



## **LITTLE BERKHAMSTED PARISH COUNCIL**

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30pm in the Village Hall in Little Berkhamsted.

Cllrs present: Cllr Stokes (Chair), Cllr Hunter (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Eaglestone, Cllr Standbrook, Cllr Morris, Cllr Fellowes

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

### **AGENDA**

**1 To receive apologies for absence and approve:**

Cllr Noble and Cllr Eaglestone, approved

**2. To receive declaration of interest and dispensation:**

Cllr Morris for planning application 3/22/1289/HH

**3. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022:**

The minutes were unanimously approved.

**4. Chair's Report:**

Cllr Stokes reported that the Queens platinum Jubilee celebrations in Little Berkhamsted were a great success and included the lighting of the new beacon brazier and a party with the whole community. Cllr Stokes thanked all those that helped organise and those who attended.

Cllr Stokes advise that the lack of a Recreation Committee meant that any events held needed to be organised by groups of volunteers. It was noted that it is not the role of the PC to organise village social events but of course they will always assist and help where they can.

Cllrs have discussed that the focus in the next year is to increase the number of bookings of the PC facilities to help cover the rising costs of running them.

The ward walk with East Herts Councillors planned for June has been postponed, probably until October.

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

## 5. To receive questions and comments from the public:

Sandie Ash advised that on Saturday August 27<sup>th</sup> 2022 a concert is being held at the church to raise funds for the Ukrainian crisis. She asked if the PC could help advertise this via Mailchimp. This was agreed. Cllr Stokes to action.

Sam Baker from Apple Day Care had emailed the Clerk previous to the meeting to ask if Bayford School could erect a banner advertising their upcoming open day. Cllrs agreed to this. Cllr Stokes will ask if the PC can advertise the function halls in any of their advertising material in return.

Standing Orders reinstated from here

## 6. To agree a date for the Autumn litter pick:

Cllr Hunter discussed dates for this with Cllrs. The date agreed is Sunday October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10.30am.

The ongoing issue of litter in the village was discussed. As a business operating in the village that generates some of the litter in question, councillors discussed the responsibilities of the shop in regard to this matter. The clerk to write to the shop owners asking for their co operation in working together on this matter for the benefit of the residents and the environment.

## 7. To discuss options for renewing the PC Website:

Cllrs Stokes explained that Cllr Noble is leading on this project. The PC have spoken to a local web expert. His advice is to migrate the website to another provider and has suggested two companies that the PC could use. The hope is that a potential website can have a calendar on it to view bookings at PC owned facilities and will streamline administration. Cllr Noble has also spoken to another web expert and is continuing with research and acquiring like-for-like quotes. Cllr Stokes to contact our existing website provider to advise of the PC intentions.

## 8. To discuss the preservation & display of Parish archives:

Cllr Stokes explained that Cllr Noble now holds some old archives relating to the village. Cllr Noble is currently looking through the material with a view to having some of the most interesting pieces on display. The PC would like to preserve this in digital format as well. It was suggested that displays of selected pieces could be put on permanent display in the village hall and/or the pavilion. Work is ongoing on this project and those interested in helping were asked to contact Cllr Noble.

## 9. HIGHWAYS

### 9.1 To report on 20s Plenty Campaign:

Cllr Stokes reported that in Wales the government has just approved a default speed limit of 20mph for restricted roads to be implemented throughout the country from March 2023. This was generally considered to be good progress for the 20's Plenty for Us campaign.

Cllr Stokes reported that 20s plenty for Herts are working together with Herts Highways but progress on the matter is slow. Another meeting is due to take place at the end of the month.

Cllr Stokes advised that Cllr Ken Crofton has asked Highways for the data to be downloaded from the two village SID's. This data can then be used to help push ahead with trying to reduce speeding through the village. The PC will need to pay for this data at a cost of £250, which was unanimously approved.

Cllr Morris reported that there are two dropped drains on Robins Nest Hill which have been reported on the HCC reporting portal.

## **9.2 To update on drainage issues on Robins Nest Hill:**

Cllr Stokes advised that Ben Randall at Ringway has left the company but there is another point of contact that the PC are dealing with. An agreement has been passed to carry out investigative work on the drains, which will be cleared and then camera footage can be obtained to ascertain where water is leaking from and to. No date for this work has been advised. Cllr Stokes to follow up with the Environment officer at East Herts and Highways as the matter is urgent.

Cllr Standbrook suggested that when the work is carried out, and a road closure is in place, it may be a good opportunity for the PC to carry out some maintenance work on that stretch of road.

