

LITTLE BERKHAMSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 16th September 2020 at 8pm in the Village Hall, Little Berkhamsted.

COVID 19 NOTE - *This meeting was held during the Covid-19 Pandemic via Zoom*

Present;

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

In Attendance: 5 members of the public, Laura Brooks-Payne (Clerk)

- 1. To receive apologies for absence and approve:** Linda Haysey and Ken Crofton
- 2. To receive declaration of interest and dispensation:** Cllr Morris – for agenda item 8.2
- 3. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of the Council Wednesday 15th July 2020:** Item 7 – Cllr Stokes had the conversation with Simon Hedley in item number 7, and suggested that volunteers could look after specific events. Clerk will amend. Cllr Stokes asked if an official thank you had been sent to Mr Lohare for the donation – Cllr Downes has thanked the donor but would like to invite him officially to look round once government guidelines surrounding the pandemic permit. Minutes were approved, proposed by Cllr Standbrook, seconded by Cllr Morris.

Standing orders suspended to allow members of the public to speak if they wish

4. To receive questions and comments from the public:

A resident asked if Apple DayCare (ADC) will be using the pavilion for five days a week when their contract is finalised because he has reservations about this. As the pavilion is a village hub for all to use, he fears that others will not be able to make use of it. Another resident agreed and noted that the cricket club also use the space through the summer continuously. Cllr Downes reported that the PC are currently negotiating a new contract with ADC who would like to use the pavilion on an adhoc basis until Christmas and then more regularly thereafter. The owner of ADC understands the concerns of residents and explained that it is unrealistic to leave the space empty on one day a week for possible village events. Cllr Stokes explained that in her view the PC should rent the space to ADC for only 4 days a week, in the first year, to give residents an opportunity to use the space and review this again at a later date next year.

Sandie Ash asked if the football goals can be erected. It was agreed that these could go up at the end of September when the cricket club season is nearly at an end.

A resident asked if the bridleway issue report is available. Clerk reported that it is now online.

Cllr Hunter reported that the raw sewage is flowing down Robins Nest Hill and the source is unknown. The drain is also blocked so is not flowing away. The PC are in liaison with Herts highways to investigate the issue.

Standing Orders reinstated from here

- 5. To receive the chairman's report:** items will be covered in the body of the meeting.
- 6. To receive an update on Little Berkhamsted Recreation Committee;** Simon Hedley reported that the RC had been putting together a document in order to hand over the funds in the bank account to the PC. It is the intention that funds will be ring fenced for community events. The hope is that this will enable individuals to hold community events using these funds for the parish. Cllr Downes explained that Cllrs are so far in favour of this.

- 7. To approve the new Apple Daycare Contract;** Cllr Downes explained that the final details are still being discussed. The Co-Founder of ADC has already agreed that electricity and cleaning will be funded by ADC and are confident that they are financially viable to use the pavilion on a regular basis.

8. OPEN SPACES

- 8.1 To report on playground issues** – Cllr Standbrook reported that the annual inspection has been undertaken, there is a 'moderate risk' on the boundary fence and discussions are ongoing with the resident that owns this. They are preparing to replace the fence which will still be a secure boundary for the playground. Cllr Hunter will get in touch with the owner to ensure that the new fencing is safe for a playground area. A sign is needed for the new basketball net and bark edging needs some work undertaken. Cllr Morris reported that ADC seem to be there for some hours and nappies are regularly being left in the public waste bin. Cllr Stokes reported that she spoke to staff from ADC in the playground this week and explained to staff that there should be no eating and drinking in the playground area currently.
- 8.2 To update on latest information for Bridleway number 18** – Cllr Downes explained that Herts County Council have produced a thorough and comprehensive report for the public to view which is now on the Little Berkhamsted PC website for viewing. The decision is yet to be made, this will be taken after the consultation period has ended, and hence the path is not yet open.
- 8.3 To report on refurb of village signs** – Cllr Standbrook has circulated information as to how the signs can be refurbished. Options are complete refurb and repainting lettering with a re-varnish, circa £2000, or, repainting the letters leaving wood untreated, no quote as yet, or, to apply an overlay of an aluminium sign on a white background glued or screwed to the existing sign, circa £400. Cllrs discussed and noted that the signs also need to be raised because they are currently far too low. Cllrs agreed to look into raising the signs and to explore exact costs of this to make a more considered decision. Cllr Standbrook will liaise with Simon Hedley on how this could be undertaken.
- 8.4 To discuss replacement/new litter bins, next litter pick & litter collection:** Cllr Stokes reported that East Herts Council are currently not renting out equipment due to the pandemic so a litter pick is on hold for the time being. Litter Bin costs have been investigated and are quite high so when funds allow these can be purchased. One of the village litter bins is broken so this does need replacing sooner rather than later. Cllr Stokes will send details of specific bins to Cllrs to make a decision and look into a bigger waste bin for the village hall.

