

Minutes of a Meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 11 November 2009 in the Village Hall
Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont at 8.25pm

Present: Cllr M Dale; Cllr B Drew; Cllr C Gibbs; Cllr L Hunt; Cllr P Martin (from item 6); Cllr G Smith and Cllr F Wilkinson (Chairman).

In Attendance: Mrs. J Mason (Clerk).

Members of the Public: Mr P Martin (Items 1 – 5)

1. **Apologies for absence:** These were received from Cllr C Ingham.
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2009:** These were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
3. **Suspension of standing orders:** There were no members of the public present who wished to speak.
4. **To receive declarations of interest:** None.
5. **Approval of Items for Any Other Business (item 16):** The following were agreed: Westwood Park Working Party; a statement by the Chairman; parking in Amersham Old Town; surveillance cameras
6. **Councillor Vacancy - to receive and vote on nomination(s) for co-option:** The Chairman reported that following the resignation of Cllr Tate the appropriate public notice had been displayed and an election had not been requested. The Council could now receive nominations for the co-option of a new Councillor to fill the vacancy and the Chairman proposed that Mr P Martin be co-opted as a member of Little Chalfont Parish Council. The nomination was seconded by Cllr B Drew and carried unanimously. Cllr Martin signed a declaration of acceptance of office.
7. **Chairman's Report:** On Remembrance Sunday (8 November), the Chairman had attended the service at Old Amersham in The Memorial Gardens. He had laid a wreath on behalf of the Council and was pleased to report how well attended the service had been with representatives from a wide range of organisations. This was the first time the Council had taken a formal role in the service and he hoped this involvement would continue in years to come. He also reported that BCC would be replacing the damaged entry sign on the A 404 outside Repton House with a more vandal proof option. He was pleased to report that Transport for Buckinghamshire had undertaken to install the cycle racks during the week commencing 16 November and that the Clerk had ordered the new trees for planting in Beechwood Avenue and this was scheduled for November or December. He reminded Councillors that the third Farmers' Market would take place on Saturday 14 November, adding that the Library had been an unexpected beneficiary with vastly increased footfall on market days. Finally, he confirmed that the Clerk was seeking costs for bollards in St Nicolas Close which would be reported to the Council at a future date to assist in deciding whether the proposals suggested by a resident at the 14 October meeting should be supported.
8. **First meeting of Chalfonts Local Area Forum on 21 October 2009 including decisions on the Local Priorities Budget:** The Chairman reported on the first meeting of the Chalfonts LAF; one of nineteen in the County and the last to be established. The meeting had been organised and chaired by the County Council and as this was the first meeting the voting protocol had been agreed (one vote per organisation) together with the terms of reference. In future recommendations from the LAF would be ratified at County level but on this occasion the Chairman was pleased to report that the LAF had been charged with agreeing the allocation of the Local Priorities Budget for 2009/10. To this end Little Chalfont Parish Council had been awarded £1664 towards the MUGA at Westwood Park whilst CDC had been successful in their bid for £1000 to pay for portable floodlights for the planned five a side football matches at Westwood Park between young people and the police.

9. **Clerk's Report:** This had been circulated in advance. In brief, all actions arising from the last meeting had been undertaken; various Transport for Buckinghamshire (formerly Highways) items were in hand although flooding was again a problem under the railway bridge despite warnings to TfB; a number of repairs and maintenance problems were being rectified and the electrical fault in the supply to the tree lights was both serious and expensive to repair. However, the Clerk was now liaising with BCC on an alternative solution.
10. **Financial matters:**
- (i) List of cheques to be signed and cheques signed since last meeting: This was circulated and approved.
 - (ii) Income and Expenditure Report: This had been previously circulated and the Clerk reminded the Council of serious metering problems which had led to inaccurate electricity bills and a large refund.
 - (iii) Bank reconciliations: The bank statements and corresponding reconciliations were initialled by the Chairman.
 - (iv) Budget Preparation 2010/11: considered under item 20 below in view of commercial confidentiality at this stage.
 - (v) External Audit Annual Return: This had been received and the Auditors had no cause for concern. The return would be displayed on the Council's notice boards as required by statute.
11. Reports from outside bodies: (i) **Little Chalfont Community Association:** Cllr Drew had attended a Committee meeting on 26 October. CDC core strategy had been discussed. Concerns regarding the inadequacy of the capacity of the bins on the Village Green had also been raised. The Clerk added that she had been in discussion with a member of the LCCA on this issue and they were jointly examining the options available. Cllr Drew also reported that arrangements were well in hand for the Christmas Fair on 5 December, from 12-4pm, in the Village Hall. On 19 December a brass band would be playing carols on the Village Green. Finally, the Association were still seeking a secretary. (ii) **NAG:** Cllr Smith advised that the next NAG meeting was not until the following week. However, he had good news regarding the setting up of the youth club at Bell Lane School; it was hoped that the first meeting would be in December. Cllr Drew added that it would be appropriate to have a Council representative on the Youth Club Management Committee once established. Finally, Cllr Smith agreed to ask at the NAG why there had been crime scene signs up over the last few weeks. (iii) **GE Healthcare:** Cllr Gibbs reported that the new effluent pipe was now in place. The results of the recent ground water sampling had been very good, showing no cause for concern. The company had played host to a number of children from Belarus and had made generous donations to four local charities. The next meeting was scheduled for April and GE had requested that the Council nominate a second councillor to the Committee, to substitute for Cllr Gibbs should the need arise.
12. **Amersham Hospital:** As a result of concerns expressed to the Council by local people, the Assistant Clerk had asked the local NHS Trust for an update on the rumours about closure of various services at Amersham and transfers to High Wycombe. Summarising the Chief Executive's 10 November response, the Clerk advised that the Chief Executive was meeting with Cllr Noel Brown at CDC on 18 November. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Cllr Brown asking to be advised of the outcome of that meeting.
13. **Paradigm Housing:** David Smith's 13 October letter concerning Chiltern Heights and the land behind Sandycroft Road had been circulated to Councillors by e-mail on 4 Nov 2009. It was agreed that the Clerk should respond advising that the Council would wish to continue pursuing options regarding the land. Regarding Chiltern Heights, the Clerk was meeting on 11 December with Paradigm's Tenancy and Neighbourhood Officer to progress matters and would report back.
14. **Delegated Budgets 2010/11:** It was noted that the deadline for submission of projects is 30 November. The Chairman reminded Councillors that the project to widen the pavement at the end of Burtons Lane and install bollards there was going ahead for the current year. For 2010/11 it was agreed that a request, supported by appropriate documentation, should be submitted for the provision of two vehicle activated

