

LITTLE BERKHAMSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 18th September 2019 at 8pm in the Village Hall, Little Berkhamsted.

Present;

Cllr Downes (Chair), Cllr Hunter (Vice-Chair), Cllr Standbrook, Cllr Stokes, Cllr Holt, Cllr Morris

In Attendance: 14 members of the public, Leader of the Council Linda Haysey and Laura Brooks-Payne (Clerk)

- 1. To receive apologies for absence and approve;** District Cllr Ken Crofton
- 2. To receive declaration of interest and dispensation;** none
- 3. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of the Council; Wednesday 27th July 2019;** Cllr Stokes reported that the defibrillator has been delivered and still awaiting the cabinet. Planning permission is not required and it will be sited on the outside of the village hall inside the gate. It was discussed that it would be useful to have signs advertising the placement of the machine in the church and in the village shop. Training sessions were also discussed which Cllr Stokes will investigate.
The minutes were approved, proposed by Cllr Stokes and seconded by Cllr Holt.
- 4. To receive questions and comments from the public;**

A resident asked when the Speed Indicator Devices (SID's) were likely to up and running; Cllr Holt explained that he had managed to secure funding for two SID's that were on the Highway list of works. Cllr Holt also explained that the parish council had expressed an opinion in the siting but ultimately this was down to the expert opinion and experience of Herts Highways.

A resident that lives in the sanctuary housing development had written to Cllr Downes expressing her dissatisfaction at the PC liaising with Sanctuary Housing to repair the faulty street lamps in the alleyway that runs past the church to Goddards Close and in the car park in Goddards Close. The resident believed that the PC were unnecessarily involving themselves in private business because although she did want them back up and running, Sanctuary housing residents are not happy to have to pay for them. Cllr Downes explained that a member of the parish had originally asked the PC to get involved because the alleyway lights have not been working for some time which is dangerous on dark winter evenings.

A resident commented that there is no kissing gate on the footpath from the church to Bucks Alley and as a result bicycles and mopeds are using the path. Cllr Holt reported that he is in liaison with the Rights of way Officer at East Herts Council, funding has been sought and a kissing gate will be installed in due course.

Cllr Holt circulated a Rights of way map indicating the route for the new easy access circular pathway around the parish. Cllr Holt reported that the project is going well, the

route now established and that funding was likely to come entirely from the P3 grant. Cllr Downes thanked Cllr Holt for his work on the project.

A resident commented that the bus shelter is looking tired and that repairs and maintenance are needed. Cllr Stokes reported that she and her husband had already replaced the map and perspex in situ, but agreed it did need repainting and a little more maintenance which they are already looking into.

- 5. To receive the chairman's report and resignation of Cllr Latham-Koenig;** Cllr Downes reported that Cllr Latham-Koenig had resigned from the PC because of a move abroad and although only a cllr on the PC for a short time thanked him for his enthusiasm and work on the new village signage.
Cllr Downes had been in communication with a resident who had reported that one of the village signs seemed to be 'wonky'. Cllrs agreed that it was not.
- 6. To update on potential new website design;** Cllr Downes thanked Cllr Stokes for her research in obtaining quotations which were still coming in. Cllrs will spend time looking at the quotes in detail and agreed that some of quotations received were way out of budget. Cllr Hunter commented that the PC had not informed or communicated with the current website provider on the PC's intentions which was incorrect for the PC not to have done so. Cllr Holt commented that the PC should work with the current provider to see how we can modernise what we already have. Cllr Downes asked the clerk to liaise with the current provider to advise that the PC had been 'innocently disrespectful' and ask for the company to look at what could be achieved and at what sort of cost. The clerk reported that she had already been in communication with the current supplier but would liaise with them further.
- 7. To receive a report from Little Berkhamsted Recreation Committee and to discuss the future of the committee;** Cllr Downes reported that after the PC meeting there would be an informal meeting with the PC and the recreation committee due to a number of significant issues arising.
Cllr Hunter reported that the firework night was being held on 3rd November and the AGM on the 7th November.
- 8. To report on a possible village questionnaire –** Cllr Stokes reported that the last questionnaire was carried out in 2014 with a hard copy of it being obtained from a former cllr. The 8 page content was rather lengthy and could be more succinct with 4 key questions. Websites are available to create simple and free questionnaires. There was discussion on the best way forward and it was agreed that copies should be posted to all residents by knocking on doors and having conversations with residents. Cllr Stokes agreed to lead on the project but asked fellow cllrs to be more active with responses because the project could not run with one cllr alone.
- 9. OPEN SPACES**

