



LITTLE BERKHAMSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 25th September 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall in Little Berkhamsted.

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

Cllrs not present: Cllr Cookson, Cllr Eaglestone

Others present: Parish Clerk – Laura Brooks-Payne, 1 member of the public

- 1. To receive apologies for absence and approve:** Cllr Cookson, Cllr Bob Deering, both approved. Cllr Eaglestone – no apologies received, not approved.
- 2. To receive declaration of interest and dispensation:** None
- 3. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17th July 2024:** Unanimously Approved
- 4. Chair Report:** Cllr Morris noted that all issues are agenda items

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

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

Former Chairperson, Penny Stokes could not be present at the meeting but had forwarded the Clerk the following comments:

Footpaths/ Bridleways

Nick Maddox (East Herts Rights of Way officer) has confirmed with Andrew Berry (village resident who is the volunteer surveyor) that surfacing of the extra sections of footpath 9 & 10 which got very muddy last winter, will be carried out soon in a similar way to the works done last year. They are just finalising the access arrangements with the landowner.

The footpaths through both of landowner Mrs Varivarides fields are completely overgrown and almost impassable. The amount of ragwort in these fields is a concern to neighbours particularly those with horses. Please would council arrange for this to be sorted out as a matter of urgency.

This was discussed by Cllrs who agreed that Cllr Morris will contact the landowner again by letter.

Standing Orders reinstated from here

- 6. To update on new PC Website:**

Former Chairperson, Penny Stokes (still continuing with the project) had apologised for not being able to attend the meeting but had sent the Clerk a report, a summary of

which is below and was read out to Cllrs (though already circulated previously prior to the meeting):

Website:

This has been ready to go 'live' for some weeks now but has been delayed because the designer is still to receive all the information we wanted included. The historical photographs were sent but at the time of writing the floorplans of the two venues have not.

I investigated the cost of a private company producing these and their quote is £300 plus VAT. I am in the process of getting further quotes as properly drawn up plans are needed, not sketches by hand.

Cllrs will need to agree hire charges and proof-read all text before launch. I am asking council for a firm commitment to launching the website by Monday 14th October.

I have made it very clear to the Chair that I would like this project off my desk now. It is beyond embarrassing how long launching a new site has taken and the delay has not helped move forward the marketing of the venues.

Cllrs will remember that under the terms of the grants they will soon be asked to show how the money received towards the refurbishment of both buildings and the path have increased use, improved efficiency and impacted the lives of residents.

The Clerk advised that other quotes had been sought and asked for approval to go ahead with a quote for £140 for the floor plans. This was unanimously approved.

The Clerk explained that her saved email folders will need to be saved elsewhere before the new site goes live and has advised Penny of this. The email folders are currently stored on the current providers server. It was discussed that it would be advantageous to save these to an external drive. The Clerk will ensure this will be completed with the help of the PC IT consultant prior to the change in website provider.

It was discussed that monthly maintenance would be down to the PC to update. The current website is updated by the company that provided the website. It was noted that the Clerk would rather pass this on to an outside provider because this is not her of expertise. Cllr Morris will liaise with Shy Studios on the matter.

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

Cllr Morris advised that he intends to look through archives from a local historian when they documents are available.

8. HIGHWAYS

8.1 To update on traffic calming implementation:

Cllr Fellowes advised that he will be able to look into this again in October due to contractor changes at EH Highways. It was noted that the first stage is road analysis, the second stage is the design stage. Cllrs suggested that at the end of the financial year a budget line is added to the PC accounts to keep a percentage of the reserves for this project.

9. PLANNING

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

Cllr Morris briefly went through the latest summary.

Cllrs have agreed that going forward, they will view new applications online first, anything that may be controversial/contentious, or that any Cllr feels needs to be visited, a visit will then be arranged for that application.

Cllr Standbrook will send the Clerk comments for a new application 3/24/1783/ARPN. Cllrs will look at the plans online for 1 Goddards Close, 3/24/1561/PNHH and advise the Clerk.

10. OPEN SPACES

Cllr Standbrook advised that the hedges running along the walled garden will need pruning in due course. The bus stop and shed on the recreation field will need painting.

10.1 To report on playground issues: Cllr Standbrook reported no issues.

10.2 To update on new path from playground to Pavilion/recycling existing paving slabs:

Cllr Standbrook reported that the new path has been completed and is pleased with the work, other than it is not as impacted as expected. It was noted that the slabs could be re-used as a patio to the front of the pavilion. Cllr Standbrook will get quotes for the work. Cllrs unanimously agreed to go ahead with the work.

10.3 To discuss possible refurbishment of the goal mouth on the recreation field:

Cllr Standbrook reported that the area is need of repair. Cllr Standbrook explained that there is matting left over from the parking project. Cllrs discussed and agreed to use this.

10.4 To update on the trees along path obstructing cricket play:

Cllr Hunter reported that the offending trees had now been pollarded.

11. PREMISES MANAGEMENT

11.1 To update on advertising for both venues: Cllr Cookson not present, will be discussed at next meeting.

12. VILLAGE HALL

12.1 To update on maintenance work carried out: Cllr Standbrook reported that the pictures have now been put up. The cottage garden gate has been replaced. The village hall fence will need to be repaired, as well as the concrete render at the front of the hall.

12.2 To update on the issue with the Limes boiler flue:

The Clerk reported that she had emailed the Limes owners at the beginning of this week who had yet to get back to her. The Clerk will chase up.

12.3 To discuss and approve costs for replacement hall heaters:

Cllr Standbrook explained that he has had 3 quotes for replacement smart heaters that can be remotely operated. Cllrs (excluding Cllr Morris who declared an interest) agreed and approved to use Breach Cottage Services to do the work. The new heaters will be installed before the November meeting.

12.4 To discuss and approve new playgroup regular usage:

The Clerk explained that there is interest from a new user for the village hall on Wednesday & Friday mornings on an ongoing basis for a playgroup. This information had previously been circulated to Cllrs and an hourly rate agreed. This was unanimously approved by Cllrs. The Clerk will draw up a contract and liaise with the interested party. Cllr thanked Sandie Ash for her involvement.

13. CRICKET & COMMUNITY PAVILION (C&C Pavilion)

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

Cllr Hunter reported that cricket season is coming to an end. The Cricket Club will use the pavilion on 2nd November for a presentation evening. Dog Training is continuing.

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

Cllr Standbrook advised that the gutter will need repairing. The smoke alarm has been replaced, 3 shower valves replaced & the TV aerial booster.

13.3 To discuss the offer from EHDC re Climate change & sustainability project:

Cllr Standbrook has the forms to apply for a grant for the insulation for the pavilion. Quotes have been obtained at circa £4000. Cllr Eaglestone will be working on the project as well as completing the application form with Cllr Standbrook.

13.4 To update on the painting of the exterior of the pavilion:

Cllr Morris advised that he has the paint ready and will hope to do the work prior to the Winter months.

13.5 To update on overgrown trees along path edge: See item 10.4

14. FINANCE

The Clerk reported that the AGAR External Audit has been completed and returned to the Clerk in good order and with no recommendations.

14.1 To approve latest accounts summary circulated by the Clerk:

Accounts were signed and unanimously approved.

15. To approve the date of the next Parish Council meeting:

Wednesday 20th November 2024 – Approved. Cllrs decided to meet between meetings on 23rd October 2024.

16. To close the meeting: Cllr Morris closed the meeting at 9.35pm

Parish Clerk - Mrs Laura Brooks-Payne

Email: clerk@littleberkhamsted.org.uk