



LITTLE BERKHAMSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 16th March at 7.30pm in the Village Hall in Little Berkhamsted.

Cllrs present: Cllr Stokes (Chair), Cllr Hunter (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Standbrook and Cllr Morris, Cllr Noble

Others present: Laura Brooks-Payne – Clerk, 2 members of the public

- 1 To receive apologies for absence and approve:** Cllr Eaglestone (prior engagement)
- 2. To receive declaration of interest and dispensation:** None
- 3. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19th January 2022:** The minutes were unanimously approved.

Chair's Report: Cllr Stokes reported that the past two months have been incredibly busy with a number of different areas of work and specific projects which have required a huge amount of councillor's time. Cllr Stokes thanked councillors for everything they have done.

Cllr Stokes explained that the PC are currently trying to recruit for another Councillor and being one short adds to existing Cllrs' work load. Cllr Stokes reported that a couple, residents in Stockings Lane, have volunteered for the role of Rights of Way Surveyor for the Parish's footpaths and bridleways.

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

- 4. To receive questions and comments from the public:**

Sandie Ash reported on behalf of Revd Theresa regarding the Ukraine Crisis. Residents in the UK have been called upon to open their homes. The Diocese of St Albans is taking action to coordinate this activity in our locality and the Luton Airport Chaplaincy has already been housing refugees. There are several offers of accommodation in Little Berkhamsted as well as across the Parishes of the Hertford Hundred group. The Rector is putting plans in place, in accordance with the directions from the Diocese, to support the refugees who may be housed here as well as assisting those who are prepared to take families. A local Parish support group has been set up. While the Diocese is facilitating the scheme, it would be good for the local churches to have the support of the Parish Councils. Cllr Morris agreed to represent the PC and will attend the meeting this coming Saturday.

Standing Orders reinstated from here

5. To update on the celebrations and discuss purchase of a village beacon to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee:

Cllr Stokes advised that the PC will take the lead in the beacon lighting ceremony on the evening of Thursday 2nd June, and also the village picnic on Sunday 5th June.

A permanent and temporary (for when the beacon is lit) site have been located by the PC on the recreation field. These will be checked for suitability with the Fire Brigade and Conservation Area team. The East Herts Covid Welcome Back Fund has kindly funded the purchase of the beacon. Cllr Stokes showed Cllrs the proposed design and will finalise the design with Mill Green Forge.

Sam Baker from Apple DayCare has offered to pay for a live singer for the event.

The Cricket Club are running the pavilion bar and a BBQ on evening of Thursday 2nd June.

Raffle prizes are being sought by Sandie Ash. Some prizes have been received already.

7. HIGHWAYS

7.1 To report on 20s Plenty Campaign: Cllr Stokes reported that HCC have decided to instigate a few 20mph zones within the County. They are however, only attempting to achieve 20 mph speeds alongside traffic calming measures. Unfortunately Little Berkhamsted is unlikely to be chosen as one of these locations, having been assessed to be fairly low down on the list of priorities. Cllr Stokes will attend another meeting regarding the scheme next week.

7.2 To update on drainage issues on Robins Nest Hill: Cllr Stokes and Cllr Standbrook met the new area manager for Ringway a couple of months ago. We have been advised that there will be funding in the new financial year from April 2022 to carry out drainage work on the road.

8. PLANNING

8.1 To receive & discuss the latest Planning Report circulated by the clerk: There were no additional applications to discuss since the last meeting.

9. OPEN SPACES

9.1 To report on playground issues: Cllr Standbrook reported no current issues. Replacement bark will be purchased early in April. It was agreed that on Saturday 9th April the area and field will be tidied and the bark laid.

9.2 To update on grass carpet matting for parking on the recreation field:

Cllr Stokes reported that the matting has now been laid. The PC is still waiting for the contractor to finish the work as more 'pins' are needed to adhere some of the edges to the ground. This has created approximately 20 parking spaces for when the village holds larger events and needs further parking. One bench will be reinstated in the area, it having been removed for the work to take place.

