

**Minutes of a Little Chalfont Parish Council meeting
Held in the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont
Wednesday 14 December 2016 at 8.15pm**

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

Members of the public: Mr J Brooks

In attendance: Mrs N Meldrum (Parish Clerk).

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr M Parker.
2. **To accept a resolution that standing orders be suspended to allow any members of the public to speak (10 mins):** Jim Brooks, Chairman of the Little Chalfont Community Library, spoke about the grant application which had been made to the parish council. He explained the library had been in existence for 10 years and the previous grants from the parish council of £6,000 had been very valuable in keeping the library open. He noted the grant had been reduced last year due to the level of reserves held by the library. Mr Brooks explained there was a concern that the grant received from Bucks County Council was also under threat. He noted the difficulty of maintaining the balance between keeping a level of reserves which indicated the library finances were healthy. However, if the library did not appear in a good financial condition, new grants may not be generated. It was noted that the current application for £6,000 equated approximately to £1 per resident.
3. **To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2016:** The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.
4. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr I Griffiths; Cllr D Rafferty.
5. **Approval by Chairman of items for any other business:** (i) Lorries on Bell Lane. (ii) Broadband.
6. **Chairman's Report:** Cllr Roberts reviewed the items in her report. There were no further questions.
7. **Clerk's Report:** Several issues related to existing items on the agenda and other items highlighted were for information. There were no further questions.
8. **To receive reports, as appropriate, from members of outside bodies and working parties:**
 - (i) Community Buildings Working Party. Cllr Drew reported that the meeting with Chiltern District Council had taken place regarding the strip of land owned by CDC between the village hall and Snells Wood car park. Further discussions were continuing on this matter.
 - (ii) Little Chalfont Community Library. Cllr Griffiths reported it was the 10th anniversary of the library in 2017 and a celebratory coffee morning would take place on 18th February. It was noted that figures had been collected to show that 400 people had visited the library in one week.
 - (iii) Westwood Park Working Party. Cllr Griffiths noted the working group had not met but the signs to alleviate the car parking problems at the entrance to Westwood Park had been installed. He advised that cars were not parking where the signs had been installed, however, parking continued to take place at the very front of Westwood Park which was causing a hazard. Cllr Griffiths put forward a proposal for two additional signs to be installed. This was agreed.
 - (iv) Nature Park Management Group. Cllr Roberts reported that the order had been placed for the new slide. A donation had been received to cover

the full cost of the slide. It was expected the slide would be installed in the spring. As previously noted the damage to the picnic bench was being dealt with and a positive feature would be created on the table. (v) GE Healthcare. Cllr Patel reported that there were a number of changes occurring at GE Healthcare. The building at Amersham Place is being refurbished and staff will be relocated to Pollards Wood. The test results have been good and no enforcement action is required. The building at the front of the complex on White Lion Road is also being demolished. (vi) Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Strategic Partnership meeting. Cllr Patel reported that this meeting had focussed on the topic of dementia. This related to the safe places article in the recent parish council newsletter. Further details of shops which are noted as safe places for vulnerable people are listed on the CDC website. (vii) Finch Lane. Cllr Patel reported that he was continuing with this project and will be consulting with the neighbours.

9. **Financial matters (i) List of payments and cheques to be signed:** There were no questions about the payments. Cllr Roberts signed the payment record. **(ii) Income and Expenditure report:** Cllr Rafferty asked about the level of expenditure for the village hall which he expected to be higher at this time of year. It was reported that regular users pay in arrears which would account for this. The busiest time for the hall was taking place and continuing through the next three months of the New Year. Cllr Ingham reported that the lectern in the village hall needed to be replaced. **(iii) Agreement to set up a direct debit for payments to HM Customs and Revenue:** It was agreed that the direct debit could be set up. It was also agreed that in certain situations utilities bill could be paid and direct debits set up. A number of the accounts required payment which did not fit into the parish council's new payment structure. Cllr Walford asked about the reallocation of funds. This was still being looked at.
10. **Budget 2017-18 (discussed as Item 2 in the meeting):** Cllrs Davis, Parker and Roberts had met with the Clerk to discuss the next draft of the proposed budget for 2017-18. This draft had then been circulated to councillors for discussion. It was noted that the majority of budget lines had remained very similar. The main differences centred on the possible contribution to the fund to oppose the removal of land from the green belt and an increase of funding to the Building reserve in anticipation of the building of the new community centre. A contribution of Lottery funding was also assumed with regard to the figures relating to the community centre. Further work would be undertaken to establish the impact of the parish council portion of the council tax. It was noted that there was a possibility that the parish council precept could be capped in future years which would reduce the possibility of increasing the building reserve. Cllr Ingham reported it would be prudent to set aside some funding for possible work on the removal of green belt land. Cllr Drew felt it was important to retain the budget lines for the allotments, the Beel Close underpass and the defibrillator. He also noted that the car park at Westwood Park was in need of remedial work and this could not wait until 2018-19. It was agreed that different options with regard to the precept would be examined, together with the impact on the council tax and would be circulated for the next meeting.
11. **Parish meeting 2017:** It was agreed that a list of suggested dates would be discussed at the next parish council meeting.
12. **Bucks County Council unitary proposal:** It was reported that Cllr Parker and the Clerk had attended a BCC conference on Monday 12 December regarding the BCC proposals for a

unitary authority. There was a discussion about the different proposals including those made by the district councils. It was noted that a response had been made to Bucks County Council regarding the unitary proposals in the summer and it was agreed that no further response was necessary.

