

CHORLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the PARISH COUNCIL held in the, Parish Office, South Lodge, Rickmansworth Road, Chorleywood, on Tuesday 14th October 2014

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * Tony Edwards

Councillors:	* Jo Clarke	* Ken Morris
	* John Copley	* Alison Preedy
	Harry Davies	* David Raw
	Barbara Dickens	* Martin Trevett
	* Barbara Green	* Steve Watkins
	* Raj Khiroya	* Jane White
	* Rodney Kipps	* Jenny Wood
	* Jill Leeming	* Jackie Worrall

*Denotes Member present

Officers Present Mrs Y Merritt – Clerk
Mrs C James – Deputy Clerk
Mrs M Putman – Admin Officer
Miss L Hamilton – Admin Officer

14/25 PUBLIC FORUM

There were eleven members of the press and public present

Henry Goldberg – Chairman Chorleywood Residents Association spoke in favour of the motion to re-open the play area debate. Stating that there was a social need for a play area within walking distance of the village. This would help to deal with the increasing obesity problem in Chorleywood. He stated that the Residents Association were in favour of the Nature Trail but as a complimentary element and not a substitute to the play area. He urged Councillors for the future health of Chorleywood to support the motion.

Debbie Rosario – Also spoke in favour of the motion to re-open the play area debate. She stated that she had looked further into the play area safety report from the police undertaken in September 2013. She stated that the report has been a speedy response to a request from the Clerk which did not give the opportunity for a full in depth study to take place. She stated that as a supporter of the play area on Chorleywood Common she did not feel the previous procurement process had produced equipment that was in keeping with the Common and this would be an ideal opportunity to consult more with a view to procuring better designs for the equipment. With new councillors elected the 95K allocated to a play area in Chorleywood could be secured.

Michael Hyde – spoke opposing the motion and had sent out a letter outlining his objections. His primary objection was that the Common is a ‘Common’ and not just an open space or parkland. He spoke of restrictions identified in the Deed of Gift, which he felt had not yet been recognised. He also commented on the time limitations on the TRDC funding and was concerned that any application for the common would undoubtedly, take considerably longer than any other site and wished TRDC to be mindful of this.

Gregory Hill Chairman Friends of the Common – also spoke against the motion and had also confirmed that he had sent a letter outlining his objections.

Stated the position of Friends of the Common, having been fully consulted were in favour of the Nature Trail over the play area by 2:1. The Common is a place for recreation but the play area formally proposed was totally inappropriate.

Mr Hill spoke of the Conveyance of the Common and state that a play area would permanently vary or alter the natural features or aspect of the Common, and interfere with free access to every part thereof. The issues in principal were that the Friends of Chorleywood Common were opposed to the development of the Common.

He made practical considerations to the proposed area 13 which included access by foot across Shepherds Bridge, Access by car and the issue of fencing. Other areas mentioned were ones of auditable consultation and ongoing responsibility for a site if chosen for the Common.

The Clerk confirmed that she had received letters from Simone Tyson, Chorleywood Mums and Maria Larkin both in favour of a play area on Chorleywood Common which had been circulated.

14/26 REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Trevett made a verbal representation from Cllr Sue Stibbs regarding the Shepherds Bridge Solution. This read:-

‘Having noticed London Underground Ltd monitoring the traffic both on the bridge and through the cattle creep (which their engineers rather sweetly referred to as the subway) we did rather wonder what next.

LUL have now reported to Highways on the safety aspects (Highways has the ultimate say as to what is permissible on the highway, although the bridge is the responsibility of LUL) Highways are happy that there is sufficient evidence of full risk assessment for it not to be necessary to install either traffic light or thief kerbs, both of which had been mooted. Thief kerbs are the bigger kerbs used in lorry parks and petrol stations where a greater degree of protection to prevent Lorries mounting kerbs is required. Instead LUL and Highways are satisfied that installation of a smaller kerb will be sufficient to protect the sides of the bridge from being hit by a lorry or other vehicle.