speed signs in Elizabeth Avenue. The project submitted last year to install lighting in the underpass between Beel Close and Marygold Way should be re-submitted as an alternative.

15. Reports and Notifications :

- (i) Valuation Officer Agency – letters dated October 2009 re rateable value of hall, outbuilding and scout hut. Response due 30 November
- (ii) Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust 14 October e-mail re transfer of women and children’s care inpatient service from Wycombe to Stoke Mandeville.
- (iii) Transport for Buckinghamshire 5 October letter – Permission for signs advertising charity card sale in Hall 6 November 2009.
- (iv) Neighbourhood Policing Newsletter October 2009
- (v) CDC 16 October letter – details of precept requirement to be provided by 8 January 2010.
- (vi) CDC – 19 October letter re changes to dog waste bin charges.
- (vii) CDC – 21 October e-mail re wintertime burglary campaign dates.
- (viii) BCC 26 October e-mail re meeting 21 January 2010, at Little Chalfont Village Hall, to discuss Local Area Community Plan.
- (ix) BALC County Training Partnership 28 October e-mail re courses.
- (x) BCC 27 October e-mail attaching Rights of Way and Access Group newsletter.
- (xi) BALC 27 October invite to AGM 13 November 2009.
- (xii) CDC 28 October e-mail attaching invitation to Chiltern Community Partnership Transport Symposium 19 November 2009.
- (xiii) BALC 27 October e-mail attaching invitation to BRAG Annual Conference at Mentmore Golf Club 23 November 2009.
- (xiv) BCC 30 October letter confirming £1644 towards MUGA.

16. Any Other Business: (i) Westwood Park Working Party – Cllr Martin was nominated to the Working Party; (ii) Statement by the Chairman – Cllr Wilkinson announced his resignation from the Council with effect from the end of the month. Cllr Drew expressed his regret at this announcement; the Chairman had worked very hard as a Councillor and Chairman. The Council shared Cllr Drew’s view that a debt of gratitude was owed to Cllr Wilkinson for his inspiring contribution since the establishment of the Council. (iii) Parking in Amersham Old Town – The Clerk advised of the dates that proposals could be viewed. (iv) Surveillance cameras – Cllr Dale updated Councillors on the recent positioning of what appeared to be surveillance cameras on a telegraph pole in Harewood Road. He and the Clerk had tried to track down the source of the cameras to no avail and on the advice of CDC the police had been contacted. Cllr Smith agreed to raise the matter at the NAG whilst Cllr Wilkinson undertook to write to Thames Valley Police.

17. Resolution that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was advisable, in the public interest, that the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting and be instructed to withdraw: No members of the public present.

18. **Village Open Spaces and Westwood Park Sports Grounds Maintenance Contracts:** Cllr Smith presented the recommendations made following the 4 November meeting between himself, Cllr Hunt and the Clerk to discuss the tenders that had been received for both contracts. These had been measured against a comparison of criteria such as staffing, training, policies and procedures, references, finances, insurance and, of course, cost. It was recommended that the first contract for gardening and associated work at locations in Little Chalfont be awarded to Spruced Up Ltd. It was recommended the second contract for the maintenance of the sports grounds and other recreational facilities at Westwood Park, be awarded to Amersham Town Council. Following a discussion, it was agreed unanimously that both these proposals be accepted and that

the Clerk should advise both organisations appropriately and finalise the draft contracts. The unsuccessful tenderers would be advised accordingly.

19. **Feedback from Working Parties:** The next meeting of the Westwood Park Working party was scheduled for 19 November 2009.
20. **Budget Preparation 2010/11:** The preliminary outturn calculations and budget proposals for 2010/11 were circulated and discussed. There was a brief discussion about next year's precept. Finally, it was agreed that prior to the next meeting Cllrs Smith and Drew would meet with the Clerk to discuss the fine detail of her budget proposals in preparation for the 9 December meeting.
21. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 09 December 2009 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Signed.....

Date.....