

Little Berkhamsted Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday 10th May 2017

Present: - Councillor Ellis Downes (Chairman LBPC)
Councillor Elaine Hunter (Vice Chairman LBPC)
Councillor Richard Chaplin (LBPC)
Councillor Jim Holt (LBPC)
Councillor Wayne Morris (LBPC)
Mrs S Ash (Chairman LB Recreation Committee)
Linda Middleton Parish Clerk
Electors.

1. The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting.
2. Apologies were received from Councillor Derek Standbook.
3. An elector asked about the proposed signage and circular path for the village which had been discussed at the last Annual Parish Meeting, noting that no consultations had taken place. The Chairman advised that the cost of signs had been deemed too high so the proposal had been dropped and that an update on the circular path would be provided later in the meeting.
4. Following a brief summary by the Chairman, the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held in May 2016 were passed – proposed by Wayne Morris and seconded by Jim Holt.
5. Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council: the Chairman provided an overview of the Parish Council's work over the last year, mentioning that along with the work carried out in the Parish Council meetings, councillors were also busy between meetings. He thanked the Clerk for her hard work and expressed the Council's regret at her resignation. He highlighted:
 - The damage caused to the village hall following a car accident and that although the repairs had taken time to complete, involving negotiations with the insurer and contractors the repairs had now been completed satisfactorily.
 - That the Parish Council had contributed £1000 to the Church repairs fund, having reconsidered the matter and reflecting the wishes of the residents who had contacted them.
 - The Parish Council had agreed a number of policies and procedures demonstrating better governance, accountability and transparency.
 - Leanne Dring was thanked for her contribution as a councillor and the meeting was informed that there was a councillor vacancy to be filled by co-option. This was because no one had come forward through the advertised nomination process. The Chairman encouraged anyone interested to contact him or one of the Parish Councillors.
 - The HGV diversion signs which had directed lorries through the village whilst works were carried out in Bayford had been opposed by the Parish Council, but Herts County Council had advised that the route was the least worst option. The works had now finished and residents were urged

to photograph any lorries they saw going through the village, if it was safe to do so.

- Residents were encouraged to consider volunteering to form a speed watch group to help monitoring speeding through the village.
 - Litter- fly tipping continued to be a problem and residents were advised to contact the East Herts fly tipping hotline to report any incidents. The Chairman had made some investigations regarding a litter pick and had been discouraged from organising one by East Herts Council. Residents were keen for this to take place and the Chairman undertook to follow this up again. An additional bin for dog waste had been purchased and would be installed shortly.
 - Planning- the Parish Council had commented on a number of applications and had noted that the planning department were adhering to the timetables for consultations much more strictly so that not all applications could be discussed at meetings. In these cases representations were made via email. The possibility of developing a Neighbourhood Plan was discussed and Richard Chaplin explained that the village had been recategorised under the new East Herts District Plan so that infill development was more likely to be approved in future. He explained that by an adopted Neighbourhood Plan would be taken into account when planning applications were considered.
 - The social media site Nextdoor was mentioned and residents were recommended to join as a way of keeping in contact with other local residents. The village shop no longer provided a noticeboard and it was suggested that the noticeboard on the field could be used for notices (with an appropriate disclaimer).
 - Circular path – Jim Holt described the potential route to the meeting, advising that he had walked this with the Rights of Way Officer from Herts County Council to identify what work needed to be carried out to make the route suitable for a wide range of users including those in wheelchairs and pushchairs. A number of possible funding sources had been identified and grants had been applied for. It was hoped to have completed the path by the end of the year and then slightly longer paths could be considered.
 - An update on the need for replacement white lines by the War Memorial was given and the meeting advised that Councillor Ken Crofton was pursuing this with Herts Highways.
6. A report on the Recreation Committee's activities over the year was given by Sandie Ash who told the meeting about a number of activities that had taken place over the last twelve months including:
- A picnic on the field in July
 - Quizzes in September and April
 - Coffee morning in support of MacMillan in October
 - Bonfire night fireworks and refreshments- with thanks to Simon Hedley and Paul Curson
 - The Christmas Ball – the third year and enjoyed by all who attended
 - Easter egg rolling followed by an Easter Egg hunt and refreshments

Forthcoming events highlighted included - 8th July Music and Food Festival, September Quiz and pantomime "Toad of Toad Hall" will take place in December- residents were urged to come forward and take part.

Sandie told the meeting that the Recreation Committee were keen to provide a path around the Recreation Field and some works had been carried out on the field to improve drainage, however until there is more rain, it will not be known how successful the work has been. It was also mentioned that Channel Four have been in touch regarding participation in Village of the Year and paperwork was currently being exchanged. Sandie concluded by thanking the committee for their hard work, time and support over the year.

7. As no matters were raised by the electors, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9pm.

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