

Minutes of a Meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 7 April 2009 in the Village Library
Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont at 7.30pm

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

In Attendance: Mrs C Burslem (BCC); Mrs J Mason (Clerk); Cllr D Phillips (CDC); Mr C Schwier (BCC); Mrs K Sterling (Assistant Clerk).

Members of the Public: Mrs M Berkerey and Miss R Berkerey.

1. **Apologies for absence:** These were received from Cllr M Dale and Cllr C Ingham
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2009:** These were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
3. **Suspension of standing orders enabling members of the public to speak:** The Chairman suspended standing orders. Mrs and Miss Berkerey drew the Council's attention to the poor state of verges in Amersham Road which had been torn up by lorries. In addition, they were disappointed by the increase in potholes after the Winter and hoped these would be fixed in the near future. The Chairman thanked them for their comments and reinstated standing orders.
4. **Declarations of interest:** None
5. **Approval of items for Any Other Business (item 13):** It was agreed that recent events at Finch Lane would be discussed in the context of Designated Public Places Orders
6. **Presentation by Chris Schwier, Local Area Coordinator:** The Chairman introduced Mr Schwier and thanked him for agreeing to speak. Mr Schwier reported that the Community Gang budget had been approved for 2009/10 and this year the gang's visits would be increased to once a month and the work would be undertaken by a two person team. One of their main objectives was to address areas of work that impacted on the appearance of the village such as cutting back of plants, cleaning and realignment of signs. The itinerary for the coming year was about to be issued and this year feedback would definitely be sent to Parish Clerks after each visit. He added that some Town Councils were undertaking a range of tasks under devolved service agreements with the County Council. Turning to the issue of potholes, the Winter weather had caused the road surfaces to deteriorate. However, a programme of repairs was underway and the Local Area Technician was soon to meet with Cllr Martin Tett to prioritise a schedule of patching in the local area. He summarised the processes involved in the fixing of potholes and urged Councillors and members of the public alike, to continue to report faults to Highways on call; via e-mail or telephone. Before answering questions, he briefed Councillors on the awarding of an eight year transportation services contract to Ringway Jacobs. This service would be provided under the umbrella of the company Transportation for Buckinghamshire, to which he had been seconded. Parishes' normal contact points would remain in place. However, improved working practices and new, state of the art equipment would lead to an

enhanced service and increased efficiency. For example, new gully emptying vehicles had been ordered and were currently being manufactured. There then followed a question and answer session during which the outstanding issues of the cycle racks at Chenies parade and flooding were raised by the Council. They were reassured that the Technician would contact the Clerk regarding the cost and installation of the cycle racks. Flooding, however, was a huge problem and one that required extensive engineering work to resolve. For example, in Cokes Lane bore holes 30m deep had been drilled into the chalk. However, he hoped that the new equipment referred to would clear the cause of the flooding under the railway bridge. He undertook to visit Beel Close with the Technician to assess the flooding there. He was already aware of the problems caused by the sinking manhole cover on the bend at Nightingales and Cokes Lane and undertook to pursue the issue of the churned up verges in Amersham Road. Finally, he reiterated the advice to report issues to Highways on Call. The Chairman thanked Mr Schwier and added that he looked forward to work starting on the delegated budgets project at the top of Burtons Lane.

7. **Chairman's Report:** Cllr Wilkinson reported that he had attended an event in support of Water Aid, arranged by the 1st Chenies and Chalfont Brownies and had joined in the WI Big Tidy Up. He hoped that in future the Council would be able to assist in building on the latter initiative. Repair work at the Pavilion was on schedule and in the Village, the turfing outside Merityre was being planned for May. The Market Town Health Check had been completed, with eleven possible actions for the Parish Council. Terms of reference for the working parties established in March were being drawn up and the format and distribution methods for a Parish newsletter were being examined. Turning to finances, the £50,000 due from Amersham Town Council was expected later in the next month. Recent statistics regarding Council spending show that Little Chalfont Parish Council's precept percentage increase of 2.5% was lower than the average for Buckinghamshire, which stood at 3.01%. This fact, together with progress on the physical aspects of the Parish, demonstrate the benefit to ratepayers of having a separate Council for Little Chalfont.
8. **Clerk's Report:** A letter had been sent to Steve Braund at CDC on 18 March confirming the decision made at the 10 March meeting to proceed with the establishment of a DPPO for areas in Little Chalfont. Work was underway on the review of the Council's standing orders. The new street lighting contract had commenced with Forde and McHugh and so far their response had been good. The cleaning contract for the pavilion and hall had been renewed with Busy Bee, with some variation to the standard notice terms, to the Council's advantage. As previously discussed the insurance cover had been reviewed and the revised policy terms were effective from 1 April 2009. As had been said, the pavilion work was progressing satisfactorily and advice was being sought from Sport England on the promotion of Sunday cricket.
9. **Financial matters:**
 - (i) *Update on investigation into banking arrangements and cash management:* Cllr Smith hoped to prepare a formal financial strategy for discussion at a future meeting. He had drafted a cash flow model and was currently analysing various options,

building on the decisions taken at the 7 October 2008 meeting, with a view to combining security with the achievement of maximum value from assets.

