

Little Berkhamsted Parish Council

MINUTES of a meeting of Little Berkhamsted Parish Council
held on Wednesday 21st January 2015 at 8.00pm in Little Berkhamsted Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllrs R Chaplin (Chairman), E Hunter (Vice Chairman), C Nunn, W Walshe, M Bailey
R Pegg and W Morris

In attendance: Ms Nina Villa, Parish Clerk
Several Members of the public

79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

81. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It was noted that the minutes of the meeting of 19th November 2014 contained several typos and inaccuracies and therefore it was agreed that they would be presented to the next meeting for approval.

82. MATTERS ARISING

None

83. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

84. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Ms Nina Villa to her first meeting as the new Parish Clerk and noted that the handover had been completed, although there was still some work to do with regards to changing of the bank mandate. The Chairman also thanked his Councillor colleagues for their ongoing support with various projects.

85. FINANCE

In light of the above noted difficulties with regards to access to the bank accounts, a full financial report was not available. It was noted that a cheque for the Royal British Legion was not included on the list of payments presented to the Committee and that there was an outstanding payment due to the cottage tenant for chimney work.

It was noted that two payments had been made since the last meeting and that several payments were now due (Appendix A).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Council approve the payments listed at Appendix A.

The Clerk presented a draft budget which was broadly unchanged from the version previously considered by the Council although it was noted that there had been a slight

reduction in the tax base.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Council approve the draft budget and precept demand of £8000 for 2015/16.

86. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Council considered 2 applications (3/15/0017/FP and 3/14/2257/FP)

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Council objects to the proposed plans for 17 Church Rd (3/15/0017/FP) and has no objection to the proposals for Bucks Alley Cottage (3/14/2257/FP)
- b) The Council delegate authority to the Parish Clerk, in consultation with Cllr. Nunn, to provide a full response to East Herts Council.

87. WORK PROGRAMME

It was noted that the new notice board had been installed and was a considerable improvement on the previous one. It was noted that one side was lockable and one side was available for general community use (not commercial advertising). The key for the locked side would be passed to the Chairman.

No further progress had been made on the war memorials repairs and the Clerk was asked to progress the matter.

88. REPORTS OF WORKING GROUPS

The Chairman gave some background to the agenda item. He explained that a number of resident led groups had been formed to take forward various projects arising from the recently conducted parish survey. The Chairman invited public participation in this part of the meeting.

There was considerable discussion about the matter. In particular, concern was raised about the desirable and appropriate level of Parish Council input given that none of the issues arising from the survey were statutory duties of the Parish Council and some fell more comfortably within, for example, the remit of the Recreation Committee. It was widely acknowledged that the project had been useful and that all present were appreciative of the work that had gone in to getting these groups off the ground. However, it was felt that whilst the Parish Council should provide all possible assistance, support and advice, the groups should now be left to develop themselves and that they should not be required to report to the Parish Council unless they chose to make the Council aware of their activities. Of particular concern was Neighbourhood Watch, where strong representation was made that Parish Council should not seek to control the group and it was agreed that the members of the watch should be free to manage themselves and appoint their own coordinator should they feel it necessary to have such a role.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Council approve the proposal to remove this item from the agenda and that reports from each group could be considered in the Public Participation agenda item if/when the groups wished to address the Council.
- b) The Council would not seek to control or direct the activities of any of the groups but would offer such assistance, advice and support as was appropriate in future.

89. HALL, COTTAGE AND OPEN SPACES

It was noted that the trees directly opposite the village hall may require attention.

90. HIGHWAYS

It was noted that signs designed by local children designed to encourage drivers to reduce their speed, had been erected at various villages entrances. It was queried whether permission from Highways to erect these signs had been sought. No one present was in a position to confirm whether permissions had been sought and approved.

It was reported that there had been several ice related incidents near The Beehive Pub due to freezing weather.

It was noted that the drains along Bucks Alley had been cleared.

91. LITTLE BERKHAMSTED RECREATION COMMITTEE (LBRC)

Nothing to report

92. MINERALS AND LANDFILL

It was noted that the appeal hearing regarding the unauthorised parking of HGVs on the Bedwell site had resulted in rejection of the appeal but that the present operator's lease of the site ends in December 2015 and therefore close attention would need to be paid to ensure no future undesirable use of the site.

93. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

None

94. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND NOT PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED

None

95. MATTERS TO NOTE OR BE CONSIDERED AT FUTURE MEETINGS.

The date of the Annual Parish Meeting was discussed and it was agreed that 12th May 2015 was the preferred date with 14th May as an alternative.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2145

Signed

Date