However having monitored the number of pedestrians using the bridge LUL did not think there were sufficient number on the bridge at any one time to be at risk , so they do not propose to make any separate proviso for them. Interesting though they did feel that enough people accessed the station through the cattle creep and then up Station Approach that it was worth lighting it at night to make it safer.

Revised drawings are now in hand and it is hoped a proposal will be submitted to Herts within the next four weeks.

Given that none of the various agencies with an interest in safety of Shepherds Bridge and its users, both pedestrians and drivers, had the approximately £500,000 it would cost to put up a pedestrian only bridge this will hopefully prove a safe compromise.’

14/27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs H Davies and B Dickens

14/28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A declaration of interest was received from Cllr M Trevett on the Community Plan

Cllr J Worrall advised that she had not taken part in any of the discussion taken place with Friends of the Common in relation to the play area.

Cllr R Khiroya who was a member of the Residents Association and Friends of Chorleywood Common had not taken part in any discussion re the Play Area.

14/29 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Council

RESOLVED

To approve the minutes of the meeting dated 22nd July 2014.

These were duly signed by the Chairman

14/30 MATTERS ARISING

14/16 13/81 Banking Arrangements – The Clerk advised that she was making progress with the report and would be putting a report to the P&R committee.

14/16, 13/70 – 13/60 -13/45 Purchase of South Lodge – The Clerk explained that she had not received any further communication from TRDC on the matter. Procurement of Assets was on the Agenda for the next District and Parish Meeting

14/31 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised members that they would now only be contacted on their Councillor Email. The Clerk explained the insurance implications as to why this was.

Chairman's Diary

2nd August 2014 WW1 Commemoration The Chairman was joined by Rodney Kipps Chairman of the Royal British Legion and Cllr Anne Shaw Leader of TRDC at the War Memorial Hall to light candles in memoriam of the start of WW1. This was followed by in the afternoon by a presentation from Sue Woolmans who had written a book on the Assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand followed by afternoon tea prepared by the RVS and served by Chorleywood Scouts. After tea the Smethurst family and Eleanor Clark presented songs and poems from WW1 and read the names of the fallen. The Chairman was joined by the Vice Chairman of TRDC and his wife.

5th August 2014 Chorleywood in Bloom – The Chairman visited all the entrants for Chorleywood in Bloom.

18th August 2014 - The Chairman attended a meeting with Cllr J Leeming to create a Dementia Friendly Chorleywood, held at Sunrise.

21st August 2014 – The Chairman joined Barbara Green with the Friends of Carpenters Wood volunteers burying the wire for the virtual fencing on the Common.

22nd August 2014 – The Chairman visited those properties who had received a prize in the Chorleywood in Bloom competition which was sponsored by Van Hage.

5th September 2014 – The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk met with members of the Chorleywood Residents Association.

8th September 2014 – The Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Clerk attended the Joint Parish Council meeting held at Abbots Langley

11th September 2014 – The Chairman visited Joan Thompson at Burford House to present her with a bouquet of flowers to celebrate her 105th birthday.

13th September 2014 – The Chairman attended the Horticultural Show at the War Memorial Hall to present the prizes.

23rd September 2014 – The Chairman attended the Home Start AGM at the Fairway Inn in Rickmansworth. He advised that more information was available if anyone was interested.

29th September 2014 – The Chairman attended the second Dementia Meeting with Cllr J Leeming at the Sunrise.

9th October 2014 – The Chairman had been invited to attend the Civic Service for the Chairman of TRDC, Cllr Chris Lloyd.

14/32 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 9

The following question was asked by Cllr S Watkins:

I understand that a meeting took place between the Chair and Vice Chair of the Open Spaces Committee. at T.R.D.C. with officers/members of Leisure Committee in early September . As this was not reported to the Open Spaces Committee meeting on the 16th September, could the Chair of that committee inform Council of its contents and outcome?

