

CHORLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the PARISH COUNCIL held in the Royal British Legion Hall, Common Road, Chorleywood, on Tuesday 1st October 2013

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * **R Khiroya**

Councillors:

* Mrs W Boatman	* G Liley
* T Edwards	* F Mahon-Daly
M. Green	* K Morris
* Mrs A Hayward	* Mrs A Preedy
* Miss P Howell	* Mrs L Sutherland
* Mrs M Jarrett	* S Watkins
* R Kipps	* Mrs J White
* Mrs V Lantree	* Mrs J Worrall

*Denotes Member present

13/18 PUBLIC FORUM

There were 38 members of the public present.

Representations were heard from

Mr Gregory Hill – Friends of Chorleywood Common speaking against the proposed play area

Mrs Leadbetter – speaking for the protection of the hedgerow in Homefield Road

Mr Michael Hyde - speaking against the proposed play area

Mr Naylor Smith –Chorleywood Golf Club against the proposed play area

Mr Robert Mann speaking against the proposed play area

Mrs Alison Rubens – Chorleywood Community Orchard, Speaking against the proposed play area

Maria Larkin – Chorleywood Residents Association speaking in favour of the proposed play area

Frank Amor Commoner speaking against the proposed play area.

A petition was read out by the Clerk against the proposal of the Community facility The Hive which read

We, the undersigned businesses, wish to express our dismay at the current application for change of use for Sheratons. We have a number of concerns which include the following:

1. Parking – the parking in Chorleywood is a considerable problem. There are insufficient parking spaces for the shops as it is, a situation recently made worse by the loss of 10 2 hour spaces outside Grenville Court in Blacketts Wood Drive as part of the attempt to prevent commuter parking. Sheraton House has no parking attached to the premises and inevitably very many of the people they would hope to attract would come by car as well as the workers. Having arrived in a car they would be then parked for a length of time thus blocking parking spaces for people who want to pop in to collect their dry cleaning or get a few groceries. Whilst they would say most people would walk that argument does not hold water as anyone who spends anytime in the village would tell you.
2. Diversity – there is a requirement for there to be a diversity of shops in the village in order for it to remain a viable destination for shopping. There are currently 4 places to buy coffee and meet people, 4 restaurants where you can sit and eat and 2

takeaways. In addition there are 2 supermarkets where you can buy food to take away. A further coffee outlet may open in 5 New Parade. It seems to us that diversity is being sacrificed. Whilst it is in no one's interest to have empty shops, it is not clear how yet another coffee, alcohol and food outlet can be sustained. This one may well have volunteer staff and reduced all sort of things because it has a part of its remit a charity element

3. There is a large number of halls and function space's which are underused at present. The addition of another 'community' spaces does not seem necessary.
4. A licence form 7 am- midnight 7 days a week for alcohol is entirely inappropriate. A town centre does not need more than 4 off licences. There are already 4. One assumes the licences hopes to alcohol from the preemies rather than it being planned to open as a restaurant.
5. The decision to send a copy of the planning application to the 30 nearest premises seems a perverse one. This decision will affect the whole village. The shops within 30 meters of the premises in question are not included although they would be affected. It would seem more democratic to widen the area of premises who are notified and to extend the consultation period so people have a change to thing about and discuss the issues involved.

The petition was signed by 19 businesses.

13/19 REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

A report from Cllr Martin Trevett was read out to the Council

13/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Green

13/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

13/22 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Council
RESOLVED

To approve the minutes of the meeting dated 25th June 2013 as true and correct

These were duly signed by the Chairman

13/23 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising

13/24 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that he had attended the Horticultural Show and had presented the prizes. He was proud to say that people had made a tremendous effort and that it had been a very enjoyable afternoon.

13/25 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 9

There were no questions under Standing Order 9.

13/26 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning 2nd July - It was noted that the Homefield Road hedge had slipped off the agenda and following the report from a Parishioner it was agreed by the Planning Chairman to consider the matter at the next meeting.

Planning 30th July – Cllr Mrs White explained the differences between the Parish and Neighbourhood plan, but felt that due to the time it would be preferable to defer this item and hold an extra ordinary meeting, inviting interested parties along to move this forward.

The Council
RESOLVED

To defer discussions on the Parish/Neighbourhood plan to an Extra Ordinary Meeting inviting interested parties to attend

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs White, seconded by Cllr Mrs Worrall and unanimously approved.

Chorleywood Village Halls 17th September – Members advised that inspections of all three halls had taken place. At the War Memorial Hall, a request was put forward to clean the cooker hood as a matter of urgency. It also appeared that there was some movement at the Hollybush hall with cracks appearing on the external walls. Members requested that the survey be asked to inspect the building and report back.