9.1 To report on playground issues; New swing crotch straps had been ordered and delivered but specialist screws were needed and the company sending them on. Cllrs Standbrook and Morris had visited the playground following the annual inspection and reported that most areas were low or very low risk although they did identify areas that need attention. It was agreed that Cllr Standbrook will order the materials needed for the work to be carried out by Cllr Standbrook and Morris. Quotes for a new bench will be obtained, the current bench being at the end of its life. It was noted that the fence at the

far end of the play area needs to be either replaced or repaired and it was agreed to contact the resident who owns the fence offering to make a contribution.

9.2 To update on siting another dog waste bin on the church side of the road; Cllr Stokes circulated a map that she had produced showing current dog bin locations and possible locations for another bin which were discussed at length. It was suggested that the end of Goddards Close may be the best position. Cllr Hunter commented that Goddards Close was not the best position and that when the fence is repaired by the church this popular dog walking route will no longer be a viable one. The clerk suggested that cllrs did a walk round the village to discuss this further. Cllr Downes agreed, the clerk will circulate suggested dates.

10. PLANNING

10.1 To receive the latest Planning Report circulated by the clerk: It was noted that planning applications were sparse of late. Two new planning applications for a single storey rear extension at 44 Church Road (3/19/1589/HH) and improvements and alterations to barns and stables at Longbourne Stud (3/19/1825/FUL) were discussed and Cllrs unanimously agreed that they had no objections to both of these planning applications. The clerk will send comments to East Herts District Council. (EHDC)

10.2 To update on the retrospective planning refusal at Dene Orchard

3/17/1621/HH; Clerk had been chasing East Herts enforcement officers for an update on this application since the last PC meeting to no avail. Clerk had asked Cllr Haysey to intervene who reported that enforcement officer David Smith would update Cllr Haysey in the next few days.

11. PREMISES MANAGEMENT

11.1 To report on the Village Hall – Cllr Standbrook – nothing to report

11.2 To report on new contract with cricket club – Cllr Downes ; having received advice from a solicitor it was noted that the contract included complexities which would need to be discussed with the PC. Cllr Downes will organise a meeting.

11.3 To report on the new rental agreement for the cottage – Cllr Downes; Cllr Downes has the contract drawn up and will arrange a meeting with the tenant of the cottage to go through and sign the new contract.

12. HIGHWAYS

12.1 To update on forming a path on Robins Nest Hill & possible new sign - Cllr Stokes reported that the undergrowth for a new path had now been cleared under the organisation of resident Simon Hedley. The path is now passable and residents are using it. It was agreed not to install a sign to point the public in the direction of the path as it was both deemed unnecessary and would need probably Highways permission to install it. Cllr Downes thanked Simon Hedley and members of the working party who carried out the clearance.

13. FINANCE

13.1 To approve the financial statement and payment of accounts; Clerk had circulated the accounts prior to the meeting. Cllr Downes briefly went through the latest accounts. These were approved, proposed by Cllr Hunter and seconded by Cllr Standbrook.

13.2 To approve cost for new noticeboard in the bus shelter; Cllr Stokes confirmed that she had paid for a new map to be printed for the bus stop. Payment was approved.

13.3 To report on the upcoming budget for 2020-2021; Clerk advised cllrs that the figures would be looked into in due course and circulated to cllrs to be discussed and approved at the meeting in November.

14. Matters for future consideration and confirmation of the date of the next meeting on Wednesday 20th November 2019, 8pm; confirmed

15. To receive correspondence (for information only); none

16. To close the meeting. Cllr Downes closed the meeting at 9.30pm

Laura Brooks-Payne, Clerk
24th September 2019.