

**Minutes of a Meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 11 March 2015 at 7.30pm
In the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont**

Present t: Cllr B Drew (Chairman); Cllr J Hinkly; Cllr M Parker; Cllr V Patel; Cllr D Rafferty; Cllr G Roberts; Cllr J Walford, OBE and Cllr J Wyper.

In Attendance: Mrs J Mason, Clerk.

Members of the public: Mr D Howroyd and Cllr N Brown (Buckinghamshire County Council).

1. **Apologies for absence:** None.
2. **A resolution that standing orders be suspended to allow any members of the public to speak was agreed:** Mr Howroyd spoke about the no 71 bus service. This was now a two hour service and he hoped the 9.30 am service could be restored. In addition, he asked if the route the bus followed in the village could circulate the other way round. This would provide a much more convenient service for residents in the Elizabeth Avenue area and enable them to catch a bus to the village centre. Cllr Brown suggested that the Parish Council should raise these concerns with the relevant officer at BCC. Cllr Brown also commented on delays experienced by the Parish Council in obtaining responses from BCC staff regarding the parking consultation results. Staff cuts and shortages were the cause. Cllr Drew thanked Mr Howroyd and Cllr Brown for their contributions and reinstated standing orders.
3. **To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2015:** These were approved as a correct record and were duly signed as such by the Chairman.
4. **To receive declarations of interest:** None.
5. **Approval by Chairman of items for any other business:** The following were agreed:
 - i. Lamppost in Oakington Avenue;
 - ii. "A" boards in Chenies Parade;
 - iii. April newsletter;
 - iv. Parish Meeting;
 - v. Statter's Field.
6. **Chairman's Report:** This had been previously circulated. Cllr Drew added that if another Councillor wished to accompany him to the Chiltern District Council Youth Awards on 19 March they should let him know.
7. **Clerk's Report:** This had been previously circulated. It was noted that work had started on the installation of posts to deter Westwood Park visitors from parking on the verges. However, over the previous two weekends, people had also been parking on the verges near the entrance and it had been suggested that the posts be extended down the whole of the drive. This would have an impact on the cost of the work and would increase it by £800 to a total of £2,340. This additional expenditure was approved. The Assistant Clerk has undertaken a tailored training session with Playground Solutions on how to carry out playground inspections together with inspections of the MUGA and tennis courts. The inspection sheets have also been revised. During the training it was noted that the MUGA fencing had been damaged recently by vandalism. The area has been closed pending repairs. In conclusion, it was noted that a Rialtas Business Software representative will be coming to carry out the year end procedures on 18 May 2015.
8. **To receive reports, as appropriate, from members of outside bodies and working parties, including the Local Area Forum (LAF) on 18 February and the conference at Adams Park on 24 February 2015. An update on the status of the current year LAF project will also be made and discussed:**
 - i. *Westwood Park Working Party* – Cllr Hinkly reported that Chorleywood Cricket Club's (CCC) visiting teams had rated the park as very high on facilities but low on pitch maintenance. Weeds were cited as a problem together with inaccurate marking out of the wicket. This

latter problem had been an issue the previous summer and resolved at that time. It was agreed that these comments would be referred to the grounds maintenance team. CCC had also offered to donate some spare protective netting to put round the cricket pitch to protect it when not in use. The running line has been reinstated and the working party's choice of distance markers would be discussed with the groundsman prior to purchase. (The cost will be within the Clerk's spending limit.) A replacement for the broken tennis payment meter had been discussed and one option might be to have a device installed on the outside of the pavilion. Westwood Park Football Club hope that they will be able to use the old play area for their under 5s. Ian Sutcliffe will speak to the groundsman and report back to the working party. Chess Valley Churches Together will be at the pavilion over the Easter holidays providing refreshments and activities for children.

- ii. *LCCA* – The Local Plan liaison group had met after the 3 March meeting of the Planning Committee to finalise the joint response to CDC's consultation. The response is now on the Parish Council and LCCA websites. A further meeting of the group was scheduled for the following week. Cllr Drew thanked Cllr Parker for his input to this work and asked that the Parish Council's thanks be passed to all involved. In conclusion, it was noted that the AGM will be in the Village Hall starting at 8 pm on Thursday 26 March 2015.
- iii. *Local Area Forum meeting 18 February 2015* – The Parish Council had been awarded a grant of £6,000 to go towards the final stage of the parking consultation project. This will come from the LAF's 2015/16 budget. The outstanding 2014/15 project to install new bollards improve the appearance of the village centre, has been stalled because the Parish Council is still awaiting crucial safety and utility information from the County Council. The chairman was pleased to report that the LAF has agreed to ring fence the grant so that the work can be completed in 2015/16.
- iv. *"Parishes Delivering More" Conference, Adams Park, 24 February 2015* – Cllrs Drew, Walford and Patel had attended. They had found funding suggestions of interest and the representative from Uppingham in Rutland had spoken with great enthusiasm in his endorsement of the neighbourhood planning process.