13/27 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

**The Committee
RESOLVED
To approve the payments**

**Chorleywood Village Halls £14570.48
Parish Council £124,479.18**

13/28 CHORLEYWOOD PLAY AREA

Due to the number of attendees who had an interest in this item the Council agreed to move it to the front of the agenda therefore debate on this item commenced at 8.26pm

The history behind the proposed play area was outlined with the work carried out by the Play Area for Chorleywood Advisory Committee.

Each Councillor was given the opportunity to make relevant statements which included the following

The Parish Council had considered area 13 but had told TRDC that there were four conditions which would need to be addressed in order for the Parish Council to agree to the play area going on this site. It was generally felt that some of these issues had not been adequately addressed, namely the lack of parking and lack of a footpath and safe crossing of the railway bridge.

Correspondence received at the Parish Office was generally 50/50 for and against, the topic was dividing the community and there was not clear indication of what the parishioners wanted.

There were concerns that more attention had not been given to the safety element of the scheme. Only the Parish Council had commissioned a safety inspection from the Police. Criticism was also made of the questionnaire as not sufficient information had been given out regarding the restrictions on the Common specifically the lack of fencing around the play area.

Members had been influenced by the statistical data reported in the TRDC survey. The TRDC report stated that over 1000 people had voted in favour. However concern had been raised by some parishioners as to the credibility of the statistical evidence in the Three Rivers reports which had led to an independent audit of the figures, revealing that 398 adults had voted for the play area on Chorleywood Common (not specifically Shepherds Bridge) this was out of an electorate of 9125.

Many Councillors felt that had the area at Christ Church been allowed there would have been fewer objections however when it was revealed that due to the close proximity to the pond this area would be turned down due to the close proximity of Great Crested Newts Councillors felt pressured to find an alternative site. In hindsight it would have been preferable to have called a halt to it at that stage.

Cllr Trevett stated that it would be best to agree to the site and let DEFRA make the final decision. Criticism had already been made about the amount of money spent on the process. The Parish experience with the grazing project had shown that the S38 application together with the possibility of a public enquiry would be extremely costly going into the tens of thousands of pounds. It was suggested that as elected members and land owners they were given the duty to make decisions on behalf of the community, and not defer the decision to another authority.

Councillors had listened and read all the correspondence both in favour and against the play area on the Common and whilst the people against had put forward environmental and coherent arguments whilst those in favour had not given a single compelling argument as to why this location was right for the community.

Child obesity was discussed, and whilst this was a serious issue Members did not feel that a play area, near a parking area was necessarily the answer. Children lose weight by walking and running.

Members discussed the merits of a play or nature trail which the Parish Council could do without all the necessary permissions required for a formal play area. This proposal had received positive comments from all interested parties and may be a compromise to the more formal approach.

After further debate

The Council Resolved

That area 13 (Shepherds Bridge) be approved as a suitable site for a play area in Chorleywood

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Hayward, seconded by Cllr Mahon-Daly

The vote was recorded as follows

Those in favour

Cllrs Miss Howell, Khiroya, Mahon-Daly

Those against

Cllrs Mrs Boatman, Edwards, Mrs Hayward, Mrs Jarrett, Kipps, Mrs Lantree, Liley, Morris, Mrs Sutherland, Mrs Preedy, Watkins Mrs White, Mrs Worrall

The vote was not carried.

Members then discussed alternative sites and wished to make the positive statement that they were in favour of a play space in chorleywood and felt that TRDC should explore other areas of land in their ownership such as Chorleywood House Estate, and Carpenters Wood.

Cllr Edwards proposed that the Parish Council respectfully request that TRDC look at siting a play space within Chorleywood House Grounds.

This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Sutherland

Cllr Mahon-Daly proposed the following amendment

Or some other location

This was seconded by Cllr Morris

The vote was taken on the amendment with six in favour, eight against and one abstention.

The Council

RESOLVED

That the Parish Council respectfully request that TRDC look at siting a play space within Chorleywood House Grounds

The vote was carried 12 in favour, 1 against with 3 abstentions.

13/29 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL RETURN EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2013

Members of the Council wished to congratulate the Clerk and all the staff involved in producing an unqualified set of accounts in what has been a difficult year without a finance officer.

The Council

RESOLVED

To approve the Annual return for Year Ending 31st March 2013.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Hayward, seconded by Cllr Edwards, and carried unanimously.

13/30 CLOSURE

Before closing the meeting the Chairman made the following statement that today the Council had broken its own rules, by

1. Not enforcing the three minute rule
2. By giving everyone who wished to speak the opportunity to do so on what was a very important topic
3. That the official time of 15 minutes as outlined in the Councils Standing Orders had been exceeded to allow members of the public to have their say.

He thanked the members of the public for attending.

He then closed the meeting at 10.43 pm

These minutes have been checked by the Chairman.

Signed Dated

These minutes have been agreed at Full Council and signed by the Chairman.

Signed Dated