

Minutes of a Little Chalfont Parish Council meeting

Held in the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Wednesday 12 April 2017 at 7.30pm

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

Members of the Public: None.

In attendance: Mrs N Meldrum (Parish Clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr C Jackson.
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 8 March 2017:** The minutes of the meeting were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
5. **Any Other Business:** (i) Letter from Cllr Martin Tett regarding the unitary authority proposal.
6. **Chairman's Report:** Cllr Roberts highlighted the key issues in her report covering the meeting of Chairmen in parishes within the Chiltern district, the Chiltern District Council Youth Awards and the Community Action Plan consultation. There were no further questions.
7. **Clerk's Report:** All of the items in the Clerk's Report are covered elsewhere on the agenda.
8. **To receive reports, as appropriate, from members of outside bodies and working parties.** (i) Nature Park Management Group. Cllr Roberts reported that management group had been informed that the grant criteria from GE Healthcare had changed and the sensory area would no longer be eligible for funding. The trustees of the Nature Park will explore other funding options. Cllr Roberts also notified councillors that the trustees would not be underwriting the play area and had decided to save the funding already raised for the hard paths, which was a deliverable part of the lease. An application for funding the play area had been submitted and the outcome was being awaited. It was anticipated that the slide would be installed in late April / early May once the ground had hardened. (ii) Westwood Park: Cllr Griffiths reported on the ongoing parking issues at Westwood Park. He suggested there were three options, one of which was to take no further action as a number of signs had already been installed. The second option was to place gravel on the left hand side by the wooden posts to encourage vehicles to park there. A quote had been received previously for £3600. The final option was to install one further sign at the entrance to Westwood Park at a cost of £220. It was agreed that the final option should be purchased from the reserve fund. Cllr Griffiths asked if Bucks County Council would be able to jet patch problem areas in the car park for a small charge when the jet patcher was in operation in the village. (iv) Little Chalfont Community Association: Cllr Parker reported that the LCCA AGM had taken place. It had been hoped

that a contact from London Transport would have been received to further the work on the proposed Beel Close underpass but so far no information was forthcoming. Cllr Parker confirmed that the parish council would be able to have a stall on Village Day. (v) Community Buildings Working Party: Cllr Drew reported he had met with Bob Young, Development Control manager at CDC to discuss the revised plans. Key issues raised were the elevation viewed from the Snells Wood car park and the entrance to Cokes Lane, the position of the building in relation to the beech tree and the pitch of the roof. The issue with the previously mentioned ancient woodland related to the beech tree and the spread of the roots and the canopy. It was hoped that these issues would be resolved with a view to submitting a planning application in the autumn. Cllr Drew reported that further meetings would be taking place over the next two weeks with the architects and also to discuss the proposed consultation in May. An email would be circulated asking for volunteers to help at this event. Cllr Parker questioned if it was sensible to have a consultation without the final plans agreed. It was agreed that it was expected the plans would be close to the final version. Delaying the consultation would mean a later submission of planning in an already lengthy process.

- 9. Financial matters:** (i) List of payments and cheques to be signed. Cllr Parker asked about the length of time it was expected to install the new street lamp on Chalfont Avenue. The Clerk reported she was awaiting further information from the street lighting contractor. (ii) Income and Expenditure report. Cllr Parker queried receipt of income from the hire of the scout storage hut and The Lodge. The Clerk confirmed this was all underway and cheques were awaited. Cllr Parker also questioned the expenditure for the parking for Snells Wood car park. It was reported that the formula for the car parking fees had changed at the beginning of the financial year. (iii) Balance sheet (as of 31 March 2017) It was noted that the dates on the balance sheet had been updated. There were no further comments on the sheet.
- 10. Insurance:** Cllr Roberts confirmed that the insurance policy for the parish council had been received. The decision to approve the recommendation from the insurance brokers was undertaken by email. It had been agreed that the insurance policy would be held with Hiscox and a three year binding agreement had been confirmed. The total amount for 2017-18 was £3308.31. This decision was ratified.
- 11. Parish meeting:** It was confirmed that Superintendent Hitch would come to the parish meeting to discuss the restructure of the neighbourhood teams in Thames Valley Police. Cllr Roberts reported that an invitation had been sent to GE Healthcare. It was expected that someone would be able to attend and official confirmation was expected shortly.
- 12. Newsletter:** Cllr Walford reported that the next draft of the newsletter had been completed and would shortly be circulated to councillors for comments. Cllr Ingham noted that he was producing a leaflet regarding the Emerging Local Plan which would be distributed alongside the newsletter. It was planned to send the newsletter to the printers on 26 April for distribution commencing 6 / 7 May.
- 13. Defibrillator:** The new defibrillator has been positioned at the front of the village hall. This will also allow easy access for wheelchair users. The next stage is to await confirmation from the Ambulance Service that the defibrillator is operational. Training sessions will be organised to include representatives from the hall users and perhaps people who work in some of the shops opposite the village hall. A photograph will be

taken on 26 April with the Amersham Rotary Club and the district Rotary members who kindly arranged funding for the defibrillator.