9. Financial matters: (i) *List of payments and cheques to be signed* – The schedule of payments totalling £12,220.74 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Following a brief discussion this was approved and signed by the Chairman; (ii) *Income and Expenditure Report* – This had been previously circulated and was discussed; (iii) *Vat return 1 December 2014 – 28 February 2015* – The Clerk advised that she had recently submitted this return and a payment to the Council of £4,788.13 was due from HMRC; (iv) *VAT Partial Exemption 2013/14* – It was further reported that staff at DCK Beavers Ltd have completed the long form calculation and confirmed that the Parish Council is below the De Minimis level for 2013/14.

10. External Auditors - It was noted that the review of the annual return for 2014/15 will be performed at Mazar's Durham office. The template for the return and request for information had now been received. The Clerk advised that in addition to the financial information to be provided the following would also be required: copy of the annual review of internal control or minute relating to its consideration; copies of Members' acceptance of office and minutes considering risk management and insurance coverage.

11. Review of Policies and Procedures: It was noted that the Council's Standing Orders and Risk Assessments will be reviewed by the Clerk in the coming weeks and discussed at the 8 April meeting of the Parish Council. A review of the financial procedures will also be undertaken.

12. Asset Register and Insurance: It was noted that (i) the Clerk will update the asset register as necessary and (ii) following the meeting she and the Chairman had had with Vicky Jacomb of Came and Co on 10 February, quotations for the renewal of the Council's insurances, effective from 1 April 2015, had now been received. The recommendation set out in the Clerk's report that the renewal should be with Aviva was agreed. The Clerk was authorised to proceed as necessary.

- 13. Results of tree inspection by South Bucks Tree Surgeons:** It was noted that work is recommended at all locations managed by the Parish Council. The Clerk was asked therefore to invite quotations from three contractors. It is anticipated that the work will cost in the region of £3,000. Some of the work recommended affects trees bordering Westwood Park that are managed by the Forestry Commission. The FC will be advised and asked to undertake the necessary work as a matter of urgency.
- 14. Free parking days in Snells Wood car park:** In addition to Village Day (6 June) it was agreed that the Clerk should advise CDC that the three Saturdays before Christmas plus Christmas Eve should be allocated as free parking days in Snells Wood car park (5, 12, 19 and 24 December 2015).
- 15. Buckinghamshire County Council (Various Roads in Various Parishes) (Chiltern District Area) (Revocation) Order, 201:** It was noted that this order has no impact on the current speed limits. The order will enable BCC to “tidy up” their records and ensure that all old and current orders not in effect are legally revoked.
- 16. Buckinghamshire County Council consultation on library opening times** (circulated to Councillors 4 March 2015): The schedule of amended opening times does not affect Little Chalfont Community Library.
- 17. Speedwatch update:** Cllr Roberts’ suggestion that the forthcoming newsletter should be used to advertise for volunteers was agreed.
- 18. Update on parking issues:** Cllr Parker reported that the parking consultation report had now been received and he hoped that a meeting with the representatives from BCC to discuss the next steps would take place soon. Contractor parking in Burtons Lane by contractors and visitors to the Donkey Field development continue to cause serious problems. In response to a request from the parking manager at CDC the Council agreed that it would not be practical to allocate any spaces at the Village Hall car park to help alleviate the situation. The Clerk will advise CDC.
- 19. Community Buildings Working Party:**
- (i) *To receive a report following the 3 March meeting of the working party* – Cllr Drew reported that the revised plans had been discussed with two of the district and county councillors and, as appropriate, further meetings were being scheduled with others. The application for a pre-planning meeting had been made. The cost was £1,060 and this was approved.
 - (ii) *To discuss actions and, as appropriate, agree proposals made at that meeting – see also (ii) above:* Work continues on the business plan. Additional members of the working party are being sought. The Council endorsed these actions. A further meeting of the working party would be arranged once the date of the pre-planning meeting was known.
 - (iii) *To receive a report on the status of project costs to date and recent discussions with the architect* – The Clerk had expressed her concern to the architects and the chairman that the project was beginning to drift into the second phase of the RIBA project stage and that formal council agreement was now required for the project to progress further. The Council agreed. It further agreed that project costs should be a standing and priority item at all future working party meetings. Any cost implications of proposals made by the working party should always be subject to Council approval prior to any action being taken. It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with the architects to review project planning and costs. Cllrs Walford, Parker and Mrs Meldrum will attend. The Clerk will make the necessary arrangements.
 - (iv) *To approve the costs associated with the decision recorded in minute 8 (iii) of the 11 February 2015 meeting of the Parish Council:* The revised cost of the project on the basis of the current plans is £1,400,000. This was accepted by the Council although it was noted that any future changes would result in a further increase or reduction in cost as appropriate. It was further agreed that the Clerk could pay the two outstanding architect’s invoices she had been holding, totalling £6,570.83. In conclusion, the outcome of the proposed meeting with the architects will be reported back to the Council for discussion and agreement as necessary.

