

# Little Berkhamsted Parish Council

MINUTES of a meeting of Little Berkhamsted Parish Council  
held on Wednesday 16 July 2014 at 8.00pm in Little Berkhamsted Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllrs R Chaplin, E Hunter, C Nunn, W Walshe, M Bailey  
In attendance: Mrs S Ash, the clerk, T Brindley.

## 20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs R Pegg and W Morris had sent apologies

## 21. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> May be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

## 22. MATTERS ARISING

22.1. None

## 23. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

23.1. Members were reminded that any declarations of interest should be made immediately preceding the item to be discussed.

23.2. The chairman advised that an additional item, to note the external auditors report, would be taken as item 16e .

## 24. Public participation. NONE

## 25. To answer previously submitted questions from councillors. NONE

## 26. To review progress on the 2014/15 Work Programme.

26.1. The clerk gave a verbal report on the current year projects:

26.2. Tree pruning at the recreation ground. Contractors would be asked to tender with a view to implementing the work in October.

26.3. Village Hall floor and external repairs. The application for a grant was not submitted in time as insufficient quotes had been received.

26.4. District Cllr Haysey advised that the council could apply to her for a locality grant for minor works up to £500.

26.5. It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the hall floor and cupboard repairs.

26.6. The clerk was asked to and to seek additional quotes for the external repair work.

26.7. The clerk advised he had contacted three contractors to obtain quotes for cleaning the war memorial.

## 27. To receive an update on hall, cottage and open spaces

Nothing to report

## 28. To receive an update on highways matters

28.1. Mrs Ash showed some posters that local children had designed for a competition to encourage drivers to slow down. The winning poster would be printed and displayed on the main village roads.

28.2. The clerk was asked to obtain a copy of the Integrated Work Programme for Little Berkhamsted.

## 29. To receive a report from Little Berkhamsted Recreation Committee

29.1. Cllr Hunter gave a verbal report on the Village Fete

- 29.2. The fete had been combined with a dog show and craft fair. The enhanced activities had proved very successful and a provisional surplus of £5000 to be reinvested in the community was reported.
- 29.3. The Recreation Committee planned a pantomime, Robin Hood for the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> December. It was also likely that another Ball would be held.

### **30. Planning applications**

- 30.1. The planning report was noted.
- 30.2. No new applications had been received.
- 30.3. EHDC Little Berkhamsted Conservation Area review.
  - a) Members discussed the consultation document. It was noted that a meeting was to be held at Fanshawes, Brickendon on 31<sup>st</sup> July.
  - b) The consultation document suggested that the parish council's notice board was a detrimental feature and needed repainting. The clerk was asked to arrange for repainting of the notice board.
  - c) The clerk was asked to prepare a poster drawing residents' attention to the consultation.
  - d) The chairman suggested a leaflet drop may be warranted. Cllr Nunn agreed to discuss what publicity was planned with John Bosworth, the district council conservation officer.
- 30.4. Appeal against refusal of permissions at Water Hall quarry.
  - a) Members noted the appeal will be determined by way a public enquiry to be held at County Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> September for up to three days.
  - b) The clerk confirmed that the council's previous letters of objection had been sent to the Planning Inspectorate.
  - c) Members agreed it was not necessary to make any further representation or to appear in person at the enquiry.
  - d) It was reported that the pressure group No Bayford Quarry expected to be represented.
- 30.5. Members noted that appeal against refusal of permissions for Bedwell quarry would be by way of a hearing at EHDC Offices, Wallfields , Peggs Lane , Hertford, on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

### **31. To receive an update on minerals and landfill activities.**

Nothing to report

### **32. To consider the order of business for future meetings and to amend Standing Orders accordingly.**

- 32.1. The chairman proposed that the order of business be changed to:
  1. Statutory matters
  2. Matters for decision
  3. Matters for noting
  4. Other matters
  5. Cheque signing
- 32.2. It was agreed that a formal resolution to amend Standing Orders will be tabled at the September meeting.

### **33. To consider the introduction of an Intranet for use of members and staff.**

- 33.1. The chairman explained that he used a very sophisticated piece of intranet software High Q, in connection with his business and this could be made available to the council to facilitate collaboration on a number of projects.
- 33.2. The clerk raised a concern that the council should not be dependent on software it did not own or licence and that a simpler solution, such as Google sites, could provide the functionality required.
- 33.3. It was agreed to make use of the High Q package for the Task and Finish groups and to review its use at a later time.