Cllr B Green responded as follows

She thanked Cllr Watkins for giving her the opportunity to outline the details of the meeting. As Chairman of Open Spaces she met with Keith William, the Lead Member for Leisure at TRDC, together

with Martin Trevett, Vice Chairman of Open Spaces on 19th August 2014. Tom Darlington, Officer responsible for play spaces was also present. The purpose of the meeting was threefold, firstly, to ascertain whether funding was still available for a Play Space in Chorleywood, Secondly, whether the tender was still valid, and thirdly, to discuss whether TRDC were prepared to make a formal request to the Parish Council to re-open the debate. The Clerk to the Parish had previously advised me that the subject of the play space could not be re-opened by the Parish unless TRDC made an 'official request' for the Parish to do so. As my intention was to request that a debate on the Play Space was to be re-opened, it seemed entirely appropriate to seek clarification on these issues before moving forward.

Following that meeting I drew up a Motion, the one which is before you in the Full Council Agenda and requested that this be placed on the agenda of the Open Spaces Committee of 9th September. I was then advised by the Clerk that the matter needed to be put to Full Council and therefore the Motion was withdrawn. As there was no remit for the play space to be discussed at the Open Spaces September meeting, and indeed, two of the three issues were still unclear at that time, this Full Council provides the first opportunity for me to report back, something which I fully intended to do as part of my Motion submission.

14/33 CLERKS REPORT

The Council
RESOLVED
To note the report

14/34 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning – 29th July 2014 – it was noted that the Committee were disappointed with the report on the Green Street Flooding issue with offered no solutions to the ongoing problems.

Open Spaces – 9th September 2014 – The Chairman advised that the plans for the Cricket Club were progressing and it was hoped that more information would be available in December. Grazing costs and an update on the scheme would be presented to the next meeting.

Village Halls 16th September 2014

Recommendation 1 Indoor Table Top Sale –Members considered the recommendation from the Village Halls Committee. It was emphasised that to keep the costs down there would need to be a commitment from Councillors to run the event on the day.

The Council
RESOLVED

That the Council organise a Monthly Indoor Table Top Sale from the New Year, which would be manned by Councillors with the marketing and publicity for the event being undertaken by office staff.

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Khiroya and carried with 13 in favour, one against and one abstention.

Recommendation 2 War Memorial Hall Refurbishment –

The Council
RESOLVED

To agree to the tender process for phase two of the War Memorial Hall refurbishment with a view of reporting back to the December meetings.

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Trevett and unanimously approved.

The Clerk apologised to all Members as there was an item for decision that she had omitted from the agenda and there was a member of public present who had an interest in the decision.

She advised that a request had been received from Chorleywood Amateur Dramatics to replace the missing border curtains for the stage. CADS had managed to obtain the scaffold poles needed to place

the curtains on but were requesting the Village Halls Committee pay for the curtains at a cost of £352.80. CADS had volunteered to put up the poles and the curtains. They were also requesting new 'barn door' fittings for the front of house lighting system, which had broken some time ago. The cost of these was £102.00. CADS have booked the War Memorial hall for their annual production on 1st November, hence the urgency of the request.

The Council

RESOLVED

To agree to the funding of £454.80 plus VAT for replacement border curtains and barn door lighting which will be fitted by CADS.

This was proposed by Cllr Green, seconded by Cllr Watkins and unanimously approved.

P&R 23rd September 2014

Recommendation 1 Building on Chorleywood in Bloom –

Details within the recommendation were discussed, and comparisons were made with neighbouring villages and towns. Lyn Sutherland advised members that Chorleywood Residents Associating were in favour of the proposal and that she was happy as their representative to be on any steering group. Members considered that anything that were to enhance Lower Road, Main and New Parades would be welcomed. First impressions from some members of the Business Association were favourable. Cllr Trevett advised that grant funding may be available from TRDC towards capital costs such as the hanging baskets and brackets, but this would be better received if the application came from a group and not the Parish Council.

The Council

RESOLVED

To set up a steering group to look at building on the Chorleywood in Bloom which would be made up of Parish Councillors Clark, Khiroya, Watkins and Wood, Lyn Sutherland, and any members of the Business Association.

It was also agreed that officers write to the Horticultural Society and Allotment holders to see if there was any interested parties who would like to be involved.

This was proposed by the Chairman and unanimously approved.

