viehoff. Mr Hobbs offered to look at Mr Viehoff’s evidence but reiterated that there are no plans to increase the number of fast trains from outlying stations.

Peter Martin asked about the embankment work that took place over the Easter Bank Holiday through the night. The residents of St Nicholas Close had not been given any prior notice of this. Mr Martin requested that in future notice is given in advance saying what was going to be done and how long it would take. Mr Hobbs apologised for what had happened and agreed that the residents should have been notified. The next work is due to take place in June and he will ensure that the residents are given plenty of notice.

Don Phillips asked about the withdrawal of the investment to put lifts in at Amersham station. Mr Hobbs replied that there were many stations where lifts were required and it was a matter of priorities with limited funding. He confirmed that Amersham was not included in the latest scheme.

Cllr Drew thanked Geoff for his robust and instructive talk and for explaining some of the reasoning behind timetabling decisions.

- c. Superintendent Steven Hockin – Area Commander, Chiltern and South Bucks Local Police:** Steve has been a police officer for 26 years and a superintendent for 10 years. He

is also a firearms commander. He explained that his job is simple – to reduce crime and catch criminals. However, operationally it is not always quite so simple! The way this is achieved in this area is through local neighbourhood policing teams and the Chalfonts area has 1 sergeant, 2 police constables and 4 PCSOs dedicated to the area. The PCSOs spend about 80% of their time out and about. There is also the ability to deploy additional staff including dog teams, detectives and helicopters to the area when required. Superintendent Hockin provided a wealth of facts and figures about local crime rates and it was reassuring to hear that rates are reducing in most areas. The only major area of increase was cyber crime. He summed up by explaining that there are no plans to decrease the number of police officers and PCSOs and in fact their number may possibly increase.

Chris Ingham asked about people selling door to door and how to know if they were genuine or criminals. Superintendent Hockin responded that, if in doubt, call 101 (or 999 if felt to be an emergency).

Alan Christie said 85% of electorate did not vote for a police commissioner.

Superintendent Hockin responded that the best option is to try to make it work; our Commissioner Stansfield is very supportive and challenging when necessary, he added. Cllr Drew thanked Superintendent Hockin for his entertaining and informative talk and thanked him, on behalf of all residents, for the work done by the police to protect us all.

- d. Cllr Martin Tett – Leader, Bucks County Council:** Cllr Tett, who is a Little Chalfont resident, works closely with Chiltern District Council and the local Parish Council to ensure that the local community is well served. He gave an overview of Buckinghamshire which has a population of half a million and is very diverse from the rural north of the county to the '60s' centre and the aging suburban south. Overall the county is wealthy but with significant areas of deprivation. The County Council is being required to provide more and more services with a budget that reduces year on year. This year the overall gross revenue spend is £750million of which £417million is immediately earmarked for schools leaving £333million for everything else. The capital spend is £407million over the next 4 years. Cllr Tett showed a slide that listed the multitude of services that the County Council provides from education and skills to waste disposal, fire and rescue, roads and pavements. Since April 2013 19000 emergency potholes have been filled! Everything that is carried out is driven by the Strategic Plan. Many further reductions are required. "The easy stuff has long since been done – now it's all difficult...". On the question of the proposed Waste Transfer Station on the London Road Cllr Tett explained why the County Council is supporting the application.

Andrew Blatherwick asked why BCC continues to support it? Cllr Tett responded that we need to reduce landfill and landfill tax paid (currently £8m). It will save the county £130m after the cost of building. He understands that it is a contentious issue locally but it is logical to have three collection points. The proposed site, although technically green belt, is a disused, derelict, polluted landfill site from the 1960s.

Cllr Drew thanked Cllr Tett for his engaging talk but did point out that Little Chalfont Parish Council were still opposed to the Waste Transfer Station.

4. **Chairman's Report** - The full report can be viewed on the Parish Council's website at www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk. The Chairman thanked the Council and staff for their hard work over the year. He then gave a brief summary of his annual report highlighting some of the work of the council during the past year, which included arranging for free one hour parking in Snells Wood car park. Local Area Forum funding had been obtained for new cycle stands plus a mobile vehicle activated sign (MVAS) that will be erected in a succession of different locations throughout the village to help analyse and tackle the level of speeding.

5. **Close:** The Chairman thanked the speakers and everyone for attending what had been an interesting and informative evening. He also informed residents that there was a casual vacancy for the position of Parish Councillor and urged anyone interested to contact the Clerk.

Signed.....

Date.....