

Notes of Little Chalfont Parish Meeting
Held on Wednesday 22 April 2015 at 7.30pm
In the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Members of the Parish Council Present: Cllr. B Drew (Chairman); Cllr. J Hinkly; Cllr. M Parker; Cllr. V Patel; Cllr. D Rafferty; Cllr. G Roberts; Cllr. J Walford and Cllr. J Wyper.

Speakers: Dave Stewart, Katie Duggan, Drina Parker

In Attendance: Mrs N Meldrum (Parish Clerk); Mrs S Owens (Assistant Clerk).

Members of the Public (list only includes those who signed the attendance sheet): K Jones, B Jones, J Harrison, B Sejejs, A.J. Lockyer, M.E. Treharne, B.D. Treharne, P.R. Burgess, E Evans, R Rolls, A.M. Moore, P Conell, G Glover, T.D. Glover, S Beresford, S Strange, D Santon, V.J. Way, J Davis, A Davis, D Parker, D.C. Howroyd, B.M. Johnson, Cllr. M Tett, R Funk, E Harris, D Drew, V Edis, A Blatherwick, T Duparl, A Christie, R Hartshorne, S Hartshorne, M Berkerey, J Carr, P Way, E Cooper, T Dolman, S Christie, R Berkerey, Cllr. D Phillips, Cllr. P. Martin, D Redmayne, B Knight.

1. Apologies for Absence: Mr and Mrs Watkins, Mr Ian Griffiths and Mr and Mrs Dite.

2. Notes of the Parish Meeting held on 7 May 2014: Cllr Drew welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced each of the parish and district councillors as well as the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk. He outlined what was contained in the notes from the last Parish Meeting held on 7 May 2014 and explained that there were copies available in the hall and that a copy had been put on the website at www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk. The notes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Cllr Drew then explained the format for the evening and introduced the first speaker.

3. Guest Speakers:

a. Dave Stewart – Team Delivery Manager, Transport for Bucks: Dave Stewart said that he is responsible for looking after the road transport network in Buckinghamshire and he was there to communicate with Little Chalfont residents about the work of the organisation. There had been a period of major change during 2014 and a period of consolidation in 2015, where the aim was to focus on the needs of the customer. It had been recognised that there was a difference between being contractually compliant and doing what was right for the customer. Every year, Transport for Bucks had to deliver the same service for 3% lower cost. Safety was of major importance as everything they did was potentially dangerous. Changing the culture around safety had made a huge difference. The Capital Maintenance Programme involved either resurfacing, overlaying or surface dressing roads. A lot of technology went into what they do and why they do it. Investment would be made into Little Chalfont Parish, but the schemes could cause some disruption. A new material was being used to fill potholes which was a cheaper solution and one that caused less disruption. Previous Key Performance Indicators focused on the output rather than the outcome and failed to put customers first. The new measures of success would change the emphasis to the customer. The challenge ahead was to improve at the things they were not so good at and to continue to communicate effectively. Cllr Rafferty asked about a possible train service that would go from Chesham through Little Chalfont to Watford and whether this would affect the current bus service on this route. Mr Stewart replied that he was unaware of this development but would find out more information.

A resident queried why Transport for Bucks had 124 staff and 127 Operatives. Mr Stewart replied that the 127 operatives were the core operatives that carried out the regular jobs, but contractors were used for other work. The resident also asked for clarification about schemes chosen by 'members'. Mr Stewart said that 'members' referred to County Councillors who had good local knowledge and this knowledge was needed in addition to the input of the technical experts. In response to a question about KPIs, Mr Stewart explained that these were Key Performance Indicators.

There was a question about parking restrictions and Mr Stewart said he was aware that there was an ongoing issue in Little Chalfont and it was extremely complex, but work was progressing on this and it was hoped a resolution would be reached soon.

Cllr Drew asked about the service road at Nightingales Corner which was in a terrible state of repair and whether it would be possible for the shops to contribute to its resurfacing if they wished to do so or volunteer their labour. Mr Stewart said there would be no objection to the shops contributing to the cost, but he was doubtful whether they would be willing to do so. For health and safety reasons it would not be possible for the shop owners to volunteer their labour.

b. Katie Duggan – JBKS Architects (appointed architects for the proposed community centre):

Katie Duggan said that the current Village Hall was sixty years old and was becoming more high maintenance. Only one event could be held at any one time and there was a lack of storage. The proposed two storey Community Centre would be over twice the size in terms of footprint, but would be set much further back in the site. This enabled it to be double storied but with a low pitch roof. The plans included meetings rooms, kitchenettes, storage facilities for all the regular users of the hall and a new Parish Council office. Following the previous consultation, the views of residents had been taken on board and moving forward, any additional feedback would be taken into account. Ms Duggan would be attending a meeting with planning officers the following Monday for a pre-application consultation. The plans had been through a disability access assessment. There were no plans to demolish the toilets in Snells Wood car park.