14/19 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Cllr Green was concerned that the minutes did not reflect the decision taken. It was her understanding the members of the Council would consider at this meeting the draft Standing orders looking specifically at the current standing orders 19 – 24 looking at the position of the Ex Officio's, the use of substitutes and the election of Chairs at standing committees. But the item was not on the agenda.

The Clerk responded advising that it was her understanding that the members of the Council would be given time to look at both the NALC model and the current orders, making comments to both Cllrs Green and Worrall Via the Clerk for discussion at the next P&R meeting. She advised that constitutionally any changes could not be made until the new municipal year, May 2015 and therefore it gave members more time to study the contents of each document.

It is confirmed that there was no proposal, seconder or vote taken at the original discussion.

Planning 7th October 2014 – 14/072, The Chairman confirmed the committee had objected to the installation of a Base Station in Station Approach as it would interfere with the sight lines of drivers.

14/35 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The Committee

RESOLVED

To approve the payments and direct debits

Chorleywood Village Halls

- Cheques £14093.71
- Direct Debits £4471.82
- Debit Card Payments £138.38

Total £18703.91

Parish Council

- Cheques £148216.17
- Direct Debits £4517.68
- Debit Card Payments £1414.74

Total £154148.59

14/36 MOTION TO FULL COUNCIL

Clerks note: As this topic has high interest the comments and statements have been written in full for clarity and future reference.

- To agree to re-open the debate on a Play Space on the Common
- To agree to review the findings of the police report presented to Full Council in September 2014 in order to examine the materiality of the risks identified, and to explore ways to mitigate any unacceptably high risks to acceptable levels.

Proposer; Cllr. Barbara Green

Seconder: Cllr. Martin Trevett

Cllr Green made the following statement in support of the motion

I know that the proposal for a play space on Chorleywood Common had become a very divisive issue within the community, and that a number of you here were involved in rejecting the proposal in September 2013 (October), so, I understand it is particularly difficult for you to consider 'revisiting' the topic this evening. However, I want to make it clear that I am not asking for you to pledge support for the idea of a play space on the common here tonight, but simply asking you, as elected members to allow the debate to be re-opened so that all the issues can be examined fully.

It is my contention that the decision to reject the play space in September (October) 2013 was largely based on the finding of the police report (attached to this agenda for those new members who have not seen it). These finding were wide-ranging and took into consideration such issues as car-parking, dog-fouling, road safety, littering as well as other forms of anti-social behaviour. I understand the police report was requested by the Parish Council at short notice prior to the September (October) Full Council meeting, and I am not sure what the brief was, but clearly no attempt was made in the report to look at ways of mitigating any of the risks or to consider solutions to any of the problems raised.

I am not entirely convinced myself that all the issues raised by the police can, in fact be satisfactorily resolved. However, it is incumbent on us as elected members and representatives of the whole community, to at least see where any of the risks identified can be satisfactorily mitigated. I know some members of the community were surprised that the matter was so abruptly closed after that meeting last year, and that at no point were attempts made by the Parish to analyse the risks raised by the police and look for solutions. This motion gives us an opportunity to do just that, and not just say that nothing can be done.

We all know that whatever we do in life carries some risk – an certainly in every other case in the District (an probably in the Country) where a play space has been suggested, similar issues may well have been raised to the ones here. What is important is to examine the materiality of the risks to see how significant or unacceptable they are in relation to the norm, and in this respect I feel we will need further expert input. The letter from Chris Hope (in the agenda) has already suggested a way forward in terms of any environmental issues. Furthermore, the tender for the play space design has now run out , so new designs for equipment could be considered which may be more sympathetic for those who were unhappy about these previously.

As far as the finances are concerned, we are now in the last chance saloon!

I have been told that there are a number of other Councillors in the District who are looking to scoop up this money for their own projects if we do not use it. I think it would be remiss of us all to allow this opportunity for the Chorleywood children to slip by without further consideration of the issues.

I am not asking for a full debate here, at this meeting. The issues are many and complex and require detailed analysis. All I am asking is for Members to consider this motion with open minds and allow a debate to be re-opened. The Council can then decide the best way forward.

I would therefore like to move the Motion put before you.

Cllr Trevett wished to second the original motion but that he reserved the right to speak on the motion following debate.