Cllr Fellowes reported that he has been in contact with Ringway/Highways regarding the issue of worn verges and deep potholes on Church Road towards Epping green. It was noted that the repairs were on the schedule of works for the Highways team for the coming year but verge repair was a low priority. During Cllrs discussions, it was agreed that a list of all current Highway issues should be drawn up, and a meeting scheduled with Highways to meet Cllrs on site to go through the issues. Cllr Fellowes will continue to follow this up.

## **10. PLANNING**

### **10.1 To receive & discuss the latest Planning Report circulated by the clerk:**

The Clerk had circulated the latest application summary prior to the meeting. Cllr Stokes briefly went through the latest applications.

Cllr Morris advised that a structure is being erected to the rear of Dene Orchard, 5 Little Berkhamsted Lane. It was noted that the planning permission for a first floor extension at the property was recently refused. Cllr Stokes will liaise with the owner of the property.

## **11. OPEN SPACES**

### **11.1 To report on playground issues:**

Cllr Standbrook reported no issues.

### **11.2 To discuss installation of table tennis table and agree timescale:**

Cllr Stokes advised that this will be erected tomorrow morning. The permanent positioning of the table was discussed. Further thought and discussion is needed to ascertain its permanent position.

## **12. PREMISES MANAGEMENT**

### **Village Hall**

#### **12.1 To report on the Village Hall, insulation and obtaining a grant:**

Cllr Standbrook explained that when the heating assessment was carried out on the village hall recently, and quote for infra-red heating obtained, Cllrs agreed that this was to be put on hold because the savings are likely not to outweigh the expense of the initial outlay. Cllr Standbrook is in contact with Low Carbon Workspaces (LCW) and research is ongoing. It was noted that the potential grant will only be issued if the PC uses LCW approved suppliers.

The government have recently announced a Jubilee Grant for Village Halls. We can only register our interest once there is a planned project. Cllr Standbrook will arrange to meet with builders to discuss options re heating and insulation of the hall.

Cllr Morris will obtain a quote for LED lightbulb replacements for the village hall.

#### **12.2 To agree the facilities booking system and booking form:**

Cllr Stokes and Cllr Hunter have recently streamlined the facilities booking form. The booking system is currently working well, but as the volume of bookings is generally increasing it has become apparent that an improved on-line system may be required. Cllrs agreed.

### **Cricket & Community Pavilion (C&C Pavilion)**

#### **12.3 To receive latest report on the C & C Pavilion (including shutters):**

Cllr Standbrook asked for Cllrs approval to trim the hedge along the right-hand side of the field. This was unanimously approved.

Cllr Hunter has investigated costs for the renovation or replacement of chairs and tables. A quote for renovating the old chairs shows that this would be very expensive and what is actually needed are lightweight foldable or stackable chairs that can be cleaned, stored and moved easily. A budget of £1000 was agreed. It was suggested that the recent Jubilee raffle ticket sales of approx. £900 was used to go towards the cost.

Cllr Standbrook is obtaining quotes for the installation of loft insulation.

Cllr Eaglestone was not present, however Cllr Standbrook reported that Cllr Eaglestone is currently looking into shutter costs.

#### **12.4 To update on the repair of the clock:**

Cllr Morris explained that the battery clock has been converted to an electric clock with a transformer. This has not been successful so a new clock mechanism will need to be ordered. Cllr Morris to action. Clock to be working by the end of August at the latest.

#### **12.5 To discuss the Community East Herts Lottery:**

Cllr Stokes reported that only 11 people are regularly buying a ticket and although the PC raises funds from the Lottery it was discussed as to how the PC could encourage more parishioners to purchase tickets. Advertising material is available from the Lottery organisers. It was suggested that the Little Berkhamsted Cause details on the East Herts

Lottery website are updated and then residents are asked via Mailchimp and the PC website to purchase tickets and support the fund-raising efforts. Cllr Stokes to action.

## **12. FINANCE**

- 13.1 **To approve the financial statement and payment of accounts:** The clerk had circulated the accounts prior to the meeting.  
Cllr Morris noted that half of the noticeboard cost has been allocated to the ring-fenced recreation committee fund which he did not agree with because it is ring-fenced for community projects. Cllr Stokes explained that this was agreed at the last meeting at which Cllr Morris was not present. Discussion ensued regarding exactly what the ring-fenced fund is to be used for. The Clerk suggested that Cllrs had further discussion to clarify expenditure from the ring-fenced fund.  
The financial statement and payment of accounts was approved.
- 13.2 **To agree expenditure for SID data collection:**  
Approved in agenda item 9.1
- 13. To approve the date of the next meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022:**  
Date approved
- 15. To close the meeting:** Cllr Stokes closed the meeting at 9.35pm

**Parish Clerk: Mrs Laura Brooks-Payne**  
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