

Minutes of a Little Chalfont Parish Council meeting

Held in the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Wednesday 9 March 2016 at 8.15pm

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

Members of the public: Cllr Noel Brown; Mr Nick da Costa.

In attendance: Mrs N Meldrum (Parish Clerk) and Miss S Matthews (Assistant Clerk).

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Cllr J Walford.
- 2. To accept a resolution that standing orders be suspended to allow any members of the public to speak (10 mins):** Mr da Costa spoke about the large number of estate agency boards particularly in Bell Lane. This also included properties which had already been sold; sold and let signs are only permitted to be on display for two weeks. Mr da Costa suggested a letter could be sent to the local estate agents about this issue. Mr da Costa also reported that larger councils can apply for powers to approve all estate agency signs. Cllr Drew commented that this issue had arisen previously and the council had agreed to monitor the situation. The issue may be placed on the agenda for the next council meeting in April. Cllr Brown reported that if the signs were on public land they could be removed. It was also suggested contacting the Association of Estate Agents for their advice.
- 3. To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2016:** The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting. The confidential minutes would be discussed in the confidential section of the meeting.
- 4. Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Patel declared an interest in item 16 Parking issues.
- 5. Approval by Chairman of items for any other business:** (i) Parish Newsletter (ii) timing of papers for meetings; (iii) to approve councillors to sign contracts on behalf of the council; (iv) air pollution in the village; (v) Donkey Field; (vi) Statters Field.
- 6. Chairman's Report:** Cllr Drew highlighted the key aspects of the Chairman's report. There were no further comments.
- 7. Clerk's Report:** The Clerk reported on two issues not included on the agenda. Further grant options were being investigated for the automated external defibrillator. Work was ongoing to finalise three quotes for the Trim Trail equipment agreed for Westwood Park. At present, the most competitive quote was from Sovereign which was within the agreed £6,000 budget. It was agreed that if the costs rose above the agreed budget, the proposals would be brought back to the parish council meeting.
- 8. To receive reports, as appropriate, from members of outside bodies and working parties:** (i) Little Chalfont Community Library. Cllr Griffiths reported the new computer suite in the library is now operational. (ii) Westwood Party Working Party. Cllr Griffiths reported the planned meeting did not take place. It was reported that 50 'legal high' canisters had been found in the car park. The police had been notified. (iii) LCCA. Cllr Parker reported several issues. The advertisement of the renewal of bus passes had been raised. The Clerk confirmed that the posters had been placed on noticeboards throughout the village. A CCTV camera had been installed on Stony Lane. The Parish Council had not been informed about this. It was

understood that CDC and the police were permitted to work together on issues such as this in the interests of security. It was noted that the large grass verge on Amersham Road had been cut with many daffodils destroyed. It was agreed to try and identify who had cut this grass as there were no planned cuts in this time period. The governors of the Chiltern Valley Academy had resigned. After a discussion, it was agreed that Parish Council had no control over this. The final issue related to the payment of invoices regarding the Local Plan, for example leaflet production and fees for the planning consultant. Cllr Drew also noted that the Parish Council had other costs relating to the Local Plan such as staff time and the hire of the hall. Cllr Parker suggested the Parish Council pay a third of the costs. Cllr Drew suggested the Parish Council could pay for the printing costs and the LCCA could pay the costs for the planning consultant. Cllr Parker proposed this as a solution and Cllr Ingham seconded it. (iv) Cllr Drew reported that the Community Buildings Working Party was due to meet in the following week to decide on next steps. An Ecology report had been received which indicated that ecologically, while the area of land adjacent to the existing village hall was ancient woodland, it did not have strong attributes usually associated with ancient woodland. Cllr Parker suggested the matter could be discussed when the Co-ordination Group met with the District Council about the Local Plan.