Cllr Watkins wished to put an amendment to the motion to consider a site for a play area in Chorleywood, exploring other avenues.

Before the amendment was formally put to the meeting the Chairman opened the floor for comments.

Cllr Worrall stated that the police issues relating to the site had been highlighted in April 2012 but ignored by TRDC therefore a written report was requested which was what TRDC should have done in the first place. The criticism of the Parish Council on this matter was unfair, TRDC officers were remiss as the results of the survey were not correctly reported. The Parish Council had met with the Residents Association and Friends of the Common, and Chorleywood Mums as part of the Community Plan process and would be addressing what they wanted.

Cllr Leeming stated that she wished to second the amendment to the motion.

Cllr White said that it was insulting that the work carried out last year was not up to standard which is why the Parish Council was faced with this proposal. She said she was fully in support of a play area in Chorleywood but felt the Parish Council had a duty to protect the Common from development. She was therefore in favour to revisit all areas of Chorleywood that may be suitable for a play area.

Cllr Trevett stated that this proposal was covered by two different authorities each having their own policies. Whilst the debate could be reopened TRDC's options were limited due to policy and therefore he felt that the site should remain the same.

Cllr Watkins asked Cllr Trevett for a copy of the policy to which he referred. Cllr Green suggested that a copy would be obtained and forwarded to all members.

Cllr Watkins said that it was suggested that the play area should be near the centres of population therefore how was the play area going to service Cedars, Quickwood and Chorleywood North if it was on the Common without parking?

Cllr Watkins asking Cllr Trevett if he considered the Football pitches in Chorleywood House Estate to be an area of recreation. Cllr Trevett stated that of course it was, Cllr Watkins stated that this was full of children every weekend and therefore he had answered the question of suitable sites.

Cllr Trevett stated that whilst he had seconded the motion he reserved the right to speak

In seconding this motion there for four points I wish to make.

1. I ask members to look at the wording; at this stage members are only being asked to agree to re-opening discussions with a fellow local authority. How anyone can vote against that is quite beyond me.
2. Touching briefly on the Crime Prevention Officer's report, surely we should go back and say we hear what you say so what are your suggestions to deal with the issues raised. Especially as the Police and Crime Commissioners policy is that public space ie streets parks and commons etc should not be surrendered to anti-social elements.
3. We must be clear that is this motion is voted down then that's it; there is no possibility that the money could be held over for another year. Councillors for other parts of the District are eager to get their hands on it for their wards.
4. Having said that if this motion is voted down those who are anti should not go home celebrating, I have been round this loop twice now and we can be sure that when Three Rivers reviews its leisure facilities again in a few years, Chorleywood will again be flagged up as the worst provided for in the District.
5. In the Maple Cross part of my District Ward there are three play grounds as there are in Rickmansworth while the Watford Rural Parish area there are 12, we have one tucked away in the Swillett, so we can be sure that the issue will be back again, the sad thing of course is that another generation of children will have grown up without adequate play facilities.

I urge everyone to support this motion.

The Chairman stated that there were a number of flaws in the document TRDC put out in 2012 which were misleading. He stated that he had written to TRDC asking at what stage in the process Chorleywood House Grounds were rejected but thus far had received no response.

The Chairman stated that there was a seconder for the amendment to point 1 of the original motion and therefore he wished everyone to vote on the amendment which read as follows:

- I. To agree to re-open the debate on a Play Space in Chorleywood

This was carried ten in favour, five against.

Cllr Trevett then called for a recorded voted. The Clerk reminded him that the call for a recorded vote should be made before the vote – she therefore asked all those against the motion to raise their hands.

Those in favour of the motion were
Cllrs Clarke, Edwards, Kipps, Leeming, Morris, Preedy, Watkins, White, Worrall, Woods,

Those against
Cllrs Copley, Green, Khiroya, Raw and Trevett.

The motion was taken as amended

The Council
RESOLVED

1. To agree to re-open the debate on a play area in Chorleywood

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Leeming and unanimously carried.

2. To agree to review the findings of the police report presented to Full Council in September (October) 2013 in order to examine the materiality of the risks identified, and to explore ways to mitigate any unacceptably high risks to acceptable levels.

