

Minutes of a meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council

On Wednesday 8th July 2015 at 7.30pm

In the Little Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Present: Cllr Brian Drew, Cllr G Roberts, Cllr V Patel, Cllr D Rafferty, Cllr I Griffiths, Cllr J Walford

In attendance: Mrs N Meldrum (Parish Clerk)

Members of the public: Melanie Davis

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr C Ingham and Cllr M Parker
2. **To accept a resolution that standing orders be suspended to allow any members of the public to speak:** Not applicable.
3. **To receive and approve the minutes of 10 June 2015:** The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting.
4. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
5. **Any Other Business:** (i) Speedwatch; (ii) WiFi; (iii) Good Companions grant.
6. **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman highlighted the key areas in his report including the success of the Little Chalfont Community Trust in obtaining a grant for £10,000 towards the Nature Park
7. **Clerk's Report:** It was noted that the MVAS had moved to its new location in Bell Lane and would stay there for approximately 6 weeks. Data has been downloaded from the location in Amersham Road and will be analysed and reported to councillors. It was interesting to note that up to 7,000 cars each day passed the MVAS in this location.
8. **To receive reports, as appropriate, from members of outside bodies and working parties:**
 - (i) **Little Chalfont Community Library:** Cllr Griffiths had met with Jim Brooks in advance of the next Community Library meeting.
 - (ii) **Village Hall Working Party:** One of the issues discussed at the meeting was the cost of hiring the hall. It was reported that some commercial users had found the commercial rates high especially for hire for a prolonged period of time. It was proposed that in these cases a 25% reduction could be offered for a first booking. The working party had also suggested that the inside of the village hall could be painted as it is looking quite tired. The hall is very well used and many events will be held here until the plans for the proposed community centre are finalised. It was agreed that three quotes should be sought for this work.
9. **Financial matters:**
 - (i) *List of payments and cheques to be signed.* All payments were approved.
 - (ii) *Income and expenditure report.* There was one query about the football income. The Clerk confirmed she will clarify the position. The report was approved.
 - (iii) *Balance sheet 30 June 2015.* Cllr Griffiths asked about the rate of interest being earned in the Parish Council's bank accounts. He suggested premium bonds could be an alternative. This report was approved.
 - (iv) *VAT return for quarter ending 31 May 2015.* The Clerk confirmed this return had been submitted.
10. **External Audit report: Annual Return 2014/15.** The Clerk confirmed that this had been submitted to Mazars, the External Auditors.