9. **(i) List of payments and cheques to be signed:** The list of payments had been previously circulated. There were no comments and the schedule was signed. **(ii) Income and Expenditure report:** There were no further comments about this paper. **(iii) Update on projected expenditure in 2015-16.** The Clerk had produced a spreadsheet annotating the expected spend on budget lines to the year end. Cllr Drew explained this highlighted some issues relating to budget setting and also some expenditure on one off projects which had not spent as much as had been anticipated. The Clerk confirmed she would add an additional column into the spreadsheet for final estimated figures and circulate to councillors.
10. **LCPC investment paper.** Cllr Drew introduced the paper prepared by Cllr Walford, with help from Cllr Davis and Cllr Parker, which had been previously circulated to councillors. It noted the difficulties in finding accounts with any significant interest. One suggestion was to invest with the Community Bank however this was perceived as safe but unpredictable. Cllr Drew suggested investing with the mainstream banks. Cllr Parker highlighted that the figures suggested were higher than the £75,000 threshold set out by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme but after research the councillors felt it was better to invest with the larger mainstream banks. Cllr Parker proposed to accept this paper and as funds matured the money could be reinvested. This was seconded by Cllr Davis. All councillors were happy with this arrangement.
11. **Insurance:** Cllr Drew reported that he and the Clerk had met with the representative from Came and Co recently for the annual review. Quotes from three insurance companies were set out. It had been recommended that the Parish Council continue their insurance with Aviva with an insurance premium of £3,482.43 inclusive of insurance premium tax. Cllr Drew proposed that the parish council continue their insurance with Aviva. He also highlighted the option of a 3 year binding agreement which offered a lower premium. Cllr Parker asked if the figure was fixed for 3 years or if it would increase. The Clerk would contact Came and Co and investigate. It was agreed to accept the 3 year binding agreement on the condition that the premium would remain fixed, or only increase by the rate of the Insurance premium tax. This was proposed by Cllr Rafferty and seconded by Cllr Parker.
12. **Local Plan (this item was discussed as item 3):** Cllr Drew highlighted once more the huge amount of work which had been undertaken by the Co-ordination Group in preparing a response

to the consultation and thanked those involved including Cllr Ingham and Cllr Parker. It was noted how important it was to respond to the consultation and Cllr Drew encouraged everyone to respond independently as well. Several drafts of the response had been issued and it was the last opportunity for comment. Cllr Ingham thanked those who had helped with the leaflet campaign. Cllr Parker reiterated how important it was for as many people as possible to respond to the consultation. Cllr Brown stated that the response from the Co-ordination Group would be held in high regard if it was well reasoned. It was noted that additional information had not been sought from the District Council in the early stages. Cllr Ingham confirmed that the group had felt it was more appropriate to involve the district council in the later stages as they had absorbed much of the information through meetings and briefings and reading documents to initially respond to the consultation. Cllr Drew agreed to send Cllr Brown a copy of the latest draft of the response. The general stance within the response was that Little Chalfont had already taken its share of additional housing and wanted to protect the green belt around the perimeter of the village. Cllr Drew noted there would be volunteers available to advise residents on completing responses at the Farmer's Market on Saturday morning. Cllr Drew stated that the Parish Council needed to decide if it was content to accept the response drafted by the Co-ordination Group to be submitted by Monday 14 March. Cllr Drew proposed that the Parish Council should accept this response. This was seconded by Cllr Roberts.