This was proposed by Cllr Green, Seconded by Cllr Trevett and carried 12 in favour with three abstentions.

Cllr Green stated that she hoped that the way forward was with meaningful debate with some investigation which would link to the Community Plan timetable.

Cllr Trevett suggested that the Open Spaces Committee would be the best place to start the process. The Clerk responded stating that as the remit was for Chorleywood it would be for Full Council to decide the way forward.

The Chairman responded stating that not only the Commoners but representatives from the Community would most likely be interested.

14/37 ANNUAL RETURN

Members wished to formally note that the qualification given by the auditors was out of the Parish Councils control due to the changed election date and was not the fault of officers.

The Council
RESOLVED
To note the report

This was proposed by the Chair and unanimously approved.

14/38 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Council
RESOLVED
To note the report

This was proposed by the Chair and unanimously approved.

14/39 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL WARD BOUNDARIES REVIEW

Cllr Worrall stated that she was disappointed with the review as it was supposed to take into account communities and transport links with identifiable boundaries. Chorleywood had been split into three sections using the A404 and the M25 meaning that the Parish would now have three County Councillors. She understood about the electorate numbers but that she would be lodging a person protest.

Cllr Trevett suggested that having three County Councillors may benefit Chorleywood as there would be more support for Chorleywood for lobbying the County. He agreed it was a number crunching exercise but to criticise the Council should come up with an alternative and he could not see how the situation could be improved.

The Council
RESOLVED
That the Parish Council makes no comment on the Hertfordshire County Council Boundary Review.

This was proposed by Cllr Trevett, Seconded by Cllr Morris and carried with 11 in favour with four abstentions.

14/40 REQUEST FOR A COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD IN MAIN PARADE

Members debated the merits of a community noticeboard and how much it would be used. The Clerk confirmed that officers visited the current noticeboard weekly and therefore it would not be onerous to place items in the community noticeboard and more importantly take out notices when out of date. The

need for planning permission was also discussed. It was noted that the Residents Association had said they would make a financial contribution towards the notice boards.

The Council

RESOLVED

To look at all the options in conjunction with Chorleywood Residents Association and report back to the P&R committee with the costs and implications.

This was proposed by the Chair and unanimously approved.

14/41 DELIVERING INSPIRING LIBRARIES

Cllr Copley advised that HCC wish to implement a system which re-organises the library system into three tiers. Chorleywood has been put into the tier three which will mean that the library will be self-service and need to be run by volunteers. There is a consultation process which will bring quite a lot of questions. HCC are looking to make a £2.5 million saving. Cllr Copley advised that there is an opportunity to protest which he hoped the Council would do in the strongest possible terms.

It was noted that the library hours had already been cut and that current hours did cause problems. It was a case of use it or lose it.

The Council

RESOLVED

That the Parish Council protest in the strongest possible terms asking to move Chorleywood library from a tier 3 to a tier 2.

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

14/42 COMMUNITY PLAN

Cllr Trevett declared an interest and left the room.

Cllr White as Chairman of the group advised that the plan had progressed quite a lot and had engaged an external consultant to add finesse to the questionnaire. This was being paid for from grant funding. Members were advised that it was anticipated that the plan would have a soft launch where Councillors and community plan partners would receive a link to an electronic copy. People would be asked for comments on an glaring errors, spelling grammar etc.

It was anticipated that the launch would be between the 7th and 9th November with launch events in the library. There would be a press release advising of the launch prior to delivery of the plan, and members of the group will publicise the launch on their website, newsletters etc prior to delivery of the questionnaires. The results will be back before Christmas and three months have been set aside to analyse the results. More grant funding is available for this exercise.

Cllr Worrall stated that if the response rate was less than 20% the process would go no further as the results would not necessarily be representative, therefore everyone was being encouraged to respond to either the paper copy or the on-line facilities.

14/43 CLOSURE

The meeting have started at 8.00 pm, closed at 10.38 pm

These minutes have been checked by the Chairman.

Signedagreed via Email..... Dated28th November 2014.....

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

SignedDated.....