CDC Cllr Don Phillips said that he felt the plans were rather expansive at a time when every other Council was cutting back. There were other halls in the area that could be hired such as the St Georges Church meeting room. He did not see the need for so many storage facilities and wanted to see a business plan for the building. A member of the audience said that the regular users of the Hall were aware of the storage needs and that the other hall options he mentioned were not comparable to the Village Hall and were not within easy walking distance of the village centre. She felt it was a shame that the resident's representative on CDC did not support the views of residents. Cllr Drew said that the majority of residents were supportive of the new centre and that it would only result in a modest increase in Council Tax. There were a number of options to fund the scheme, including lottery grants, but the plans would be scaled back if financially necessary. A business case was being drawn up and a full business case would be submitted with the planning application. Roger Funk said that it was important to have a new centre that would last for another fifty years. Cllr Hinkly said that chairs and tables had to be stored in the existing hall and this was potentially a safety issue. The proposed development would take account of this storage requirement.

c. Drina Parker – Nature Park Action Group: There had been dramatic changes at the Nature Park recently. The site had to be made safe and this had involved a lot of tree work. There was

now a more open path to the meadow, which had been made out of wood chippings and logs from the tree clearance. Prince Charles had recognised the meadow as part of the Coronation Meadow Scheme. Planning permission would soon be sought for the path that will go around the site. Four chainsaw carved benches were being commissioned. It was hoped the Park would be opened by summer 2016, but in the meantime residents could book a tour with Rob Rolls, either before or on Village Day on the 6th of June. Mrs Parker thanked all those who were working very hard on the project.

- 4. Chairman's Report** - The full report can be viewed on the Parish Council's website at www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk. The Chairman thanked the Council and staff for their hard work over the year. In particular he thanked Cllr James Wyper and Cllr John Hinkly, who were both standing down as Councillors. John Hinkly had been an excellent Vice-Chairman and would be greatly missed. He also thanked Janet Mason who had recently resigned from the position of Parish Clerk. He said that there should be an election of Parish Councillors in May, but not enough candidates had stood to make an election possible and so the Council would be going forward with only six Councillors instead of nine. He encouraged residents to put themselves forward to be co-opted as a Parish Councillor. He then gave a brief summary of his annual report highlighting some of the work of the council during the past year, which included the war memorial that had been erected in time for the Remembrance Sunday parade. There had been a very moving Lights Out ceremony to commemorate the outbreak of World War One. Cllr John Hinkly reported that Westwood Park continued to be a great local attraction and that the play area had been slightly remodelled. The football and cricket clubs were very well attended and they were grateful for the support of Little Chalfont Parish Council. Cllr Hinkly thanked the Chairman for his services to the Parish Council and for working so hard to make Little Chalfont an excellent place to live and work. He said that the Chairman's experience was invaluable. Continuing his report, the Chairman reported that a mobile vehicle activated sign (MVAS) had been erected on the Amersham Road and it would be moved to a succession of different locations throughout the village to help analyse and tackle the level of speeding. The latest edition of the Parish Council newsletter had been delivered to every household in the Parish and more information about the Council could be found on the website.
- 5. Open Forum:** Denis Howroyd read out a letter he had sent to the Parish Council about the lack of a bus service to the village centre for residents on the north side of the railway. The number 71 Bus ran away from the village centre rather than towards it. It was concerning that there was a planning application to demolish the two shops in Elizabeth Avenue, which would make it difficult for some residents to buy food. Cllr Drew responded that the bus routes had altered a couple of years ago in order to save money and that the bus had to go on a circular route as it was unable to turn around in the village centre. It was felt that the present clockwise direction was better than anti-clockwise as it catered for people returning from the village centre, carrying shopping. A decision had not yet been made to pull down the shops, but an application had been made for new shops with flats above. The Parish Council would consider the matter. A resident said that the speed sign on Elizabeth Avenue was not having any effect on drivers and speeding was still a problem. Cllr Drew responded that police had monitored the area and the sign had slowed people down, although he accepted that the influence of the sign wore off in time. This was the advantage of the new moveable sign.

A resident said that rubbish bins were being left full overnight at Westwood Park. Litter was often deposited over the grass by the morning, probably by wildlife. A request was made for the Parish Council to look at the timing of emptying the bins or installing bins with lids.

- 6. **Close:** The Chairman thanked the speakers and everyone for attending what had been an interesting and informative evening.

Signed.....

Date.....