



LITTLE BERKHAMSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 19th July 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall in Little Berkhamsted.

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

Cllrs not present: Cllr Fellowes, Cllr Noble

Others present: Parish Clerk – Laura Brooks-Payne, 12 members of the public, Bob Deering – Ward Cllr & Herts County Cllr

- 1 To receive apologies for absence and approve:** Cllr Fellowes, Cllr Noble
- 2. To receive declaration of interest and dispensation:** none
- 3. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24th May 2023:** Cllrs Unanimously approved the minutes.
- 4. Chair's Report:**

Cllr Stokes welcomed Cllr Bob Deering to the meeting. Cllr Deering was elected onto East Herts District Council in the May Elections and has replaced Linda Haysey as our Ward Councillor. Bob is a Hertfordshire County Councillor with responsibility in the portfolio for Resources and Performance. Bob and his family have lived in the village for 36 years. The PC are delighted to be represented by a neighbour and someone with such a wealth of knowledge and experience.

There were no crimes reported to the Police in the Parish of Little Berkhamsted in June. However, the police ask us to remind residents that in the warmer weather it is especially important to check that all windows are closed, doors locked, and alarms set every time one leave one's property.

The PC's involvement in the 20's Plenty Campaign continues despite the fact that the signs and banners have been temporarily removed. It was felt that these were starting to lose their impact. Thank you to resident Tony Tyndale who has kindly offered to rotate the children's Slow Down signs in an effort to raise their impact on drivers and he would welcome any offers of help with this as well as the judicious pruning of the nearby hedges.

This Saturday the recreation field host's to a village wedding reception. Victor and Danielle have lived in the Parish for a few years and are excited to celebrate their special day in our lovely village. We wish them every happiness for their future together.

5. To receive questions and comments from the public:

A resident expressed concerned about the current retrospective planning application for land on Robins Nest Hill. It was explained that as a consultee the PC have submitted an objection to the application. It was noted that the PC acted swiftly as did East Herts Planning Enforcement in visiting the site. There are currently circa 30 objections from residents to the application. A number of other residents at the meeting were also concerned about the implications of the application. Cllr Bob Deering explained that he has been involved with the issue and is keeping abreast of the situation.

A resident asked if there was an update on the historic Bridleway number 18 issue. Cllr Morris explained that the issue is currently with the Secretary of State. Delays and a backlog of work after the Covid years, mean that it will another 12 months until they look at the case.

6. To review Policies & Documents held:

The following updated policy documents had previously been sent to all Cllrs by the Clerk:

Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations, Financial Management Risk Assessment, Data Breach Policy, Data Breach Reporting Form, Document Retention Policy, Complaints Handling Procedure, Councillor Complaint Form, Privacy Policy.

The documents were unanimously approved and adopted.

7. To update on new PC Website:

Cllr Noble was not present at the meeting. Cllr Stokes advised that the Clerk, Cllr Noble, Cllr Stokes will have a meeting in due course re the booking system.

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

Cllr Morris advised that scanning the documents has been started.

9. HIGHWAYS

9.1 To update on traffic surveys:

Cllr Stokes reported that the traffic surveys had now taken place and the data received. Cllr Stokes has analysed the data and forwarded this to Herts Highways who are due to look at the data in more detail and will report back to the PC.

10. PLANNING

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

Cllr Stokes briefly went through the applications. The current retrospective planning application for Robins Nest Hill was discussed in agenda item 5.

11. OPEN SPACES

11.1 To report on playground issues:

Cllr Standbrook reported that the cradle swing has been replaced because it had been damaged.

11.2 **To approve a contract for Alpaca Walking on the field:**
Cllr Stokes advised that the organiser is still looking at permissions and insurance.

11.3 **To update on the trial of the clothing bank:**
Cllr Stokes reported that due to a couple of reservations from residents re the positioning of the clothing bank the unit has now been repositioned on the recreation field. It was noted that the Clerk had previously liaised with the Planning Department at East Herts (EH) on the matter and understands that no planning control is required, the unit being a temporary structure. Cllrs will discuss the success of the clothing bank on completion of the 6 month trial period.

11.4 **To discuss the upcoming 'open morning' on the field:**
Cllrs agreed on the date of Saturday 19th August and are organising attendees.

12. PREMISES MANAGEMENT

12.1 **To discuss registering the management of Parish premises as Charities:**
Cllr Stokes has contacted two more solicitors. One advised that the invoice will likely be circa £5000. It was agreed that the PC will use the services of the consultant who has expertise in this area and is the most affordable. Work will continue.

13. Village Hall

13.1 **To update on grant for insulation & secondary double glazing:**
Cllr Stokes reported that there may be additional funds available from the EH Shared Prosperity Fund. Cllr Deering will liaise with Andrew Figgis to ascertain if the funds are still available in order for the project to go ahead.

13.2 **To update on maintenance work carried out:**
Cllr Standbrook advised nothing to report. It was noted that the tenant had done some internal decorating and had painted the front door.

14. Cricket & Community Pavilion (C&C Pavilion)

14.1 **To receive latest report on the C & C Pavilion:**
Cllr Hunter reported that the pavilion has been used on many occasions, cricket matches being played each weekend, Appleday Care using the facilities on Tuesdays & Thursdays and dog training classes being held on Tuesdays & Fridays on the field. Friday club has recently been well attended.

14.2 **To update on the replacement of security lights:**
Cllr Morris reported that lights have been installed. The light above the front door is currently not working. Cllr Morris will look at this.

14.3 **To discuss review of the Cricket Club's Contract with the PC:**
Cllrs discussed and agreed that the fee would remain the same. Cllr Stokes will email the Cricket Club to remind them that the final payment is due.

14.4 **To update on maintenance work that has been carried out:**
Cllr Standbrook advised that the push bar on the fire escape has been replaced.

- 14.5 **To approve the updated terms to Apple Day Care licence:**
Cllr Stokes reported that the recent trial period with extended hours had been a success and has also spoken to immediate neighbours to gauge further opinion. Cllrs unanimously approved a new contract until the end of September 2023 with the extension in hours.
- 14.6 **To update on the contract with Home Farm Dog Training:**
Cllr Stokes reported that a new contract has been sent to the company, the PC are awaiting a response.

15. FINANCE

- 15.1 **To approve the financial statement and payment of accounts:**
The Clerk had circulated the latest accounts to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllrs unanimously approved the accounts.
- 15.2 **To approve cost increases for building and field rentals:**
Cllr Stokes explained that weddings being held on the recreation field require substantially more administration than usual bookings. It was suggested that the PC have a flat daily rate for use of the field, pavilion and electricity, as an all in one package. Further research is required to set a fee for this to be approved at the next meeting.
- 16. To approve the date of the next Parish Council meeting – Wednesday 20th September 2023:** Date approved.
- 17. To close the meeting:**
Cllr Stokes closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

Parish Clerk
Mrs Laura Brooks-Payne

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