



LITTLE BERKHAMSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 18th January at 7.30pm in the Village Hall in Little Berkhamsted.

Cllrs present: Cllr Stokes (Chair), Cllr Eaglestone, Cllr Standbrook, Cllr Fellowes, Cllr Morris

Cllrs not present: Cllr Hunter, Cllr Noble

Others present: Laura Brooks-Payne (Clerk) 1 member of the public

AGENDA

1 To receive apologies for absence and approve: Cllr Hunter, Cllr Noble, District Cllr Ken Crofton and Leader of the Council, Linda Haysey.

2. To receive declaration of interest and dispensation: None

3. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16th November 2022: Minutes were unanimously approved

4. Chair's Report:

Cllr Stokes reported that Herts Highways are currently using CCTV cameras to assess damage to the drains the length of Robins Nest Hill and are attempting to clear them. Road closures will continue for the next two weeks.

The Essex & Herts Air Ambulance have written to the Clerk to thank the PC for the donation recently made. They have offered the PC a visit to the airbase. Interested Councillors to liaise with Cllr Stokes.

It was noted that many residents quietly volunteer their time for the benefit of the village, such as regularly picking up litter, cleaning the bus shelter and maintaining the War Memorial area. The PC thanked all of them, including Emmie Murphy's village shop for donation of the Christmas tree that lit up the church yard through December.

Despite the Christmas break, work on Parish matters has continued since the last meeting. Attempts to move things forward are often beset with obstacles and frustratingly slow, but by staying positive and working together as a team the PC can make a difference. So, on behalf of the village, Cllr Stokes thanked Councillors and the Clerk for their time and efforts.

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

5. To receive questions and comments from the public:

A member of the public asked if there was going to be another first aid course.

Cllr Stokes replied that there would be another course organised soon, especially important at the current time with the long ambulance wait times.

Standing Orders reinstated from here

6. To update on potential new PC Website:

In Cllr Nobles absence, Cllr Stokes reported that Cllr Noble is liaising with the preferred supplier, research and work is ongoing.

7. To update on the meeting held to start work on the archive materials:

Cllr Stokes reported that Cllr Noble has a meeting planned in February with interested parties.

8. HIGHWAYS

8.1 To update on traffic date collection:

Cllr Eaglestone reported that he has contacted various companies but has received no further information back as yet. Cllr Eaglestone will continue to chase for information.

9. PLANNING

9.1 To receive & discuss the latest Planning Report circulated by the clerk:

It was noted that there has been one new application since the last meeting. Cllr Stokes briefly went through outstanding applications.

10. OPEN SPACES

10.1 To report on playground issues:

Cllr Standbrook reported no current issues. It was noted that there were currently large puddles under the swing areas from the sheer volume of recent rainfall. It was discussed that the holes could be filled with type 1 hardcore to raise the ground level, astro-turf could be used, or alternatives. Cllr Standbrook will research options and report back to Council.

10.2 To update on siting of a charity clothing bank in the village:

Cllr Stokes has spoken with the pub landlord who is happy for the clothing bank to be trialled in the pub car park. The clerk will liaise with the company.

10.3 To update on hedge cutting:

Cllr Standbrook noted that hedges have now been cut. Discussion was had with regard to the overgrown hedges adjacent to the road along Robins Nest Hill though this is the landowners responsibility.

10.4 To update on 2023 contract with Home Farm Dog Training:

Cllr Stokes advised that the company have reduced their hours for 2023 and have asked for a reduction in rent. The PC agreed that this is not possible because rates have been increased for other users due to increased costs for the PC. Cllr Stokes has written to the company and awaiting a reply.

10.5 To discuss arrangements for marking the Kings Coronation:

It was discussed that it would be a great idea to mark the event but with the lack of a recreation committee, it was agreed to gauge public interest first. It was noted that the Cricket Club may be interested in organising an evening on the cricket field similar to that of the Jubilee. Cllrs will liaise with residents to gather interest for organising the event.

11. PREMISES MANAGEMENT

11.1 To discuss registering the management of Parish premises as Charities:

Cllr Stokes will be attending a course in February run by SLCC to gain further knowledge on the subject. It was noted that if the parish owned premises had charity status there would be a reduction in business rates and the buildings may also be eligible for further grants.

Village Hall

11.2 To update on quotations for insulation & secondary double glazing:

Cllr Standbrook reported that quotes had been sought, the grant application was submitted; extensive paperwork, including accounts and invoices etc. The grant, however, was not approved because we are a PC and funded by the Government, though previously it was suggested the PC would be eligible. This is obviously disappointing with the amount of previous work having been involved. Cllr Standbrook has spoken to the company to ascertain whether there are other criteria that the PC could obtain the grant under. Work is ongoing.

11.3 To update on maintenance work carried out:

Cllr Standbrook reported that the cottage front door has been repaired. The gutters have been cleared and the outdoor lights replaced. Cllr Morris reported that the projector is now working. Cllr Standbrook advised that the stopcock for the village Hall still needs to be accessed and will contact Castle water.

Cricket & Community Pavilion (C&C Pavilion)

11.4 To receive latest report on the C & C Pavilion:

Cllr Standbrook reported that the TV is now working and the aerial has been replaced.

11.5 To update on the replacement of the clock:

Cllr Stokes is dealing with the company that can provide a replacement. It was agreed that the mechanical parts of the clock should be within the roof space for ease of access. The clock will be ordered.

11.6 To update on security lights:

Cllr Eaglestone advised that quotes have been difficult to source, though one quote has been received at approx. £500 for two new lights and a 'camera'. It was suggested that poles are used to raise the lights to a good height. It was also noted that the light outside the pavilion entrance could be on a PIR. It was discussed and agreed that Cllr Morris will replace the light currently in situ and will add a PIR on the entrance light by the end of February.

11.7 To update on maintenance work that has been carried out:

Nothing to report.

12. FINANCE

12.1 To approve the financial statement and payment of accounts:

The clerk had circulated the latest accounts. Accounts were unanimously approved.

13. To approve the date of the next meeting on 15th March 2023 and agree the date for the Annual Parish Meeting (APM):

15th March 2023 approved.

It was suggested that the APM is held on 19th April. Cllrs and Clerk will check their diaries. An informal meeting for Cllrs will be held on 22nd February.

14. To close the meeting:

Cllr Stokes closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

**Parish Clerk
Mrs Laura Brooks-Payne**

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