

Minutes of a Little Chalfont Parish Council meeting

Held in the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Wednesday 8 February 2017 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr B Drew; Cllr I Griffiths; Cllr C Ingham; Cllr M Parker; Cllr V Patel; Cllr D Rafferty; Cllr G Roberts (Chairman).

Members of the Public: None.

In attendance: Mrs N Meldrum (Parish Clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr M Davis; Cllr J Walford; Cllr D Bray; Cllr N Brown; Cllr C Jackson; Cllr D Phillips.
2. **To accept a resolution that standing orders be suspended to allow any members of the public to speak (10 minutes):** Not applicable.
3. **To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2017:** The minutes of the meeting were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
5. **Any Other Business:** (i) Roads; (ii) Finch Lane; (iii) new district councillors update; (iv) unitary authority.
6. **Chairman's Report:** Cllr Roberts reported that further investigations had taken place about the taxi concessionary scheme. Following a visit to Gerrards Cross Parish Council who currently operate the scheme, it was reported that the administration for the project was manageable. A positive response had already been received from Linfields, who offer a minibus and wheelchair transport service based in Little Chalfont. Further investigations would take place with the link officer at the doctors surgery and also find a suitable mechanism to undertake the financial aspect of the scheme. Cllr Roberts also reported that Simply Walks was also progressing well with 16 people attending the last walk.
7. **Clerk's Report:** It was reported that work had taken place on a stretch of White Lion Road to reduce an overgrown hedge. The completion of this work meant that a pedestrian footway in this area was now accessible and several positive comments had been made to the contractor while the work was taken place. Councillors asked for their thanks to be passed onto Amersham Town Council for their work on this project. It was also reported that the new footway on Stony Lane, partly funded by the Local Area Forum, had been completed.
8. **To receive reports, as appropriate, from members of outside bodies and working parties.**
 - (i) Little Chalfont Community Library: The meeting was taking place on the same evening.
 - (ii) Community Buildings Working Party: Cllr Drew reported that the architects had produced some revised plans following discussions with Chiltern District Council. There was a change in the position of the proposed new hall, including a wide area for car parking with additional space at the rear of the building. By changing the plans for the interior of the buildings some additional internal space had been obtained, but the footprint of the whole building was smaller. The proposed plans had been sent to the head of planning at Chiltern District Council for his review and it was hoped to receive a reply shortly to enable an

exhibition for residents to take place in March. (iii) LCCA: Cllr Parker reported that further work was taking place on the Community Action Plan and responses from residents were being received at present. (iv) Co-ordination Group: Cllr Parker reported that the group were considering further instructions for the planning advocate appointed by the LCCA, and were also looking into the possibility of appointing a planning consultant to review the soundness of the evidence documents issued by CDC/SBDC for their green belt review. Preliminary approaches had been made to several firms to determine whether they would have a conflict of interest in performing that service for the Little Chalfont community. Replies were awaited. (v) Nature Park: Cllr Roberts reported that work was moving on with regard to building a plinth for the proposed sundial. In addition, £160 had been raised through the Waitrose community green token scheme.

