

**Minutes of a Meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council held on
Tuesday 10 March 2009 in the Village Library
Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr M Dale; Cllr B Drew; Cllr C Gibbs; Cllr L Hunt; Cllr C Ingham; Cllr G Smith; Cllr A Tate and Cllr F Wilkinson (Chairman).

In Attendance: Mrs J Mason (Clerk); Mrs K Sterling (Assistant Clerk); Cllr D Phillips (CDC) and Cllr M Smith (CDC).

Members of the Public: Mrs K Clark and Mr R Clark.

1. **Apologies for absence:** There were no apologies for absence.
2. **Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2009:** These were approved and signed as a correct record following the striking out of the words “in line with the Council’s procedure for grants and donations” (page 2 item 10, line 8).
3. **Suspension of standing orders enabling members of the public to speak:** The Chairman suspended standing orders and welcomed Mr and Mrs Clark who described problems with anti-social and intimidating behaviour in their neighbourhood. They hoped that the Council would provide support in highlighting their concerns to the police and other organisations so that the appropriate action could be taken to stamp out this type of behaviour throughout the Village. The Chairman thanked Mr and Mrs Clark for their contribution and reinstated standing orders.
4. **Declarations of interest:** None.
5. **Chairman’s Report:** The Chairman summarised the main points from his report. The last few weeks had been very busy and a final review of the coming year’s *budget* had been undertaken and circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. He reminded Councillors that the precept increase was 2.5% and reported that this was lower than that set by many other Councils, in particular, those of Amersham Town Council, Chiltern District Council and Bucks County Council. £25000 had been earmarked for possible building work which could emerge from the Market Town Health Check. A contingency of £5900 was included and the amount for street lighting maintenance reflected the tenders received in the recent review of contractor (see item 14 below). February had seen the last meeting of the *Chiltern Local Committee* which he had attended on 4 February. Their replacement is the Local Area Forum at which the Parish Council will be grouped with Chalfont St Giles, Chalfont St Peter and Jordans. The Committee had received updates on the winter road maintenance procedures and on the review of speed limits. It was hoped that the latter would be implemented in the Autumn, following public consultation. Turning to the establishment of two *working parties* to consider the use of Westwood Park and properties, he reported that Councillors had already come forward to join the groups and extended this invitation to others. Finally, he undertook to continue to press BCC about cycle racks and other outstanding matters.
6. **Designated Public Order Areas:** the Clerk and Cllr Hunt had met with CDC representatives on 27 February to discuss the way forward on the implementation of

DPPOs (a tool to deal with anti-social drinking in public areas) in Little Chalfont. The Clerk stated that the main benefits of their introduction were the reassurances such measures gave the public and the fact that Community Support Officers could action the orders. The cost of formal press notices were likely to be in the region of £2000. It was agreed that the Clerk should proceed with further work and the associated expenditure was approved, subject to the Clerk clarifying whether inclusion in a Parish newsletter would be sufficient notice bearing in mind the expense of advertising in the press. Finally, it was noted that at the same meeting, the opportunity had been taken to discuss solutions to the problem of dog fouling at Westwood Park. As a result, the CDC staff had undertaken to initiate an exercise with the police, to deter the small minority of irresponsible dog owners

7. **Financial matters:**

(i) Update on actions arising from Internal Audit Report/ Insurance Renewal/Asset register: The Clerk circulated a brief report summarising the actions that had been taken to implement the recommendations made in the internal Audit report dated 19 January 2009. It was agreed that the Council's standing orders should be revised by the Clerk and brought forward at a meeting in the near future for discussion and approval by the Council. A review of insurances was currently underway and the Asset Register had been prepared.

(ii) Risk Assessment Review dated February 2009: The actions taken to mitigate risk were noted and supported. Cllr Smith reported that he was examining banking options to bring before the Council at a future meeting. He hoped to make proposals that would increase interest received and enhance the process of cash management.

(iii) Income and Expenditure Report: The income and expenditure accounts were noted.

(iv) Budget 2009/10: The final proposals for 2009/10 had been previously circulated. The budget was approved and the following actions for the Clerk agreed: outstanding items for the village hall to be purchased this year (flooring for kitchen; screen; extra microphone; lecturn) and the remaining transferred to the Park and Pavilion cost centre to cover the Pavilion repairs. This project would incur costs in the current and the new financial year, therefore, any remaining budget should also be carried forward to 2009/10; appropriate action should be taken to make accruals, ensuring an accurate reflected of costs incurred in each year. Other sums should be carried forward as necessary.

(v) Bank reconciliation: The current account bank reconciliation for 28 February 2009 was noted and signed by the Chairman together with the summary reconciliation for all accounts.

8. **Highways issues:**

(i) 13 February letter from Chris Schwier on revised delegated budget schedule 2009/10: The revised schedule was circulated and the Council were disappointed to note that the Vehicle Activated Sign scheme had been dropped. In the light of recent problems with vandalism it was agreed that a lighting scheme for the underpass would reassure pedestrians and the fact that the underpass itself was owned by London

Underground should not be a deterrent. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Schwier accordingly.

