

Minutes of a Meeting of Little Chalfont Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 9 December 2009 in the Village Hall
Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr M Dale; Cllr B Drew (Chairman); Cllr C Gibbs; Cllr L Hunt; Cllr C Ingham; Cllr P Martin; Cllr G Smith.

In Attendance: Mrs J Mason (Clerk)

Members of the Public: Mr P Meikle (Little Chalfont Community Association and Secretary to the Chalfont Junction Youth Group Management Committee) and Cllr M Smith (CDC).

1. **Apologies for absence:** None
2. **To appoint a Chairman of the Council:** Cllr Ingham proposed and Cllr Gibbs seconded the appointment of Cllr Drew as Chairman for the remainder of the Council year 2009/10. This was carried unanimously and Cllr Drew signed a declaration of acceptance of office (Chairman).
3. **To appoint a Vice Chairman of the Council:** Cllr Drew proposed and Cllr Hunt seconded the appointment of Cllr Smith as Vice Chairman for the remainder of the Council year.
4. **To confirm membership of the Establishment Committee:** Membership was confirmed as the Chairman, the Vice Chairman and the Chairman of the Planning Committee.
5. **To review, confirm or amend membership of outside bodies for the remainder of the Council Year 2009/10:**
 - a. *Neighbourhood Action Group* - Cllr Smith will continue in this role.
 - b. *GE Healthcare Liaison Group* - Cllr C Gibbs will continue in this role but will be joined by Cllr Martin, in line with GE Health Care's request that a second Councillor be appointed to cover for Cllr Gibbs if necessary.
 - c. *Village Hall Management Committee* – Cllr Gibbs will continue and the appointment of Cllr Hunt was approved.
 - d. *Local Area Forum* – Cllr Drew was appointed.
 - e. *Chiltern Community Partnership* – Cllr Drew was appointed. It was noted that these meetings would be held less frequently.
 - f. *Denham Aerodrome Consultative Committee* - Cllr M Dale to be appointed subject to outcome of current correspondence with the Committee
 - g. *Little Chalfont Community Association liaison role* – Cllr Martin was appointed.
 - h. *Chalfont Junction Youth Group Management Committee* – Cllr Drew was appointed.
 - i. *Library Committee Liaison role* - Cllr Hunt will continue in this role.
6. **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2009:** These were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
7. **Suspension of standing orders enabling members of the public to speak:** The Chairman suspended standing orders enabling Mr Meikle to address the meeting. First congratulating Cllr Drew on his appointment as Chairman of the Council, Mr Meikle then advised Councillors that Little Chalfont Community Association had agreed to donate £500 to the newly formed Chalfont Junction Youth Group. It was likely that a second application for the same amount would be made to LCCA in the Spring. Over £3000 per annum was needed to pay the rent for the group and to sustain a modest level of activities during meetings. In his capacity as Secretary to the Youth Group Management Committee, he hoped that the Council would match the LCCA funding. The Chairman thanked Mr Meikle for his contribution and reinstated standing orders.
8. **To receive declarations of interest:** None.
9. **To approve items for Any Other Business (item 20):** Four items were approved (i) surveillance cameras (ii) Scottish Widows One Year Business Deposit Account (iii) LCCA Market Town Health Check projects and (iv) The future of the Snells Wood car park public convenience.

10. **Clerk's Report:** The delegated budgets submission had been sent to BCC; discussions continue with Paradigm Housing about land for allotments and community engagement; Spruced Up had started to clear the Village Hall site and to prune and plant up the Triangle. It was hoped that the shed roof would be replaced during the Christmas period as would the main lock on the front door of the Hall (regular users are being issued with new keys). The water pumps at Westwood Park were currently being replaced and there should be hot showers again in time for the weekend football. Football matches at Westwood Park between young people and the Police would commence on 13 January for a period of ten weeks. The Youth Group had met in the Pavilion and hoped to move into their permanent premises after the Christmas holidays. The new trees in Beechwood Avenue were being planted the next day and three cycle racks had been installed at Chenies Parade towards the end of November. The vacancy for a Councillor would be advertised next week and work requests for the local Area Community Gangs were due for submission. Finally, thanks were expressed to BCC Transport for Buckinghamshire staff who had been so helpful in approving the work on the lamp columns in the village that had been necessary to enable the LCCA Christmas lights and the Council's tree lights to be installed.

11. **Financial matters:**

- (i) *List of cheques to be signed and cheques signed since last meeting* – this was circulated and approved.
- (ii) *Income and expenditure report* – this was discussed briefly as the budget discussions which took place under item 11 (iv) also covered this item. The cost of the engineering work to the lamp columns to allow the Christmas lights to be installed was noted and approved.
- (iii) *Bank reconciliation* - the bank reconciliation, summary reconciliation and current account bank statement were signed by the Chairman.
- (iv) *Budget 2010/11*- The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk had met on 2 December to discuss the budget. In addition a note of items to discuss and the Budget in Detail Report (setting out budget, expenditure and projected outturn in the current year and next year's budget) had been circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting. On the basis of the figures in that report (dated 8 December 2009) assets at the year end would stand at £183,937. It was agreed that at the year end these assets be expressed as earmarked reserves under the following codes: general reserves; buildings and general maintenance reserves; Westwood Park amenities (drive, tennis courts, pitches and play grounds); contingency reserves. The amounts to be allocated to each code would be agreed nearer the time. Expenditure proposed under code 4002 104 Superannuation was agreed in principle and the Clerk was asked to investigate the options available with a view to reporting to the Establishment Committee. Street lighting maintenance 4171 106, was discussed. Remedial work identified during the statutory inspection of street lights would cost £13,451. It was agreed that this work should be carried out in the current year and that a virement of £11,600 should be made into Street Lighting Maintenance from Contingency 4300 105. This would enable the work to be carried out as soon as possible whilst freeing up £10,000 originally estimated for the work in next year's budget. It was agreed that the following items should now be included in the budget for 2010/11: replacement of safety surfaces around the equipment in the children's playground; tennis court resurfacing will take place in four years time with the necessary monies being accumulated in the Westwood Park Amenities Reserve; a tree survey will be carried out that will lead to the introduction of a rolling programme of tree maintenance; the car park barrier at the Village Hall would be replaced within the next two years. It was also noted that some adjustments to the budget would probably be necessary as a result of the findings of the Westwood Park Working party which would be discussed under item 22. On the basis of these discussions the budget for 2010/11 was agreed.
- (v) *To set the precept for 2010/11*- A variety of options were debated including a possible reduction in the precept. The main factors influencing the Council's decision were the current economic situation; the