9. **Financial matters:** (i) List of payments and cheques to be signed. Cllr Parker asked about the priority one and priority two tree work highlighted in the schedule. The Clerk explained that a tree survey had been conducted and the trees that required most attention had been dealt with. There were no further questions about this report. (ii) Income and Expenditure report. There were no further questions about this report.
10. **Budget and precept 2017-18:** Cllr Roberts reported that the changes to the budget agreed at the last meeting involving the movement of some projects to be funded from the reserve if necessary had been incorporated. This had resulted in the reduction in the amount of precept required. A total of £230,855 had been requested from Chiltern District Council. This decision was proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr Griffiths. All council members ratified this decision.
11. **Proposed hire costs for village hall and Westwood Park in 2017-18:** Cllr Griffiths reported that members of the Westwood Park working party had viewed the proposed change in hire costs and felt that the changes were reasonable. Cllr Parker commented that the increase did not necessarily have to be the same for both facilities. Cllr Drew agreed and noted that the village hall hire was a more competitive market. Cllr Drew proposed that the village hall hire costs increase by 2% and the sports facilities at Westwood Park increase by 3%. All councillors agreed with this proposal. Cllrs Drew and Parker also requested that the numbers should be rounded to the nearest 50p or £1 as appropriate.
12. **Parish newsletter:** A discussion took place about when the newsletter should be issued. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to deliver the weekend following the county council elections on 4 May. This would also be a suitable time to advertise the forthcoming Parish Meeting scheduled for 17 May. Cllr Walford had drafted a list of potential topics for the newsletter which were all agreed. It was also suggested that advertising for Village Day could also be included in the newsletter. Cllr Drew suggested that the lead story should cover the rationale for the increase in the precept in 2017-18.
13. **Parish meeting.** It was reported that Nicola Upton of the Thames Valley Police had agreed to speak about the restructure of the local teams at the parish meeting on 17 May 2017. Other potential speakers would be considered in the light of events developing over the next few weeks. Any other suggestions for speakers were also welcomed.
14. **Westwood Park and future expenditure:** Cllr Griffiths reported that the decision regarding the application to the revitalisation fund for the security systems at Westwood Park had been postponed until April 2017. Cllr Rafferty expressed concern that further vandalism could occur in the intervening time. It was agreed that systems could be implemented in

April, closely followed by the installation of the new tennis machines. Cllr Griffiths also raised two items which required attention at Westwood Park. The first concerned the removal and replacement of the balancing tree stump equipment. A number of the stumps were deteriorating and the cost for replacing was similar to purchasing a new structure. Three quotations for this had been previously circulated to councillors. The second item related to new playground surfaces around the roundabout and the Sputnik which had been raised by ROSPA in the past two inspections. It had previously been agreed that a long term solution needed to be sought. Previously it had been raised that the car park surface at Westwood Park needed attention. The Westwood Park working group had been asked their opinion about the priority of work in the park and commented that new surfaces in the playground would be more beneficial. After a discussion, it was agreed that the tree equipment could be replaced in 2016-17 for safety reasons. The quote from Playground Facilities was accepted as the cheapest price as well as fulfilling the requirements. It was also agreed to install new playground surfaces in April 2017 instead of focussing on the car park. Three quotes for this activity had previously been circulated. Playground Facilities were again the most cost effective supplier. Cllr Parker asked that the budget line was altered to accommodate the change in activity. Cllr Griffiths reported that the original bins for the playground had been returned due to damage and being unfit for purpose. It was confirmed new bins would be obtained from a different supplier. It was agreed to purchase the dolphin and the bear which would equate to the same cost as the original bins. Some of the existing bins in the playground would be relocated in other areas of the park to help the litter problem. Parking on the footway at the weekends was also raised as an issue. Signs prohibiting parking had recently been installed but the problem still remained. Ideas were suggested such as placing bollards or cones in the area. Cllr Drew suggested placing gravel in front of the wooden posts on the opposite side of the road to allow cars to park there. A quote had previously been requested for this purpose and would be investigated by the Clerk. Cllr Drew also suggested producing a byelaw to prevent vehicles parking in this area. This idea will also be looked into further.