(ii) **17 February letter from Chris Schwier accepting invitation to 7 April Council meeting:** The Council were pleased to note that Mr Schwier had agreed to speak at the next meeting. It was agreed that Councillors should advise the Clerk by 24 March of any topics they would like him to cover.

9. Reports from Councillors who are members of the following groups: (a) *Village Society and Revitalisation Group*: Cllr Drew reported that on 1 April members of both groups would vote on amalgamation. Over 120 people had attended the public consultation on the Market Town Health Check which took place in the Village Hall on Saturday 7 March 2009. The Health Check team would be meeting to finalise the results and these would be available in April. (b) *NAG*: The NAG was meeting that night and Cllr Smith undertook to report back the key points. (c) *Village Hall Management Committee*: Cllr Drew reported on the meeting held on 9 March. The Committee would be carrying out further work on hall usage patterns and had asked the Clerk to prepare a schedule which would also assist future discussions about marketing the hall. He would be asking Don Marshall to include a section on facilities (including Westwood Park) and hire charges on the web-site. It was the intention to prepare revised hire charges for consideration at the 7 April 2009 meeting.
10. **Contribution towards Village Day and Hanging Baskets:** Cllr Drew proposed that the Parish Council sponsor two items at Village Day on 13 June 2009. He suggested (i) a mobile climbing wall (£680 plus vat) and (ii) the arena event and static display by the 2nd Battalion 95th Rifles (£400). These proposals were agreed unanimously. It was also unanimously agreed that £1000 be contributed to the Little Chalfont Revitalisation Group towards the cost of hanging baskets.
11. **Reports and Notifications:**
 - (i) 28 January 2009 from CDC Deputy Returning Officer: **Use of Village Hall Thursday 4 June for European and County Council Elections.** Noted. Hall users have been advised.
 - (ii) **The Chalfonts Area Newsletter February 2009.** It was agreed that each Councillor should receive a copy in future.
 - (iii) 13 February letter from BCC Martin Tett: **Update on tendering Energy from Waste initiative.** Noted.
 - (iv) 24 February letter from Thames Valley Police: **Nominations for Community Policing Awards 2009** (deadline 17 April 2009). Noted and to be displayed on notice boards.
12. **The following resolution was agreed:** in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is advisable, in the public interest, that the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting and be instructed to withdraw.
13. **Update on Discussions with ATC:** The Chairman stated that there was nothing further to discuss and that Amersham Town Council's cheque for £50,000 was awaited.
14. **Street Lighting Contract:** The Clerk had had meetings with the three contractors invited to tender for the street lighting maintenance contract 2009/12 and the statutory inspection and test of all lights. A paper summarising the background and a comparison of tender prices was circulated. Following discussion, it was agreed that

the tender submitted by Forde and McHugh be accepted. It was noted that the charges for the inspection and test would apply to 2009/10 only as this was a cost incurred once every six years.

15. **Repairs to Westwood Park Pavilion:** The Assistant Clerk reminded the Council that three firms had been asked to tender for the work. Two had submitted very similar quotes and it was agreed that the work be offered to CMS/Greystokes who are based in Little Chalfont and would be able to start the project in the next few weeks. It was noted that the quotes did not include some additional work to the doors which would, especially in the light of recent vandalism, be required. It was anticipated that this would be around £250 per door. The Council authorised this expenditure on the basis that the new doors be made secure before any internal work began.
16. **Appointment of new Internal Auditor:** It was proposed and agreed that Ernest Newhouse be offered the post of Internal Auditor with effect from 1 April 2009.
17. **Working Parties:** There was a discussion about the working parties mentioned in item 5 above. The Chairman emphasised that the membership of each working party was still open to Councillors and he urged any who had, for whatever reason, not been as fully aware of the proposal as they might have wished, to put their names forward so that they could contribute their much valued knowledge and advice. He hoped that the working parties would have been able to make preliminary reports by June 2009.
18. **Any Other Business:** The Clerk reported that the following correspondence had been received after the issue of the agenda:
 - (I) Letter received 6 March from the **1st Chenies and Chalfont Brownies** inviting Councillors to their Shades of Blue event at the Methodist Church on Tuesday 31 March 2009 from 6-7pm. Councillor Wilkinson can attend. Others should advise the Clerk by 23 March 2009.
 - (II) 5 March 2009 letter from the President of the Little Chalfont (Evening) WI inviting Councillors to join the **WI in the Little Chalfont Big Tidy Up** at 10.30am on Wednesday 25 March 2009, meeting at the Village Green. This was left as an open invitation to Councillors. The Chairman added that such initiatives were highly valued and hoped they would continue and be built upon in the future.
 - (III) 5 March letter from the President of the Little Chalfont (Evening) WI seeking approval of the **planting up the Triangle** with gold themed bedding and similar plants to mark the **50th anniversary** of their institute. This suggestion had the unanimous support of the Council and the Clerk was asked to liaise with the WI as necessary.
19. **Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 7 April 2009 at 7.30pm in the Village Library.

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