(ii) *Income and Expenditure Report*: This had been circulated the previous week. It was noted that hall income was on budget with an increase on 2007/08. It was agreed that money remaining in the hall refurbishment budget should be transferred to the Pavilion repairs and maintenance budget and carried forward to 2009/10 to cover the remaining cost of the ongoing repairs. There were delays in finalising the installation of the new piece of playground equipment because of confused and inaccurate pricing from the manufacturer and it was agreed that the unspent budget be carried forward. However, there would be no carry forward of the budget for Westwood Park Drive repairs as this would be patched until a broader strategy was agreed for the Park.

(iii) *Bank reconciliation*: It was agreed that this would be presented at the next meeting once the year end accounting processes had been completed.

10. Reports (as appropriate) from Councillors who are members of the following groups:

(a) *Village Society and Revitalisation Group*; Cllr Drew reported that at the recent AGMs of both groups, their amalgamation had been agreed and the resultant organisation would be called Little Chalfont Community Association. The Committee membership was being reviewed. The Council joined Cllr Drew in wishing the Little Chalfont Community Association a successful future. (b) *NAG*; Cllr Smith reported that the next meeting was on 15 April 2009. Since the last Council meeting there had been a mugging and two pavilion break ins. He, Cllr Drew and the Clerk were in regular discussion with members of the police and a meeting was planned for 17 April.

11. Proposals from the Hall Management Committee:

(i) *To consider recommendations to increase Hall Hire charges*: Cllr Drew referred to the note previously circulated summarising the Hall Management Committee's recommendations on new rates for 2009/10 and the simplification of user categories. It was agreed that in future there would be two types of user; non-commercial and commercial. However, all current regular users would continue to receive the discounts they currently benefit from. On Monday- Friday and Sunday the hourly non-commercial rate would be £9.20 with a commercial rate for these hours of £18.40 per hour. On Saturday between 9am and 5pm the non-commercial hourly rate would be £13.30 (commercial £26.60) and on Saturday between 5pm and midnight the hourly non-commercial rate would be £18.50 (commercial £37.00). It was suggested that the Council review Westwood Park rates at a future meeting once the work at the pavilion was completed.

(ii) *Update on preliminary investigations into the feasibility of holding farmers' markets on the Hall car park* : Cllr Drew reminded Councillors that the possibility of holding regular farmers markets in the village had arisen out of public consultation during the Market Town Health Check: many members of the public enjoyed these events which added vibrancy to the village. He and the Clerk had met with a representative from the Thames Valley Farmers' Market Cooperative, who had identified the Village Hall car park as a possible venue, on a monthly basis. Following discussion, the Council agreed that the Clerk would ask the Market Cooperative for

comments on the feasibility of a trial (for example 3 months September-November) and ask local traders for their views on the proposal. The Council would discuss the issue further once this information had been obtained.

12. Reports and Notifications:

- (i) Transport for Buckinghamshire: Val Letheren's 26 March letter
- (ii) Local Flavours Food Festival 2009 – information received via BALC.
- (iii) Cllr Nick Rose's letter of 23 February re Chiltern Forum: It was noted that further developments impacting on this subject would be forthcoming after June.
- (iv) Bob Wearing's 23 March Service re Cessation of Courier Service to Parishes from CDC.
- (iv) 30 March letter from Mark Taylor confirming LCPC membership of the Open Spaces Society.
- (v) Alison Derrick's 9 March letter re Area 10 Speed Limit review.
- (vi) Buckinghamshire Community Action Group magazine "In Focus" Spring 2009. It was noted that the Council will join this group.
- (vii) Alan Goodrum's 1 April 2009 letter re Senior Staff Review.
- (viii) BALC – Matters Arising- Newsletter Spring 2009

13. Any Other Business: Finch Lane – inclusion in DPPO areas. Cllr Gibbs reported that beer crates and bottles had been found on the grassed area and requested that the situation be kept under review and the area identified as a possible location to be covered by DPPO. This was agreed and the Clerk undertook to advise CDC and the police.

14. Arrangements for the Parish Meeting 13 May 2009: It was agreed that light refreshments should be offered to members of the public.

15. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13 May 2009 starting at 7.30 in the Village Hall (Parish and Annual meeting).

Signed.....

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