15. **Parking Survey:** Cllr Parker reported that Bucks County Council had almost completed the works in implementing the new parking restrictions. It was noted that there were a number of issues with the new restrictions particularly with the signage which has been used to implement the restrictions rather than the use of yellow lines. It was noted that a number of parking tickets had already been issued. Cllr Drew felt that the signs were unsightly and would cause confusion particularly in Chenies Avenue where two different types systems were operating to implement the same restriction. Cllr Griffiths felt the signs were very visual. Cllr Parker will contact Bucks County Council highlighting the concerns about the new way of highlighting the parking restriction and the lack of consultation with the parish council about the use of signage. Cllr Parker also highlighted an error had been pointed out to Bucks County Council regarding an inconsistency in the timing of the restrictions in Chalfont Avenue. This was currently being resolved by Bucks County Council.
16. **Local Plan and Community Action Plan:** Cllr Parker reported that the consultation regarding the Community Action Plan, organised by the LCCA, was underway. Only a small number of responses had been received to date. Cllr Parker asked all councillors to encourage friends and neighbours to respond. It was highlighted that the Community Action Plan was a stepping stone to the decision whether to develop a Neighbourhood Plan in Little Chalfont.

17. **Proposal from Chalfont Valley E-Act Academy:** A request from Chalfont Valley E-Act Academy had been previously circulated asking if the parish council would like to nominate a representative to stand on the new Academy Ambassadorial Advisory Group. Cllr Davis had previously contacted the Clerk to confirm she was happy to take on this role. It was agreed that Cllr Davis would be the parish council representative on this group. The Clerk would notify the organisers.
18. **Proposal of a litter collection event:** Cllr Roberts proposed that following the success of Clean for the Queen in 2016, an event could be set up in the village perhaps on an annual basis. It was suggested that this could take place in early June prior to Village Day. It was agreed that this was a beneficial idea. Cllr Roberts agreed to discuss the idea with Roger Funk from the LCCA, although would not be able to lead on the event this year.
19. **Neighbourhood Policing:** Councillors had been previously sent a request from Chiltern District Council about the top three priorities for policing over the next three months. It was agreed that the priorities were (i) regular patrols at Westwood Park to deter vandalism; (ii) regular patrols at the Nature Park to deter vandalism; (iii) speeding in Elizabeth Avenue and Burton's Lane; (iv) patrols around the shopping areas. Councillors had also been notified about a meeting planned in March 2017 regarding the restructure of Thames Valley Police and local policing. It was agreed that as Nicola Upton had agreed to speak at the parish meeting about this topic it was not necessary to send a representative to this meeting. Cllr Parker asked about the Speedwatch project. Cllr Roberts explained it had been quiet over the winter months but it was hoped to renew activity in the spring. A request for more volunteers could be included in the next newsletter. Cllr Drew highlighted the fact that the Bucks County Council MVAS on Elizabeth Avenue was faulty. It was suggested it could be fixed and moved to a new location. The Clerk will notify the Local Area Technician.
20. **Reports and Notifications:** (i) Letter from Yvette Hitch, Thames Valley Police (circulated 23 January 2017); (ii) My Bucks newsletter: February 2017 (circulated 31 January 2017); (iii) BCC newsletter for Chalfonts division (circulated 31 January 2017). All noted.
21. **Any other business:** (i) Roads. Cllr Ingham reported he had been asked by a resident to investigate installing a keep clear section at the area adjacent to Chalfont Avenue as it was very difficult to exit the service road on the Amersham Road. The Clerk will investigate this proposal with the Local Area Technician. Cllr Parker reported that flooding was occurring in this area and also underneath the railway bridge. The Clerk will highlight these two areas to the Local Area Technician. (ii) Finch Lane. It was reported that there had been no further work undertaken on pursuing changes in Finch Lane. Cllr Roberts reported that the willow tree had been removed and proposed that the parish council write to residents of Finch Lane to consult with them about what facilities they would like to see in Finch Lane. This was agreed. (iii) District councillors. It was reported that the three district councillors had been written to and invited to attend the parish council meeting. Cllr Jackson had replied and confirmed he would be able to attend the parish council meeting on 8 March. (iv) Unitary authority. A letter had been received from Cllr Darby at Chiltern District Council offering a meeting to discuss the district council proposals for the unitary authority structure. It was agreed that it would be sensible to wait until the decision on the authority structure had been made by the Secretary of State in March.
22. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 8th March in the village hall at 8:15pm (following a planning meeting commencing at 7:30pm).