### 34. To consider the formation of Task and Finish groups

- 34.1. The chairman proposed to set up a number of task and finish groups to examine new ways of working and to address several potential projects. He explained that the membership would be drawn from the whole community and in the case of the planning group from neighbouring parishes.
- 34.2. Planning Group
- e) Members discussed the creation of a Planning Group of locally-based property professionals to review all planning applications and advise relevant Parish Councils on their submissions as statutory consultees.
  - f) The chairman explained that the parochial church councils co-operated on a group basis known as the Hartford Hundred and suggested a similar grouping could be used.
  - g) It was made clear that the decision whether or not to submit a response and the content of that response would always rest with the council.
  - h) Concern was raised that the members of group, such as architects and surveyors would have a different perspective on planning than councillors or the public.
  - i) The clerk suggested that the benefit in the council being a statutory consultee was to bring local knowledge that the District council's planning experts may not have but that the technical assessment of applications was best left to the planning experts.
  - j) It was noted that the Hartford Hundred group of parishes crossed district council boundaries and that a planning group should be restricted to those parishes in East Herts.
- 34.3. Conduct a review of the existing village website (including functionality, scope, content, user experience).
- a) Members noted that the website was not owned or operated by the parish council but was a community web site for use by the entire parish, although it was funded by the parish council.
  - b) Cllr Nunn had compared the web site to many other communities and found it better than most. He considered that a website refresh was not a high priority.
  - c) The chairman explained that he would expect to consult with all groups that used the website (and some that currently didn't).
- 34.4. Carry out an online/hard copy residents' survey to assess priorities, interests and levels of engagement.
- a) Members recalled that a similar survey had been conducted in 1994.
  - b) The chairman proposed that an online system be used as this would make analysis easier.
  - c) Members suggested a hard copy would be needed to get maximum engagement and that the survey should be delivered to all houses.
- 34.5. Consider an update to and distribution of the New Resident's Welcome Pack.
- a) Cllr Nunn advised that it had been his practice while chairman to write to each new resident welcoming them to the village.
  - b) Cllr Hunter advised that a document was downloadable from the website. (The document *Welcome.PDF* is annexed to these minutes).
  - c) Mrs S Ash explained that she visited each new resident to introduce them to the village and to explain the role of the Recreation Committee and Village Hall activities.
  - d) It was agreed that a task and finish group could report back to the PC on content, presentation and distribution of the welcome pack.
- 34.6. To consider the future of Neighbourhood Watch.
- a) It was reported that the current co-ordinator and other names street co-ordinators were no longer active.
  - b) Members questioned the police involvement as historically Neighbourhood Watch had been a police initiative.
  - c) The clerk was asked to contact the police and invite a representative to a future parish council meeting.
- 34.7. Members **RESOLVED** to delegate to the clerk in conjunction with the chairman and vice-chairman the formation of these groups which would report back to the September meeting.
- 34.8. The clerk advised that this could involve additional work beyond his standard contracted hours.

**35. Finance:**

- 35.1. The financial statement of accounts to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014 was noted.
- 35.2. Five payments made since the last meeting were APPROVED (see attached list).
- 35.3. Five payments due were APPROVED (see attached list).
- 35.4. The external auditor's clean audit report was NOTED.

**36. To note any correspondence received and not previously circulated.**

- 36.1. A pamphlet on the East Herts Community Safety Partnership Summer Programme was circulated.

**37. To consider matters to be considered at future meetings. None**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.20 pm.

Signed

Date

## Little Berkhamsted Parish Council

### Payments made in May & June

				<u>CQ</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Gross</u>
01/05/2014	Flying Moth	Broadband	*#	so	60.00	0.00	60.00
21/05/2014	K Murphy	Int Audit	*#	1101	80.00		80.00
21/05/2014	HAPTC	Subs	*#	1099	304.71		304.71
21/05/2014	CDA	Subs	*#	1100	30.00		30.00
01/06/2014	Flying Moth	Broadband	*#	so	60.00	0.00	60.00
11/06/2014	Tonks	Payroll	*#	dd			
13/06/2014	Paul Curson	Litter	#	1102	35.00		35.00
13/06/2014	HCC	Rec Committee purch	#	1103	126.38	25.28	151.66
13/06/2014	Fusion	Open spaces	#	1104	56.00	11.20	67.20
13/06/2014	T & J Fire	Admin	#	1105	29.73	5.94	35.67
<b>Total</b>					<b>781.82</b>	<b>42.42</b>	<b>824.24</b>

### Payments made / due July

				<u>CQ</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Gross</u>
01/07/2014	Flying Moth	Broadband	#	so	60.00	0.00	60.00
16/07/2014	T Brindley	Clerk Expenses		1106	41.40	3.61	45.37
16/07/2014	Fusion	Grass		1107	56.00	11.20	67.20
16/07/2014	P Curson	Litter		1108	63.00	0.00	63.00
16/07/2014	Little Berk. PCC	Glebe land rent (50%)		1109	125.00	0.00	125.00
16/07/2014	BDO	Audit		1110	100.00	20.00	120.00
<b>Total</b>					<b>445.40</b>	<b>34.81</b>	<b>480.57</b>

\* = approved at previous meeting

# = already paid

<http://www.littleberkhamsted.org.uk/docs/welcome.pdf>