

Minutes of a Little Chalfont Parish Council meeting

Held in the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Wednesday 14th June 2017 at 8.15pm

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

Members of the public: None.

In attendance: Mrs N Meldrum (Parish Clerk).

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Cllr G Roberts; Cllr N Brown; Cllr C Rouse; Cllr M Tett.
- 2. To accept a resolution that standing orders be suspended to allow any members of the public to speak (10 mins):** Not applicable.
- 3. To receive and approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 May 2017:** The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.
- 4. Declarations of Interest:** None.
- 5. Approval by Chairman of items for any other business:** (i) Low flying aircraft (ii) Nationwide (iii) Weedkilling.
- 6. Chairman's Report:** The Chairman's report had been previously circulated. Cllr Griffiths read the recent email which had been received from Cllr Caroline Rouse. It was agreed to thank Cllr Rouse for her email and ask for further feedback on her views on preferred option 6.
- 7. Clerk's Report:** It was noted that information had just been received from Amersham Town Council on their policy regarding commercial users of their parks. Cllr Drew felt that it was a good idea, however it did raise the issue of whether the policy would apply for professional dog walkers. It was agreed to check how other councils dealt with this issue. The issue of food being sold at Westwood Park was also discussed. It was agreed this would be placed on the agenda of the next Westwood Park working party meeting.
- 8. To receive reports, as appropriate, from members of outside bodies and working parties:** (i) Westwood Park working party. Cllr Griffiths reported that a local resident had been invited onto the Westwood Park working party. The CCTV system had been installed at the pavilion. It was noted that local residents had been notified about the installation prior to the event. (ii) Little Chalfont Community Library. Cllr Griffiths reported that it had been agreed that a shed would be constructed at the rear of the library to house additional books. A celebration of the ten year anniversary of the library had taken place in the previous week and had been sponsored by local businesses. (iii) Village Hall working party. Cllr Davis reported that new arrangements for depositing the hall key after hire were soon to be in place. (iv) Community Buildings working party. Cllr Drew reported that the exhibition had taken place in mid-May. Of those who attended, the response for a new community centre was overwhelmingly positive. A survey had been recently placed on the parish council website showing the proposed plans for the community centre. Responses were encouraged from residents. The plans would also be available at Village Day and feedback forms would also be available. Cllr Drew reported that he had recently met with Bob Young from CDC and the architects to discuss the proposed plans. Much progress had been made although there were still some issues to be resolved. It was expected that the planning application would be submitted in the late summer. It was asked if

there were any additional volunteers to man the parish council stall on Village Day. Cllr Roberts, Cllr Rafferty, Cllr Parker, Cllr Ingham and Cllr Griffiths were able to help at different points in the day. (v) Nature Park. The Clerk reported that there had been some problems with the installation of the slide which the Nature Park trustees were trying to resolve. A visit to Black Park to view a similar slide was taking place the next day. There had been some discussion about reducing the amount of area which was cordoned off in the Nature Park. The Clerk was seeking advice from the insurance company. The Clerk also reported that a proposal was being drawn up for a park ranger role to set up an educational programme within the park and to work with school groups on visits to the park. Any implications for the parish council would be reported.

9. **Report on digital engagement course and update on production of Facebook page.** Cllr Davis reported that the course she had attended had been very useful. A report of the course had been previously circulated. A draft template for social media was available which would be examined and adapted as appropriate. It was also agreed the Clerk would check the council's insurance cover with regard to cyber liability. Data protection regulations were expected to change shortly and the possibility of the need for council tablets was highlighted. Grant funding may be available to help support this. Cllr Davis also reported that the Facebook page was now operational and it was agreed that there should be publicity for the new page. Cllr Davis asked if there was a logo of the parish council which could be used on the new page. The Clerks will set up administrator status for the page.
10. **Report on the accounts 2016/17.** This report was noted. There were no further questions about the report.
11. **Internal audit report 2016/17.** (i) The report from the internal auditor had been previously circulated. It was noted that the vast majority of the previous recommendations had been implemented. Several recommendations had been made in the report including advice when conducting a tender exercise and methods of representing information during the budget process. The issue of the reserves would be discussed later in the meeting. (ii) Cllr Parker volunteered to undertake a review of the internal audit process.
12. **External audit report 2016/17.** (i) Annual Return 2016/17. The papers had been previously circulated. The governance report was discussed and approved and duly signed by the chairman. The annual report figures and supporting documents were discussed. Cllr Parker asked about the youth club funding. Cllr Drew reported that the youth club had folded and at the closure of the bank account the money had transferred to the parish council to use the money on youth activities. This had been previously agreed by the parish council. The figures were approved and the annual return was signed by the chairman. (ii) The notice of the appointment of the date of the exercise of public rights was noted. The period during which interested parties may inspect the accounts runs from 3 July 2017 until 11 August 2017.
13. (i) **List of payments and cheques to be signed:** The list of payments had been previously circulated. There were no further questions and the list was signed by the Chairman.
(ii) **Schedule of s137 payments 2016/17.** These payments had been previously circulated. There were no further comments about this paper. (iii) **Reserves:** The internal auditor had highlighted the level of the reserves. The building reserve was in place due to the plans to rebuild the community centre. It was agreed that the general reserve and contingency reserve could be reduced and the building reserve should be increased. After a discussion it was agreed that contingency fund should be reduced to £20,000 and the general reserve should be reduced to £100,000. The Clerk will action these changes.