9.3 To update on the Queen's Canopy project: Cllr Eaglestone has organised purchase of two oak trees from local garden centre, Rochford's, which will be planted at the far end of the recreation field, one close to the cricket net and the other close to the pathway.

9.4 To agree the purchase of Gazebos through The Welcome Back Fund:

Cllr Stokes reported that the administrator for the Welcome Back Fund at EH has also kindly offered to allow the PC to purchase gazebos for use when the pavilion or the recreation field is hired. Cllrs discussed the size and type of gazebo to purchase, noting that they need to be the robust type of structure. It was agreed to purchase four, 3x3m and one, 3x6 gazebos, with additional required accessories.

Additionally, the Welcome Back Fund has also offered to pay for a cycle rack, a flag pole, a new waste bin and a new noticeboard for Epping Green (that was damaged in the recent storm), a replacement noticeboard for the village hall (broken), and a permanent table tennis table for the recreation field. A semi-permanent barrier to surround the new parking spaces on the recreation field is needed and Cllr Stokes will ask if this meets the grant criteria. The location of items was discussed and the items will be researched further.

9.5 To discuss the siting for new benches, picnic tables, Jubilee Beacon & oak trees on the recreation field:

Further discussion will take place on site to decide on locations to site the new benches and tables.

Oak tree location – see agenda item 9.3

Jubilee Beacon – see agenda item 6

9.6 To discuss the replacement of the Epping Green noticeboard: see agenda item 9.4

10. PREMISES MANAGEMENT

Village Hall

10.1 To report on the Village Hall: Cllr Standbrook reported that Sandie is organising a contractor to clear the gutters. The decking to the back of the village hall needs minor repair. The cottage garden decking is in poor repair and needs replacing. Quotes will be acquired for this work and discussed at the next PC meeting.

Cricket & Community Pavilion (C&C Pavilion)

10.2 To receive the latest report & information on the Cricket & Community Pavilion: No issues to report other than a pest issue that is being dealt with.

10.3 To update on pavilion bar refurbishment: Cllr Standbrook reported that the base units are in situ, the worktops will be delivered tomorrow and the plumbing and electrical work has been carried out.

10.4 To update on the 2022 contract with the Cricket Club: Cllr Stokes reported that the Cricket Club has requested a substantial reduction in the yearly rental. This was discussed at length and it was agreed that Cllr Stokes would write to the Cricket Club again.

- 10.5 **To update on the 2022 contract with Apple Day Care:** Cllr Stokes reported that dialogue was currently being had between the PC and Apple DayCare to finalise the contract.
- 10.6 **To discuss new pavilion clock quotations:** Cllr Morris will look into whether the existing clock can be adapted for a power feed before the end of the month when the clocks change.

11. FINANCE

11.1 To approve the financial statement and payment of accounts:

Accounts and payments were unanimously approved.

Cllr Standbrook reported that the contract with Fusion for the grass cutting contract for the 2022 season had been received and this was unanimously approved.

Cllrs agreed and approved that the village sign cleaning will be carried out once a year by Simon Hedley.

- 11.2 **To agree a policy on charitable donations:** The Clerk explained that requests come in from time to time for donations. This was discussed and it was agreed that a budget of £300 per year would be allocated to charitable funds. Preferred charities for 2022-23 were discussed and approved, these being Herts & Essex Air Ambulance and East Herts Citizens Advice Bureau. The Clerk will seek advice to confirm that this is allowed within our regulations.

12. To approve the date of the next meeting on 18th May 2022 and note that the Annual Parish Meeting is to be held on Wednesday 30th March at 7.30 pm in the village hall: Approved and noted.

13. **To close the meeting:** Cllr Stokes closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Parish Clerk: Mrs Laura Brooks-Payne
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