

Minutes of a Little Chalfont Parish Council meeting

Held in the Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont

Wednesday 11th January 2017 at 7.30pm

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

Members of the public: Cllr N Brown.

In attendance: Mrs N Meldrum (Parish Clerk).

1. **Apologies for absence:** None.
2. **To accept a resolution that standing orders be suspended to allow any members of the public to speak (10 mins):** Cllr Brown thanked the parish council for the grant to the Chesham Christmas Day Party for the Elderly and reported the day had been successful with 55 people attending.
3. **To receive and approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 December 2016:** The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.
4. **Declarations of Interest:** None. It was noted that all council members have declared a DPP in relation to discussions under item 10 Budget and precept, and have applied for and been granted a dispensation, that applies until May 2019, enabling them to speak and vote on item 10.
5. **Approval by Chairman of items for any other business:** (i) Update on parish council investments (ii) Sandycroft Road and footway on Chalfont Station Road (iii) Cycle racks (iv) Parish boundaries.
6. **Chairman's Report:** Cllr Roberts highlighted the key aspects of the Chairman's report. It was noted that 28 people had taken part in the first Simply Walks event. Cllr Roberts also read a letter from the Chiltern Hard of Hearing Club thanking the parish council for their grant. There were no further comments.
7. **Clerk's Report:** There were no further comments on the Clerk's Report.
8. **To receive reports, as appropriate, from members of outside bodies and working parties:** (i) Little Chalfont Community Library. Cllr Griffiths reported a committee meeting was planned to take place in the following week. (ii) Westwood Park Working Party. Cllr Griffiths reported the working party was due to meet in the following week. He highlighted the security issues and proposals outlined in the Clerk's Report. The final quotes had been received as requested at a previous meeting. Cllr Griffiths proposed this work could go ahead as soon as it could be arranged. Cllr Parker seconded this proposal. Cllr Griffiths also highlighted an email received from a resident referring to antisocial behaviour in the car park and suggesting the gate could be closed at night time. It was agreed that the possibility of installing security cameras into the car park would be examined. In addition, consideration would be made about the practicalities of closing the gate at night time, perhaps for a temporary period to see if this alleviated the problem. Cllr Drew reported a similar situation had occurred in Hervines Park, Amersham. (iii) Cllr Drew reported that revised plans were awaited from the architects in the light of the meeting with Chiltern District Council in November. A plan had been provisionally approved regarding the layout of the hall, however, further investigations were required about the location of the building on the site. It was still hoped that an exhibition of the new plans would

take place in March, but this is subject to agreement of the plans with the architects and further discussions with Chiltern District Council. Once the dates were confirmed, councillors will be notified and asked to help with the exhibition. (iv) Nature Park. Cllr Roberts confirmed the slide had been ordered and would be installed in the spring. It was planned to speak to Amersham Town Council about a quote for inspecting the slide once installed and also emptying the bins on a weekly basis. Future fundraising for the hard paths was being discussed by the trustees.

9. **(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) Income and Expenditure report: There were no further comments about this paper. **(iii) Balance sheet 31 December 2016:** There were no further comments about this paper.
10. **Budget and precept 2017-18.** Papers detailing the budget and proposed precept had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Davis highlighted the key aspects of the budget. It was proposed that the request for the precept should be £233,700, a 9.69% increase. Cllr Davis explained the large part of this increase was attributed to a growth in the budget on the community centre project which was expected to rise once planning permission had been submitted. The building reserve remained the same. The other issue related to the mandate from the community to oppose the development of green belt as proposed in the option 6 of the preferred options paper. An estimated amount of funding of £7,500 had been allocated to this cause. Councillors were also reminded that there was no grant from Chiltern District Council in 2017-18 which had also had an impact on the level of the precept. Other levels of expenditure were expected to remain the same. It was noted that some areas previously in the budget such as allotments and the underpass at Beel Close would be earmarked within the general reserve. Cllr Parker asked for clarification on the election reserve. Cllr Drew explained this was in place in case it was necessary to call a parish council election. The Clerk will check the costings from the previous election. Cllr Ingham highlighted the importance of the fund to support the Local Plan however it was not yet clear if and how much would be required. He queried if the funding could be earmarked within the reserve. Cllr Parker agreed on the importance of the fund but felt it was important it was clearly marked in case of need. Cllr Drew expressed concern about the level of the precept but acknowledged there was justification for the amount especially with the possibility of future capping of the precept. After a full discussion two proposals were raised. Cllr Griffiths proposed the full precept should be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Davis. Cllr Ingham proposed the precept should be reduced by £7,500 but the amount should be earmarked within the reserves. A vote was taken and it was agreed to request a precept of £233,700.
11. **Parish meeting 2017:** Two dates were suggested for the Parish Meeting after it was confirmed that county council elections were taking place on 4 May. It was agreed to hold the event on Wednesday 17 May. A discussion took place about potential speakers. Ideas included district councillors, the police with regard to the changes to neighbourhood policing, and co-ordination of projects for the elderly and vulnerable.
12. **Parish Council newsletter:** It was agreed the newsletter would be issued in April / May 2017. Cllr Drew suggested that a rationale regarding the increase of the precept could be included within the newsletter. Suggestions about other stories for inclusion would be discussed at the next parish council meeting.
13. **LCPC website:** It was reported that the new design of the website was now live. Cllr Walford noted that some of the councillor biographies were out of date and the style of all biographies

would benefit from being streamlined. Cllr Walford offered to update this section of the site. It was agreed that the Clerk would send Cllr Walford details of all committees that councillors attended for inclusion on the website. There was also a discussion about the type of councillor email address which should be shown on the website. A number of councillors had experienced difficulties with the council email and had reverted to their own email address. It was agreed that using the council email was preferable and the Clerk would try to set up a session with the web manager to rectify the problems experienced by some councillors. Cllr Drew reported that he had received an increased amount of spam through his council email address recently. The Clerk will follow this up.