- 14. Review of risk assessments, financial regulations and standing orders.** Final versions of the risk assessment and financial regulations had been previously circulated. These papers were agreed. The standing orders were also agreed, although it was acknowledged there was one outstanding piece of information which was awaited before the standing orders could be completed.
- 15. Review of parish meeting – 17 May 2017:** It was agreed that all of the speakers had received good feedback from attendees of the evening and had discussed useful and relevant topics for the village. It was agreed that the representatives from GE should be contacted with regard to the issues raised at the meeting.
- 16. Update on Local Plan:** Cllr Ingham reported on the recent meeting with Cheryl Gillan, MP and colleagues from Old Amersham and Chesham. Mrs Gillan is planning to write to Bob Smith of Chiltern District Council regarding the issues relating to the Local Plan. Cllr Ingham suggested an idea the co-ordination group were considering to contact parish councils and community organisations within Mrs Gillan's area. The proposal was to draft a letter from many areas regarding the green belt issues. It was proposed that the draft letter would be produced by the co-ordination group and the contact would be made by the parish clerk in Little Chalfont to other parish clerks in the area. A decision on if this would be a useful exercise would be decided by the co-ordination group. Cllr Ingham also reported that a meeting had taken place with the organisation instructed to help with the preferred option 6 issue. A site visit had taken place and it was expected that the Phase 1 letter would be received in two weeks.
- 17. MVAS:** As detailed in the Clerk's report the cost for the repair of the MVAS was £439.08 plus parts and VAT. It was agreed that the Clerks should arrange for the MVAS to be repaired at this cost. A maintenance contract would then be set up at a cost of £210 plus VAT per year. Cllr Drew reported that engineers from Bucks County Council had visited the VAS on Elizabeth Avenue. Although there was no obvious sign of a fault the distance on the VAS has been reset to try and solve the problem.
- 18. Village Day:** Volunteers for Village Day had been discussed under item 8 (iv). It was confirmed that the parish council stand would have details of the proposed community centre plans as well as some information about the parish council. More plans and a video of the proposals would be available inside the village hall.
- 19. Local Area Forum funding: (i)** Additional suggestions for projects to take place in 2016-17 had been requested. At the previous parish council meeting it had been agreed to bid for a second MVAS of which the parish council would pay half. Councillors also suggested that more trees could be planted in the village. Cherry trees could be planted along the A404 on the verge at the entrance to the village. Cherry trees had previously been planted there. Additional trees could also be planted on the village green. It was agreed to put this suggestion forward to Bucks County Council. **(ii)** The LAF application round for transportation bids was also discussed. Suggestions were for a red crossing by the entrance to the Nature Park. Discussions would need to take place with Dr Challoners High School in the first instance. Cllr Drew also suggested that additional bus stops could be installed in the village.
- 20. Grants: (i)** It was agreed that a donation of £100 would be made to the LCCA in thanks for their organisation of the delivery of the parish council newsletter. This was a section 137 payment. **(ii)** A request for funding had been received from Helen and Douglas House. Although councillors supported the charity, there was not currently a presence in the village and it was felt not appropriate to provide a parish council grant to the organisation.

21. **Westwood Park defibrillator:** The Clerk reported that a proposal had been made by Westwood Park Football Club to combine with the parish council and Chorleywood cricket club to purchase a defibrillator at Westwood Park, perhaps as part of a loan agreement. It was agreed that it would be very helpful to have a defibrillator at Westwood Park. It would need to be in a locked cabinet as at the village hall. It was agreed the Clerks would investigate grants and prices of defibrillators and cabinets. Cllr Griffiths will contact Den Reed regarding any possible grants through Sport UK.
22. **Westwood Park Football Club storage shed:** The Clerk reported that the committee of Westwood Park Football Club had met and agreed with the suggestion to gift the storage shed to the parish council in order to resolve their insurance issue. The Clerk will draw up an agreement on this basis.
23. **Creation of Parish Charter:** Cllr Drew stated he had no objection in principle to the proposal. Cllr Ingham felt it was important for any future unitary authority to have an officer responsible for liaison with parish councils. It was noted that there were some cases when the charter would be useful but at present it was not a high priority due to resources.
24. **Street associations:** It was noted that there were several Neighbourhood Watch schemes in operation in Little Chalfont. If these organisations worked well they were a beneficial means of expressing information. Discussions were also taking place between Chiltern District Council and the LCCA. It was agreed that the village hall could be used as a centre for the launch if requested.
25. **Village hall assistant:** It was reported that Lynda Golding had been appointed as a village hall assistant.
26. **Reports and notifications:** (i) LGC /NALC supplement survey (circulated 17 May 2017). (ii) My Bucks – June 2017 (circulated 30 May 2017) (iii) Traffic order – Lodge Lane (circulated 1 June 2017. All of these reports were noted.)
27. **Any other business:** (i) Low flying aircraft: Cllr Parker reported that the investigation on low flying aircraft in the area had been completed and he would ensure it was sent to the parish council for information. (ii) Nationwide. Information about the correspondence about the renewal of the Nationwide had been included in the Clerk’s report. The existing account was due for renewal by 10 July. Councillors agreed to renew the Nationwide Business one year saver account at an interest rate of 0.75% (iii) Weedkilling. Cllr Drew reported that the weeds had grown rapidly in recent weeks. The Clerk had arranged a meeting with Amersham Town Council to assess the work required on all the footpaths in the village and the weedkilling programme would be part of that.
28. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 12 July 2017 in the village hall at 8.15pm, following the planning meeting which commences at 7.30pm.

Signed..... Date.....