

Minutes of the First Parish Meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council held on
13 May 2008 in the Library, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont.

Present: Cllr. M Dale, Cllr B Drew, Cllr. C Gibbs, Cllr C Ingham, Cllr. D Marshall, Cllr A Tate, Cllr. G Smith and Cllr. F Wilkinson (Chairman).

In Attendance: Mrs J Mason (Clerk), Cllr. M Phillips (Chiltern District Council), Cllr. M Smith (Chiltern District Council) and Cllr. M Tett (Buckinghamshire County Council).

Members of the Public: H. Wizgier, Chiltern Voice weblog; M. Mason, LCVS/ LCRG/LCMTHC: Paul Houghton, Oakington Avenue Resident; Ian Morris, Chalfont Art; Ian MacKay, LCVS and Fatima Selahi, Floral Art.

1 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Reports from Committee Chairmen

Before introducing the first speaker, the Chairman explained that this year the Parish Meeting was being kept relatively low key; he was hopeful that in years to come there would be more to discuss as the Council's activities developed . He then introduced Cllr C Ingham who reported on the Planning Committee's first year in operation. Cllr Ingham commented that the committee had carried out its duties with understanding and enthusiasm. Meeting monthly, they had discussed 125 planning applications over the year. Of these the District Council had been of the same view as the Parish Council in just under 80% of cases, which was encouraging. Where there were differences this was generally where local concerns were not fully appreciated by the District, or, because of a technical point. The committee wanted to increase their expertise and hoped to arrange a teach-in with one of the senior planning officers from the District. Referring briefly to the issue of the planning decision relating to the former sawmill in Bell Lane, he commented that the committee had been split on this issue but after a vote decided against the application and made a statement against it at the appeal.

3 Open forum

Thanking Cllr Ingham for his contribution, the Chairman opened discussion to the floor. Mr I Morris, owner of Chalfont Art, raised the

issue of advertising boards which had been discussed at the April and May Parish Council meetings. He stated that the boards, without doubt, brought in valuable business. As a result of action taken by the Council he had decided not to sponsor activities associated with Village Day and the revitalisation initiative of which he had, in the past, been a strong supporter. He felt it was ironic that businesses were not allowed such signs in a village that itself had inadequate name signs. In conclusion, he commented that it was difficult for traders to attend evening meetings of the Revitalisation Group as many did not live locally.

Cllr M Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council, commented briefly on the Bell Lane sawmill planning decision. Cllr D Philips, Chiltern District added that the District had opposed the development of the site for housing as it represented one of the largest employment sites in the area which would be gone forever once developed for housing. Following a question from Cllr Ingham, Cllr Tett said it would be proper for the parish to influence considerations of the educational contribution required by the applicants as a condition of their planning consent. There then followed a discussion about the local development framework and projections for increased housing throughout the South East.

Mr M Mason expressed concerns that recent parking decisions taken by the District Council would be overturned but was assured by the District Councillors present that this was not the case. He then asked what was happening about the dumping of rubbish on the land at the end of Chenies Parade. Cllr Drew responded that this was of great concern to the Council and he was personally trying to resolve the matter. In addition to planning issues there were also environmental health implications. Cllr Philips stated that Martin Holt at the District Council was aware of the issue and felt confident that action would be taken. Finally, Mr Mason also raised the need for properly placed, attractive signs marking the entrance to the village. Cllr Tett responded that a budget for new signs had been passed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee the previous week. The Clerk undertook to write to find out how the Council could influence the design of the signs.

Mr I Morris informed the meeting that he would be meeting the Chief Executive of Chiltern District on 5 June to discuss the possibility of introducing into Chiltern District an initiative sponsored by the Thames Valley Energy Centre to promote recycling collections of glass and cardboard from businesses. This was based on a scheme in the Harlequin centre in Watford. Not only would this be good for the environment but would allow businesses to demonstrate their commitment to green issues.

4 Close

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.45pm

Signed.....

Date.....