9. PLANNING

- 9.1 To receive the latest Planning Report circulated by the clerk:**

Cllr Hunter explained that the property at 1 Goddards Close had started works and had not submitted a planning application. A planning application has now been submitted. (3/20/1316/HH) Cllrs unanimously agreed that to object to this application because the extension is already in process of being built and hence should have been submitted as a retrospective application.

Cllrs had no objection to the planning objection at Danes Farm Silos. (3/20/1721/ARPN)
Cllrs had no objections 4 Robins Nest Hill (3/20/1636/LBC).
Clerk will submit comments on behalf of the PC.

Cllr Downes had received a letter relating to an objection from a neighbour against the current planning application for 42 Church Road which he read out. There are currently 3 separate applications for permitted development at the property which extend 8 metres to the back of the property which they feel is excessive and unreasonable. Cllr Stokes has spoken to the owner of the property who advised that they do not want to adversely affect any neighbours and applied for 8 metres after advice that this would be allowed under permitted development.

- 9.2 **To approve how the PC consider new planning applications:** Cllrs discussed having more involvement in applications and it was agreed that 2 Cllrs will contact the applicant and visit the property on every application, report back to cllrs and then make an informed decision to submit to the planning department. Cllr Hunter, Morris, Stokes, Kent and Standbrook agreed to take this on.

10. PREMISES MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 **To report on the Village Hall:** Cllr Standbrook reported that the damaged ceiling will be repaired next week.
- 10.2 **To update on pavilion refurbishment;** showers have had a deep clean, most outbuildings have been cleared. Toilet roll dispensers etc have been installed. Outside sockets need to be checked as working. The water heater in the kitchen needs to be checked. Cllr Morris and Standbrook will look at this. Cllr Stokes is currently obtaining quotes for bench cushions.
- 10.3 **To update on the new tenancy agreement for the village hall cottage:** Cllr Downes advised that a job description and tenancy agreement is currently being written in conjunction with Sandie Ash.
- 10.4 **To discuss pavilion including; cleaning, security, inventory & waste collections;** Cllrs will meet next week at the pavilion to discuss the finer points.

11. HIGHWAYS

- 11.1 **To receive an update on completion of the circular village accessible path** – Cllr Holt reported that this is complete apart from 2 access points that need further action. Works are still ongoing.
- 11.2 **To receive an update on the siting of the SID** - Cllr Holt reported that both are up and running. Hertfordshire highways decide where they are sited though the resident who lives close to the Church Road SID is concerned as to its proximity of their house. Clerk to email resident.
- 11.3 **To receive and update on the Drive Safe scheme petition & HCC's Speed management strategy:** Cllr Stokes has spoken to the local Police Officer who carried out speed checks last week in the village and will be meeting with him to discuss the issue further.
- 11.4 **To discuss overgrown hedges/verges, obscured/damaged traffic signs, in the village & on the Lower Hatfield Road:** Cllr Standbrook explained that 30mph signs in the village and on the Lower Hatfield Road are obstructed by undergrowth. Cllr Standbrook will report some of these signs on the online fault reporting system and contact Ken Crofton to see if we can push this further along.

12. FINANCE

- 12.1 **To approve the financial statement and payment of accounts:** approved, proposed by Cllr Kent and seconded by Cllr Stokes.
13. **To approve the date of the next meeting, Wednesday 18th November 2020 and meeting dates for 2021:** 2021 meeting dates approved; 20th January, 17th March, 19th May, 14th July, 15th September, 17th November with an APM being held in April 2021, date to be confirmed.
14. **To receive Correspondence (for information only):** none
15. **To close the meeting:** Cllr Downes closed the meeting at 22.25