- 13. Grants and Donations (discussed as item 3 in the meeting):** Cllr Davis asked for an indication of how much other applying organisations had been granted in the past to see the possible level of expenditure. (i) Little Chalfont Community Library. A discussion took place about the level of grant to the library. It was noted that Cllr Parker had written to councillors to suggest the full application was not granted due to the number of other priorities the parish council had to fulfil. Cllr Drew highlighted that whatever the level of grant awarded, this did not affect the esteem in which the library was held by the parish council and he acknowledged all the good work undertaken and the benefit to the community. However, Cllr Drew noted that the finances currently looked healthy and the figure of £6,000 was probably too high. Cllr Griffiths noted that with other grants and other demands of the budget, the full grant application was not affordable. Cllr Ingham agreed and felt that if the library was in financial difficulty that would be the time in which additional grant could possibly be awarded. A number of options of grant figures were discussed. Cllr Rafferty proposed that £4,000 was granted which was seconded by Cllr Griffiths. Cllr Ingham proposed that £3,500 was awarded which was seconded by Cllr Drew. A vote was taken and it was agreed that £3,500 would be granted. However, it was expressed that if the library experienced any financial difficulties the parish council should be notified. (ii) Good Companions. It was agreed that £150 should be awarded. (iii) Chesham Christmas Party for the Elderly. It was agreed that £100 should be awarded. (iv) Chiltern Hard of Hearing Club. It was agreed that £260 should be awarded to cover the cost of the equipment requested. (v) Chiltern Dial-a-Ride. It was agreed that £300 would be granted to this organisation. (vi) LCCA. It was agreed that £100 would be awarded in appreciation of the delivery of the parish council newsletter by volunteers.
- 14. Parking:** Cllr Drew reported that work on the new yellow lines was expected to start on week commencing 19 December, weather permitting. The work in Chenies Parade was affected by the Christmas embargo and therefore work would take place later in this area.
- 15. Plan for Nightingales Corner:** The Clerk reported all the businesses in Nightingales Corner had been contacted regarding the possibility of sponsoring a cycle rack, with appropriate advertising included. Four responses had been received to date. It was agreed to check if planning permission was required given that advertising would be included on the cycle racks. Following an examination of the costs, it was agreed that the interested businesses would be asked for a contribution of £250, with advertising lasting for two years per cycle rack.
- 16. Format of LCPC website:** The contractor responsible for the parish council website had made some amendments to the website to make it more user friendly given the higher usage of mobile technology. The link to the draft new website had been previously circulated to councillors. Councillors agreed that the new site was an improvement and was more practical. Cllr Drew highlighted that the tabs were currently placed in the order of hits for each page. However, he suggested that the order should be slightly different, for example placing the council meetings first. There was a discussion about the order of tabs and it was agreed that councillors would look at the site again. Cllr Davis will look at the hall

booking information. Cllr Rafferty noted that some items were not accessible on the site, but it was explained that not all information had been uploaded at this stage.

- 17. Possible district association for Chiltern town and parish councils:** The paper from Cllr Isobel Darby had been previously circulated. Given the current situation of possible change of structure at district and county level, it was agreed to respond that it would be satisfactory to continue with the existing situation.
- 18. Proposed removal of pay phones:** A document from Chiltern District Council had been previously circulated. It was confirmed the phone box in Bell Lane which was not mentioned on the list was not affected by any proposed changes. It was agreed that it would be requested that the phone box in the centre of the village should stay, however the parish council would like details of cost implications for the council before a final decision is made.
- 19. Emergency Plan:** It was reported that the parish council had been contacted by a neighbouring council with regard to the Emergency Plan. It was noted that CDC had a lengthy Emergency Plan in place but there was nothing specific to Little Chalfont at present. Cllr Roberts reported that, dependent on the emergency, the police would generally take control and direct other organisations as appropriate. It was agreed that a basic emergency plan would be drawn up, primarily covering venues which could be opened in an emergency, for example the village hall. Once agreed, this document would be posted on the parish council website.
- 20. Reports and Notifications: (i) My Bucks December 2016 (circulated 1st December 2016).**
The document was noted.
- 21. Any Other Business:** (i) Lorries on Bell Lane. Cllr Roberts reported that problems were being experienced by large lorries travelling down Bell Lane and trying to progress along Elizabeth Avenue or along the road towards Latimer. It was noted that there was a sign showing the weight restriction but it was suggested that it would better positioned further towards the junction of Bell Lane and White Lion Road. Cllr Drew suggested that the BCC local area technician should be contacted with regard to this issue. Cllr Drew also suggested that small stone bollards could be placed on the verges on the junction of Bell Lane and Elizabeth Avenue to protect the condition of the verges. It was also agreed that Yodel would also be contacted as these lorries seemed to be experiencing difficulties in particular. (ii) Broadband. Cllr Drew asked if it was possible to find out when good quality broadband would be installed throughout the village. This will be investigated with BT.
- 22. Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 11 January 2017 in the village hall at 7:30pm.