- 11. Parking Survey:** Cllr Drew gave an overview of the parking survey. In all three areas which were consulted there was overall support for yellow lines to be implemented. The process will now go to a public consultation. It was hoped that the parking project could be completed in approximately 12 months time. It was reported the funding was in place to enable the parking restrictions to be implemented. Bucks County Council had asked the Parish Council for a contribution of £9,800 towards the project. Cllr Drew proposed that the Parish Council should make this contribution. Cllr Walford seconded the proposal which was carried unanimously. Special thanks were expressed to Cllr Parker for his hard work on the parking project. Cllr Drew also reported on the parking issue on Burtons Lane which was dealt with separately as part of the Donkey Field agreement. It was expected that this part of the project would be completed in the late autumn.
- 12. Beel Close / Marygold Walk underpass:** Cllr Drew explained that the underpass, owned by London Underground, was currently unlit and many people had commented on the safety of the tunnel. In conjunction with the LCCA, discussions would take place with London Underground to see if they would be able to help fund the project. Cllr Griffiths suggested obtaining support from the police about the safety of the tunnel. The possibility of undertaking a survey of residents was also discussed to see if the tunnel was well used in the evening, and if not what were the reasons.
- 13. LAF funding:** Cllr Drew had previously asked for ideas for LAF funding which need to be based on transportation. Lighting on the underpass, an additional MVAS, a yellow cross hatch near Chenies Parade, and repairs to the footpath near the Donkey Field were all suggested. These ideas would all be considered when putting together a bid for funding. An additional idea was to provide a minibus into the village for the period of time when the shops on Elizabeth Avenue could be closed. This was not appropriate for the LAF funding but it may be possible to pursue this idea with another part of Bucks County Council. It was reported that another funding stream had become available through the HS2. Little Chalfont will be indirectly affected by the construction due to the volume of heavy goods traffic passing through the village. Suggestions for funding included the proposed community centre, the Nature Park, and a proposal to enhance the village centre by planting a series of trees. These ideas would be included in a bid to be sent to Bucks County Council by their deadline of Friday 10th July.
- 14. Devolution of duties from BCC:** The Clerk reported that a third round of grass cutting had taken place. The cutting generally occurs at the middle of the month, but not always on consecutive days due to rubbish collection and the weather conditions. There are a number of amendments to the original devolution agreement that was signed in April. It was agreed to liaise with other parish councils about the changes. Finally, the issue of hedge cutting was raised. It was noted that several reports had been received about overgrown hedges in the village. The devolution agreement provides a template letter to deliver to householders if it was perceived that the hedge was on their boundary. Councillors agreed to work in pairs to look at hedges in the roads they had been allocated. The Clerk could provide letters for councillors to give to householders.
- 15. Play area safety inspection report undertaken by RoSPA 1 June 2015:** It was reported that the playground inspection had taken place. A few issues which were designated medium and low risk were identified. The Clerks had been to the playground with Mark Richardson to look at the issues raised and agree a plan of action. A work plan had now been drawn up.

Some of the tasks were planned to take place soon, the remainder were more long term issues which could be tackled in the autumn.

16. Community Centre project: The Community Buildings Working Party had met to discuss the response from the CDC planning officer following the pre-planning application meeting. With regard to the issue of the ancient woodland designation, Cllr Drew reported it had been agreed that the architects would speak to Natural England about the concerns raised by the planning officer. It was also reported that building costs had escalated in the time since the initial costings were produced and it was anticipated this could continue to increase at a rate of 5% per year. The architects had been asked to scale back the proposed building and had been given a minimum specification the Parish Council would require.

17. Schedule of meetings: Cllr Drew raised the issue of council and planning meetings being held in the same week. Most councillors present were content to continue with the existing arrangement of both meetings being held on the same evening when this occurred. Cllr Drew also raised the issue of increased formality within the meetings suggesting that councillors should indicate if they want to speak, and also speak only once about a particular issue. Many councillors liked the more informal approach for a small council, but it was agreed to trial a new approach in the next meeting with members indicating, to the chairman, their wish to speak. It was agreed that a microphone was unnecessary. Cllr Rafferty suggested that councillors could have name plates to help members of the public identify them. This was agreed and the Clerk will arrange for name plates.

18. Reports and Notifications:

- (i) Proposed road closure – Stony Lane, Little Chalfont (circulated 22 June 2015)
 - (ii) Chiltern District Council – Road Multi order and associated Traffic Order (both circulated 29 June 2015)
 - (iii) My Bucks July 2015 (circulated 30 June 2015)
- In addition, it was raised that the A404 will be closed from 7pm – 6am from Little Chalfont to Chenies from 3 August to mid September. A diversion would be operating through Denham.

19. Any other business:

- (i) Speedwatch. Cllr Roberts reported that the training for the Speedwatch volunteers had been arranged for 25 July in Prestwood.
- (ii) WiFi. Following the issue being raised at the last meeting, the Clerk reported the most safe and effective way of obtaining WiFi for hall users would be to install another WiFi line which would have an independent code. Cllr Drew proposed that the Parish Council should install WiFi for hall users and for council meetings. Cllr Roberts seconded this proposal.
- (iii) Good Companions grant. The Clerk reported that additional information about the group's accounts had been received. A formal decision was not able to be made until September, however it was agreed that the group would receive an indication that the funding bid would be favourably received.

20. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 9th September at 7:30pm.