



## LITTLE BERKHAMSTED PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm in the Village Hall in Little Berkhamsted.

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

Others present: Laura Brooks-Payne – Clerk, Linda Haysey – Leader of the Council and 1 member of the public.

### AGENDA

- 1 To receive apologies for absence and approve:** Cllr Morris and Cllr Eaglestone
- 2. To receive declaration of interest and dispensation:** none
- 3. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022:**  
Cllr Stokes noted that Cllr Eaglestone was not in attendance, Clerk will amend the minutes accordingly. The minutes were approved otherwise.

#### **4. Chair's Report:**

Cllr Stokes thanked everyone who responded so quickly when the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was announced. Together with St Andrew's church, Little Berkhamsted PC led the way in paying the village's respects to our late monarch and offering condolences to the Royal Family.

Cllr Stokes reported that much time has been spent on raising awareness of and attempting to increase ticket sales for our cause on the East Herts Lottery. A few more tickets have been purchased by residents, but more work is needed and welcomes any suggestions.

It was reported that ongoing repairs are needed on Robins Nest Hill and Church Road. Councillors are continuing to lobby both EHC Environmental Health and HCC Highways departments for action but unfortunately there is no progress to report.

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

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

Cllr Stokes reported that a resident in Bucks Alley has recently experienced problems with off road quad bikes using the public rights of way (ROW) adjacent to their property. It was noted that this is an issue that needs reporting to the Police. However, Cllr Stokes will contact ROW Officer Nick Maddex to ask if anything can be put in place to stop this anti-social behaviour.

Cllr Stokes reported that the Cricket Club have requested to hold their AGM at the pavilion, which is outside the dates of the current contract. It was noted that there may also be a further game that needed to be played in October. Cllr Stokes will liaise with the Cricket Club.

**Standing Orders reinstated from here**

## **6. FINANCE**

### **6.1 To approve the financial statement and payment of accounts:**

The Clerk had circulated the accounts, these were approved and signed.

### **6.2 To update on Business Rate charges for village Hall & Pavilion:**

The Clerk had, prior to the meeting, circulated details of new business rates charges for both the pavilion and the village hall. The PC receive business rate relief on one property only, the village hall. Due to these unexpected high charges that will now be due annually, the issue of how the PC could reduce these costs was discussed. It was noted that more research was needed related to running the buildings as a charity or a trust. The Clerk and Cllr Fellowes will liaise with CDA Herts in the first instance to utilise their expertise on the matter, as well as other local Parish Councils to investigate this further.

### **6.3 To approve expenditure for insulation for Pavilion loft:**

Cllr Standbrook had circulated details and costs prior to the meeting. The existing quote standing at approx £4000. It was discussed and agreed that the village hall roof insulation was a higher priority.

### **6.4 To approve expenditure for replacement 'Slow Down for Children' sign:**

Cllr Stokes has asked the driver of the vehicle that knocked down the sign to pay for a new sign, but this has not been paid. Cllrs unanimously agreed and approved to the purchase of a new sign at £86 plus vat.

### **6.5 To advise on conclusion of External Audit:** The clerk reported that this has now been concluded after further minor questions.

## **7. To update on arrangements for the litter pick on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October:**

Cllr Hunter has had over 23 residents offering help with the litter pick being held this Sunday. Collection of the equipment has been arranged. A sandwich lunch will be provided by the Five Horseshoes pub afterwards.

## **8. To discuss & approve quotes for new PC Website:**

Cllr Noble reported that she has been in contact with several website experts and had discussed the type of platform likely to work for a new PC website, incorporating the PC's requirement brief. Quotes have been received ranging from £1500 to £2000. A local designer with family contacts to the village is interested in working with the PC. Cllr Noble will continue to liaise with the preferred designer. It was discussed that yearly hosting costs are likely to be less than current costs. Cllrs unanimously agreed and approved £2000 initial spend.

## **9. To update on the meeting held to start work on the archive materials:**

Cllr Noble will meet with interested parties in December to continue with this project.

## **10. HIGHWAYS**

### **10.1 To report on 20s Plenty Campaign:**

Cllr Stokes advised that she is still trying to collect the data from the Speed Indicator Devices (SID's) but explained the dilemma that by the time the data is purchased it is essentially 'out of date'. It was discussed that the PC could obtain data by other means, eg. A traffic survey incorporating cables across the surface of the road. After further discussion Cllrs unanimously agreed and approved £250 to download data from both village SID's. Cllr Stokes will organise this.

## **11. PLANNING**

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

Cllrs briefly went through the latest report circulated to Cllrs by the Clerk prior to the meeting. It was noted that no new applications had been received since the last meeting.

## **12. OPEN SPACES**

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

Cllr Standbrook reported no current issues. Cllr Stokes asked Cllrs if the ground surface around the table tennis needed to be levelled out slightly. Cllr Standbrook reported that the field hedges are due to be cut back in October. It was noted that the old boundary boards are still in situ and that the Cricket Club will be asked to remove them.

### **12.2 To discuss 'village events' inc. fireworks display:**

Cllr Stokes advised that there are currently residents keen to help, but not to lead on any event organised. It was discussed that the emphasis could be on a bonfire party with stalls, food & drink being the main event rather than fireworks. The PC discussed that it should not be a PC organised event but a community effort. Cllr Fellowes suggested that an event could be held without fireworks and the beacon could be lit. It was agreed that Cllr Stokes will contact those residents who have expressed an interest in helping to ask if anyone is prepared to lead on the event.

## **13. PREMISES MANAGEMENT**

### **Village Hall**

### **13.1 To report on the survey:**

Cllr Standbrook explained that he had recently circulated the costs and report to Cllrs to insulate the village hall and cottage ceiling. There will be a small grant that can be sought to cover some of the costs. After discussion re types of insulation that can be used and expertise from the report, Cllrs agreed to go ahead with further quotes for low density open cell BBA thermal insulation which suits the type of ceiling well. Cllr Standbrook will obtain further quotes.

### **13.2 To update on maintenance work carried out:**

Cllr Standbrook went through outstanding maintenance works; the stop cock access needs to be investigated. The outside light needs to be repaired. All work is in hand.

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

- 13.3 **To receive latest report on the C & C Pavilion (including security):**  
It was reported that the storage garage that the cricket Club use, had recently been broken into. This has now been repaired. Cllr Standbrook added that the TV bracket is to be fitted in the pavilion, a security bar is to be installed over the man-hole cover to the rear of the pavilion, a broom cupboard to be fitted in the kitchen and the debris in the loft to be cleared. Cllr Eaglestone has been researching replacement shutters but was not present to update Council.
- 13.4 **To update on the repair of the clock:**  
Cllr Morris was not present, but this has not been repaired to date.
- 13.5 **To update on cleaning contract:**  
Cllr Hunter reported that the current contract will not be renewed next year. A new cleaner is being sought.
- 13.6 **To update on maintenance work that has been carried out:**  
Covered in item 13.3
14. **To approve the date of the next meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022:**  
Approved
15. **To agree dates for 2023 meetings:**  
18<sup>th</sup> January, 15<sup>th</sup> March, 24<sup>th</sup> May, 19<sup>th</sup> July, 20<sup>th</sup> September, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – dates approved.
16. **To close the meeting:**  
Cllr Stokes closed the meeting at 21.20

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

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