- 13. Local Area Forum:** Cllr Roberts reported that she had attended a recent LAF meeting which included discussing budgets for 2016-17. The proposals from the LAF team had been previously circulated. A proportion of the funding was already committed to one project and the proposition was to divide the rest of the money between the three parishes of Little Chalfont, Seer Green and Chalfont St Peter who had all submitted a proposal. Cllr Roberts suggested making an arrangement with another parish to donate our share of funding in this financial year in return for a share of the funding in 2017-18. Cllr Drew felt that due to funding allocations and uncertainty of future funding it would be better to retain the funding for the Stony Lane project this year. Cllr Ingham proposed that the Parish Council should continue to seek funding for the Stony Lane project and confirm this to the LAF team. This was seconded by Cllr Parker and agreed.
- 14. Parish Meeting:** Cllr Drew confirmed that the Parish Meeting would be held on Wednesday 25 May 2016. It was proposed to seek a number of speakers for the event. This included a representative from the First Responders scheme which may generate volunteers for the initiative. A representative from either Paradigm Housing or the police would be asked, in addition to a speaker about the Nature Park.
- 15. Nature Park:** Cllr Drew requested this item should be discussed in the confidential section of the meeting.
- 16. Parking Survey:** Cllr Parker reported a quote had been received from Bucks County Council of £650 for the informal consultation for parking restrictions in the lay by in Elizabeth Avenue. Cllr Patel agreed to deliver the consultation letters. The outcome will feed into the formal consultation later in the year. All councillors were content with this costing and course of action.
- 17. MVAS / Speedwatch:** Cllr Roberts reported another Speedwatch session would be arranged shortly. The MVAS is currently located in Burtons Lane and data showed an increase in speed over 30mph particularly since the yellow lines had been implemented. It was proposed to move the MVAS from its current position further down Burtons Lane opposite Long Walk. This would take place next week.

- 18. Clean for the Queen:** Cllr Roberts reported that the Clean for the Queen initiative had been successful and a number of individuals and groups such as the Scouts, Brownies, WI, Dr Challoners High School, Little Chalfont Primary School and Westwood Park Football Club had all participated. Certificates and thank you letters were being sent to all those who took part. Cllr Roberts suggested if people were keen the event could be repeated next year in advance of Village Day.
- 19. Automatic enrolment pension scheme:** The Clerk reported that a new scheme needed to be set up by June 2016. A preliminary meeting had taken place with Cansdales to see what the process was and if Cansdales would be able to advise the Parish Council. Cllr Drew proposed asking Cansdales to set up and certificate a scheme. It had been estimated these two elements would cost £750. All councillors were content with this proposal.
- 20. Office space and storage:** Cllr Roberts reported that the storage capacity in the parish office had reached its maximum and proposed that additional storage solutions such as a lockable cupboard and shelving should be purchased. Cllr Drew agreed that this was necessary. Cllr Roberts will work with the Clerks on arranging the storage solutions.
- 21. Reports and Notifications:**
- (i)Chiltern Society Spring magazine (circulated 29 February 2016) Noted.
 - (ii)My Bucks e-newsletter (circulated 1 March 2016) Noted.
 - (iii)Amersham Neighbourhood Policing Scheme update (circulated 1 March 2016) Noted.
- 22. Any Other Business:** (i) Parish Newsletter. Cllr Drew confirmed that the Parish newsletter would be issued in April 2016 and asked if councillors could contribute by writing an article. Cllr Drew will circulate a list of articles over the next few days. (ii) Timing of papers for council meetings. Cllr Davis asked if papers for the meeting could be circulated earlier in line with the agenda which is issued 3 clear days in advance of the meeting. The Clerk explained that certain papers, particularly on the finances were distributed to show the latest position especially with regard to payments. Every effort would be made to ensure that all other papers were issued in good time. (iii) Signature of contracts. Cllr Griffiths asked for confirmation that it was acceptable for councillors to sign contracts on behalf of the council. It was confirmed that all councillors were authorised to sign contracts on behalf of the Parish Council. (iv) Air pollution. Cllr Ingham noted an issue that had arisen as part of the work on the Local Plan. A resident had commented that the air pollution was particularly bad underneath the railway bridge. It was agreed it would be useful to gain some readings for the Local Plan. The Clerk will contact BCC for advice. (v) Donkey Field. Cllr Parker reported that the developers of the Donkey Field are no longer permitting the overflow from the ditch in Burtons Lane to go into the drainage system for the site. Previously Countryside had indicated this solution could solve the flooding issues from the ditch onto the pavement adjacent to the development. (vi) Statters Field. It was reported that several emails had been received at the parish office from residents who were unhappy about the application for the right of way on Statters Field which had been made to BCC. It was agreed to include this issue on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.
- 23. Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 13 April 2016 in the village hall at 7.30pm.

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