- 14. Capital grants:** Cllr Roberts reported that meetings of the Revitalisation Group had been postponed and would now take place in June. Bids had been submitted for the improved security at Westwood Park and a new small footpath onto the village green.
- 15. Parish Council office hours:** Cllr Roberts reported that the revised opening hours for the parish office had been trialled successfully. The new hours were working well for staff and enabled more technical work to be undertaken when the office was closed. There had been no adverse reaction from the public. It was agreed that the new opening hours could continue.
- 16. MVAS:** Cllr Roberts reported that it appeared that a fault had developed with the MVAS. The MVAS was no longer in warranty. It was suggested that an engineer would be called out to deal with the current fault and a new maintenance contract would be initiated. It was noted that the existing version of the MVAS was an old style model. The Clerk was asked to investigate if it would be possible to arrange an upgrade for the existing MVAS. Cllr Ingham asked about the success of the MVAS. Cllr Roberts reported that the MVAS continued to provide lots of useful data which could be passed onto Thames Valley police who are concerned about speeding in a number of roads in the village. Cllr Drew reported that the MVAS in Elizabeth Avenue had also developed a fault some time. It was also suggested that it could move to a different location. The Clerk noted that she had reported these issues to the Local Area Technician previously but had not yet received a reply.
- 17. Westwood Park Football Club storage shed:** It had been previously noted that Westwood Park Football Club were experiencing difficulty in obtaining insurance for their new storage shed. A request had been made to the parish council to include the storage shed under the Westwood Park insurance with the football club willing to pay any additional costs for this. The Clerk reported this had been discussed with the council's insurance brokers. The final advice was that the football club could gift the shed to the parish council on the agreement that the shed remains for football purposes for the life of the football club. This would mean the parish council would have responsibility for the maintenance of the shed. Councillors agreed that this was a sensible approach. There was a discussion about how the additional costs should be covered. After a discussion, it was agreed that the football club would be charged £100 per annum to cover the insurance costs and also any maintenance which is required. The additional premium was expected to be £15.40. The football club currently pay a peppercorn rent of £50 for ground rental which would be replaced by the new insurance and maintenance charge.
- 18. Street lighting:** The parish council had received a request from a resident to fit a shield onto a street lamp outside her property. It was agreed that this would set a precedent and a shield would not be fitted in this case.
- 19. Parking implementation:** The inclusion of the topic of parking implementation in a recent local publication was discussed. It was agreed that no further action was required. Cllr Parker reported that the last two areas which required parking implementation had now been completed. The problem with the disabled parking bay in Cokes Lane had been dealt with by Bucks County Council. It was noted that all parking restrictions were now

operational. Cllr Drew asked about the situation with Bedford Avenue. It was noted that although it was a private road, Bucks County Council had highway responsibility.

- 20. Local Plan and Community Action Plan:** Cllr Ingham reported that the Co-ordination Group was producing a leaflet to be issued with the parish council newsletter. The leaflet will give information about the current situation with the Local Plan, an explanation of the objectives and would ask residents to pledge money in case of the need to produce an independent report which challenges the green belt assessment and other professional fees which may be incurred in this issue. A draft of the leaflet would be circulated to councillors for approval. Cllr Parker reported that there was a consultation on the Housing White Paper. He would produce a draft response and circulate to councillors for comment in order to meet the deadline of 2 May.
- 21. Local Area Forum:** At the previous meeting it had been reported that there was some additional LAF funding available and proposals were encouraged. It was agreed that additional bollards were required at the entrance of Stony Lane as the verge adjacent to the new footway was being damaged by heavy goods vehicles. It was also suggested some traffic management such as a red crossing was required on the Dr Challoners Approach Road outside the entrance to the Nature Park. Another MVAS would also be a possible option as the existing MVAS had almost covered all of the top priority locations over a period of two years. Finally, the issue of the lighting in the Beel Close underpass was discussed. It was agreed that more investigations should take place including further discussions with Bucks County Council. The Clerk would contact Paul Hodson with these suggestions.
- 22. Council relationships:** A request had been made for additional paperwork to be made available to visiting councillors attending the parish council meetings. The Clerk can supply any additional information as requested to avoid the overload of information. It was noted that there had been no further communication from Cllrs Bray and Rouse following the recent letter. There was a full discussion about the role of councillors in the parish and what steps should be taken. It was agreed that another letter would be sent to the councillors to invite them to parish council meetings and other events in the parish over the next few weeks and to ask for their opinions on key issues in the village. If no response was received, this situation would be discussed again.
- 23. Communications:** Cllr Roberts spoke about the large number of people who did not appear to have knowledge of issues taking place in the village despite many efforts at communication. She suggested that using social media may be a way of engaging different sections of the community. Cllr Davis volunteered to set up a Facebook page for the parish council. Cllr Ingham reported that his council email address was now operational.
- 24. Reports and Notifications:** (i) New Legal Topic Notes (circulated 13 March 2017) (ii) London and Luton Airport development (circulated 13 March 2017) (iii) Bucks County Council news: Chalfont (circulated 21 March 2017) (iv) My Bucks April 2017 (circulated 27 March 2017) (v) Parish precepts (circulated 30 March 2017) All noted.
- 25. Any other business: (i)** Letter from Cllr Martin Tett regarding the unitary authority proposal. The letter had been previously circulated. It was noted that a letter expressing the parish council's views had been sent to DCLG. If the council were approached to participate by Opinion Research Services, it would discuss its involvement at that stage.

26. To consider 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. (The items are confidential because they deal variously with contractual and legal matters.)
29. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 10th May in the village hall at 7:30pm. (Annual meeting)