Following this, any adjustments to the 2015/16 budget will be made and the draft contract between the architects and the Parish Council will be referred to Buckinghamshire Law Plus for advice and completion.

20. Devolution of duties from Buckinghamshire County Council - *To receive an update report:* The Clerk reported that the draft contract from BCC had been received. She had attended a meeting on 10 March with other tranche 1 Town and Parish Councils at County Hall. This had been followed by a compulsory health and safety seminar which had also been attended by three of the Spruced-Up staff. She would be working on the contract with BCC and drafting a contract with Spruced-Up together with a specification of work over the coming weeks. It was agreed that an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council should be held on 24 March 2015 (after the Planning Committee meeting) to discuss the contracts. It was hoped that the contracts would also be signed at that time.

21. To consider and as appropriate approve proposals by the Little Chalfont (Evening) WI:

- (i) *WI centenary planting on the Triangle* – It was agreed that the centenary planting proposed by Cllr Roberts on behalf of the Little Chalfont (Evening) WI could proceed.
- (ii) *Refurbishment and installation of former library outdoor seat in the village* – It was agreed that this could proceed using one of the locations previously suggested by public petition. This would be subject to the Clerk and Cllr Roberts being satisfied that the bench was safe and approval of the location by BCC's local area technician.

22. Renewal of Hall Hire and Pitch and Pavilion Charges: It was noted that due to pressure of other business this will be deferred until the 8 April 2015 meeting.

23. Westwood Park Football Club storage shed draft lease - *To discuss one of the lease renewal clauses prior to the Clerk agreeing the final version with the club* – The Clerk had drafted the lease and sent it to WWPFC for their comments. She was happy with all their minor changes with the exception of one more significant change to clause 23. The club proposed the word “may” should be changed to “shall” in relation to a possible renewal after five years. The Council agreed that this change should not be accepted. However, they would be happy to renew the lease on a one year rolling basis after this period and undertake that such renewal would not be unreasonably refused.

24. Little Chalfont Nature Park: (i) *Project Update* – Work on all aspects is progressing well. £35,000 is still required to undertake complete stage 1; (ii) *Update on lease negotiations* – The Clerk is in correspondence with the solicitor and awaits advice on the VAT wording from DCK Beavers.

25. Reports and Notifications:

- (i) Chiltern District Council democratic Services - Member's Allowances Panel Vacancies (Mathew Bloxton's 3 March e-mail refers);
- (ii) Legal Briefing LO1 – 15 – Freedom of Information Datasets (Carole Burslem's {MKBALC} 3 March e-mail refers);
- (iii) Parish Council Elections Nomination Pack from Lesley Blue, Interim Democratic Services and Electoral Services Manager, CDC – circulated to Councillors 3 March 2015;
- (iv) Neighbourhood Policing Team Newsletter March 2015 (circulated 2 March 2015);
- (v) My Bucks March 2015 (circulated 2 March 2015);

26. Any other Business:

- i. *Lamppost in Oakington Avenue* – Following a request from a member of the public Cllr Hinkly agreed to make a site visit and would advise the Clerk.
- ii. *“A” boards in Chenies Parade* – Cllr Parker reported that the proliferation of such signs was causing problems for people with disabilities. It was agreed that this matter should be placed on the 8 April agenda.
- iii. *April newsletter* – The closing date for input is the Wednesday before Easter.
- iv. *Parish Meeting* – It was agreed that wine, soft drinks and nibbles would be served. The Chairman agreed that his allowance would be utilised to fund these costs.

- v. *Statter's Field* – Cllr Drew reported that a member of the public had enquired whether the path around the field could be claimed as a Right of Way. It was agreed to discuss the matter further at the 8 April meeting.

27. A resolution was agreed 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.

28. Staffing matters:

- i. The Establishment Committee's recommendation that Natasha Meldrum be appointed to the post of Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer with effect from 1 April 2015 was agreed. Her hours of work and salary will be as set out in the Chairman's 23 February letter to her. It was further agreed that Mrs Meldrum would be paid her revised salary rate with effect from 18 March 2015. The Chairman will write confirming this arrangement. Her new hours of work will not start until 1 April;
- ii. It was further agreed that the actions required to advertise and fill the consequential vacancy for an Assistant Parish Clerk should now be taken.

29. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 8 April 2015 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont.

Signed.....

Date.....