- 14. Parking project:** It was reported that many yellow lines were now being painted as agreed by the parking project organised in conjunction with Bucks County Council. It was noted that there was a delay with the lines to be implemented in Chenies Parade. The lines were expected prior to the Christmas embargo but are now expected in the second half of January. Cllr Parker will keep updated with the plans for Chenies Parade and in conjunction with the LCCA will ensure that shop keepers are notified of the dates of implementation. Councillors were asked to notify the Clerk about any areas containing existing yellow or white lines which required repainting. The hatched area outside the chemist was given as an example.
- 15. Local Plan:** Cllr Parker reported that an exhibition was planned to be held in March regarding the forthcoming Community Action Plan. This project is being led by the LCCA. Many of the action points from the last plan had been achieved and the list had been refreshed and new issues had been added. It was noted that one of key challenges of the project was engaging all residents of the village. The LCCA /Parish Council Co-ordination Group, which represents the parish council and the LCCA, decided on 10 January to try to set up new residents' networks, based on individual roads, to stimulate public interest and activity in relation to the emerging local plan. Information and advice from the Co-ordination Group, usually in the form of emails, would be passed on by the road organiser, ideally to every house in the road. Some such networks exist already, but with one exception the distributors are members of the Co-ordination Group. Parish councillors should also be aware that it is now proposed to recruit, in the name of the LCCA and PC, new people to serve as road organisers who are not members of the Co-ordination Group and are neither parish councillors nor members of the LCCA Committee. With regard to the progress of the emerging local plan, Cllr Parker reported that the next phase had been delayed by six months by Chiltern District Council.
- 16. Local Area Forum application / Taxi concessionary scheme:** Papers had been previously circulated regarding the proposed project from Bucks County Council that could be submitted as a non-transportation LAF project. It had been suggested that the parish council ringfence £2,000 for the implementation of a taxi concessionary scheme. A similar scheme currently operates in Gerrards Cross. Cllr Roberts and the Clerk had met with representatives from Bucks County Council regarding the proposal. Advice had also been sought from the doctors surgery and the LCCA to see if this arrangement was required within the village. It was noted there appears to be a gap in services which could be addressed by the taxi concessionary scheme which is not currently fulfilled by Dial-a-Ride and other organisations. It was agreed to investigate this scheme further with Gerrards Cross parish council and also test viability within the village. Ongoing costs in existing scheme were approximately £1200 per annum. Other suggestions for LAF funding included library services and a defibrillator.

17. **Buckinghamshire Freight Strategy:** The parish council had previously expressed an interest in taking part in a workshop on 13 February 2017. No further details of time and venue were available at present.
18. **Response to surveys:** It was reported that the parish council were receiving many surveys both from Bucks County Council and Chiltern District Council. It was noted that it is not always appropriate for the parish council to complete the surveys itself. It was agreed that the surveys should continue to be circulated and councillors can answer the surveys independently if appropriate.
19. **Reports and notifications:** (i) The Chalfonts Local Area Forum: Update report from Transport for Buckinghamshire (circulated 28 December 2016). (ii) My Bucks Special Edition (circulated 5 January 2017) (iii) Bucks County Council press release re: budget hearings 10-12 January (circulated 5 January)
20. **Any other business:** (i) Parish council investments: Cllr Walford asked for an update on the parish council investments. The Clerk reported that she was continuing to investigate financial institutions. Cllr Brown suggested that Jim Burness at Chiltern District Council may be able to advise. (ii) Sandycroft Road and footway on Chalfont Station Road: Cllr Patel raised an issue at about a footpath at the rear of Sandycroft Road. It was agreed the footpath would be investigated. The footpath across the land, and connecting footpaths had been maintained by the parish council in the summer of 2016. Cllr Patel also reported that the vegetation by the railways bridge on Chalfont Station Road was encroaching onto the footway. It was agreed this would be investigated. (iii) Cycle racks: Cllr Roberts reported the parish council had been informed that the implementation of cycle racks would require planning permission. Cllr Drew asked for confirmation of the document which sets out which items parish councils have permission to install independently. (iv) Parish boundaries: Cllr Parker updated the parish council that it had highlighted that the southern ward of Little Chalfont was the responsibility of three district councillors in Chalfont St Giles. The existing district councillors were also not aware of this situation. It was noted that this area incorporated the green belt land referred to in the Chiltern District Council preferred option 6. Cllr Parker referred to concerns that this issue could have implications for the council tax base and the electoral roll but the parish council had received reassurance that these issues were unaffected. It was suggested that Cllr Roberts write to the three councillors and invite them to meet prior to the next parish council meeting.
21. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 8 February 2017 in the village hall at 7.30pm.

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