substantial savings effective from April 2010 as a result of the retendering of the grounds maintenance contracts currently carried out by Amersham Town Council; thirdly, the need to maintain reserves at a level that will allow planned projects to be undertaken over the coming years. The Chairman put forward a resolution that the precept for 2010/11 should not be increased and would remain at the 2009/10 level (£208,433). This was agreed. The Clerk would now write and advise Chiltern District Council of this decision.

12. **Reports from outside bodies:** (i) *Youth Group* - Cllr Drew was pleased to confirm that Chalfont Junction Youth Group had been established and had held its inaugural meeting. A management committee had also been formed (see 5(h) above). It was agreed that the £500 ear marked at the 10 June 2008 Council meeting for youth matters now be donated to the new youth group. It was further agreed that if funds were available later in the financial year and depending on the success of the group, the Council would make a further contribution of £500. (ii) *NAG*- Cllr Smith had circulated a note reporting on the NAG meeting he had attended on 18 November. He had also established that the surveillance cameras referred to in item 9 related to a private security firm's investigations.
13. **Core Strategy** – Following discussions at the Planning Committee on 1 December it was agreed that a joint leaflet from LCCA and the Parish Council should be distributed as soon as possible. The cost of printing (approx £200) would be shared between the Council and the LCCA.
14. **BCC - Walk Your Local Paths Initiative** – the proposals set out in M Walker's November letter were broadly supported although the level of involvement would have to be clarified. The Clerk would respond appropriately.
15. **BCC Local Transport Plan 3 Consultation** – It was agreed that a response be prepared by a small working party consisting of Cllrs Ingham and Hunt together with a nominee from the LCCA. The Clerk will arrange this.
16. **Local Area Plan** – this would be discussed at the at 21 January 2010 meeting of LAF at the Village Hall and it was agreed that the Clerk should re-circulate the summary of issues for prioritisation and agree a response on the basis of replies received.
17. **To discuss installation of bollards in St Nicolas Close** – Quotes had been received. Councillors expressed concern that agreeing to this request could lead to a number of similar proposals that could not all be accommodated. No decision was reached at this stage.
18. **Beel Close Bench** – The Clerk informed the Council that residents in and around Beel Close had provided copies of a petition they had delivered to Paradigm Housing requesting reinstatement of a bench at the top of Beel Close.
19. **Reports and Notifications:**
 - (i) Chiltern Citizens Advice Bureau 3 November letter requesting funding – to be deferred until the May or June meeting.
 - (ii) BCC Transport for Buckinghamshire 28 October letter re changes to bus services 305 and 352
 - (iii) Chiltern News (Chiltern Society Newsletter) December 2009
 - (iv) BCC Children and Young People 18 November letter re Family Information Service.
20. **Any Other Business:** (i) *Surveillance Cameras* - see 12(ii) above. (ii) *Scottish Widows One Year Business Deposit Account* – the proposal to invest £50000 was approved with Cllrs Drew, Smith, Hunt and Dale as signatories (iii) *LCCA – Actions from Market Town Health Check (MTHC)* – Cllr Martin reminded Councillors that action 17 arising from the Market Town Health Check was the building of a new community centre and he wished to advise the Council that at a future meeting a request for a contribution towards a feasibility study would be made. Cllrs Dale and Ingham reminded colleagues that the Council had not formally incorporated any of the MTHC recommendations into their plans; indeed they had reservations about this particular aspect of the MTHC Plan. Before the Council had fully debated the MTHC it would be precipitous to embark upon a feasibility study or to agree to a request for funding. (iv) *Snells Wood Car Park Public*

Convenience- Gill Gowing's 3 December letter regarding budget cuts at CDC and the likely closure and demolition of the public conveniences was circulated. Ms Gowing asked whether the Council would in principle be interested in taking over the responsibility of the Snells Wood toilet block. The Council's initial response was that the provision of this amenity was a valued community service. However, no decision could be made without details such as running costs, condition of the building and previous maintenance history. The Clerk would send a holding reply to CDC and report back to the next meeting having investigated further.

21. A resolution was agreed that 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.
22. **Initial Report from Westwood Park Working Party:** The initial report prepared by former Councillor Wilkinson was discussed. It was agreed that the MUGA should be budgeted for the current year. This would cost £7000 although £1644 of this would be met by the LAF grant. The resurfacing of the tennis courts would be funded in 2012 from ear marked reserves. In the meantime the courts would be cleaned and lines repainted in the current year. Other recommendations were received and noted. The Assistant Clerk would be asked to arrange the next meeting of the working group.

23. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13 January 2010 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Signed.....

Date.....