

CHORLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL held in the Common Room Hall, Common Road, Chorleywood, on Tuesday 8th December 2015

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: Yvonne Merritt - Clerk
Michelle Putman - Admin Officer
Claire James - Deputy Clerk

The Chairman opened the meeting by confirming the reason for calling the meeting and welcomed the members of the public

PUBLIC FORUM

There were 12 members of the public present.

The Council heard representations from

- Greg Hill - Friends of Chorleywood Common
- Michael Hyde - Friends of Chorleywood Common

15/52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Harry Davies, Rodney Kipps, Raj Khiroya, and Jill Leeming
Cllrs David Raw and Martin Trevett were absent.

15/53 CHORLEYWOOD COMMUNITY PLAN

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and passed over to Cllr Jane White, Chairman of the Community Plan Steering Group.

Cllr White Opened the meeting with the following statement 'What is a Community Plan?'

She went on to advise the following

A Community Plan is:-

- Statement of wishes from residents about the community in which they live.
- It is not a Neighbourhood Plan, which is a legal document concerned solely with planning and development. The Community Plan Group is currently investigating whether Chorleywood will benefit from a Neighbourhood Plan from the results gathered, and will report back to Council on that point in due course. This is a Community Plan; it is not legally binding and covers a

wide range of topics. It is hoped it will form the basis for the Community Groups to work more closely together and have more shared projects.

How did we get to this point?

- Not everyone now on the Parish Council was present back in October 2013 when it was first decided to do this. It started off as a presentation from TRDC following introduction of the Localism Act 2011, which gives communities a greater degree of control about the look and development of their area.
- The Parish Council decided that Chorleywood was going to have a Community Plan. A Steering Group was formed to manage this project – to work alongside but separately from, the Parish, & other Community groups were invited to join our first meeting in December 2013.
- These were:
 - Friends of Chorleywood Common
 - Residents' Associations of Chorleywood & Loudwater
 - Chorleywood Mums
 - Neighbourhood Watch
 - Chorleywood Care & RVS
- In addition to those listed, Chorleywood Youth Council and the Business Association were invited but for various reasons they did not want to be involved.
- In order to draw up a Community Plan the Group needed to know what residents felt. So each Group put forward a series of questions, which they felt might be worth investigating further. The help of a Market Research consultant was enlisted who turned these into a formal questionnaire, which was hand-delivered to all the 4,485 households in the Parish in December 2014. An online version was also available. The questionnaire contained 30 plus questions covering pretty much every area of life in Chorleywood.
- The results were collated in January of this year, and from those results the group have been able to determine which bits of Chorleywood life people like and also draw out the areas where improvements could be made.

Action Points

There were 26 questions, delivered to 4485 households which meant the potential for 116,600 individual answers.

From these answers there were 27 action points, 19 involving the Parish Council. Ten of which the Council is already doing, which leaves 9 new action points to consider:

What the Parish Council is already doing

1. Chorleywood in Bloom

61% said they'd like to see flowerbeds and troughs in the village.

- The Council has agreed to an ongoing commitment to this successful initiative.

2. Library & Post Office

91% and 97% respectively felt these assets were important to Chorleywood.

- The Council is already supporting the Library Volunteers Initiative & in Planning Councillors have agreed to compile a register of Local Assets to monitor the provision of these services. If the future of either the Library or the PO is threatened there are steps the Parish can take to protect the asset for the community. It is not necessary at this stage but the situation will be monitored.
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3. The Common
81% say they visit at least monthly. 96% wish to see it protected for future generations – The Parish manages the Common sensitively already
4. Planning matters
59% requested a better mix of shops; 23% want more NHS dentists, and 35% improved mobile communications. These are already handled as they arise by Planning.
5. Protection of Green Belt
Similarly 94% want the Green Belt to be strictly protected and an overwhelming number want future development to be restricted to brownfield sites. These figures, plus specifics about which types of housing are desired, are useful to Planning Committee when considering new planning applications. Councillors can use this information to shape decisions as to which applications are likely to be supported or resisted.
6. Play Area
Of those expressing an opinion, 48% felt there were sufficient play facilities in Chorleywood. 52% felt there were not. The Play Area Advisory Group is already ably handling this matter.
7. Community Centre
33% of respondents felt Chorleywood would benefit from a new “Community centre” – as a consequence the Council is now issuing feedback forms to users of the Parish’s Village Halls to gauge their level of satisfaction, and to see where improvements, if any, can be made.
8. Promotion of events
Parish Officers do this already on the website and using the new Community Notice board
9. Crossing at the A404/Common Road
68% agreed that this was needed, and indeed funding is in place and work on this crossing will commence in early next year.
10. Bus services
Of those expressing an opinion, only 20% felt there were good bus services in and around Chorleywood. The Council (through Planning) is actively involved in the Herts CC consultation process and will continue to make representations as required, stressing the importance of these services.

What is the Community Plan proposing the Parish should do?

1. Public loos
70% felt a public loo in Chorleywood was important. The Parish can promote the facility at the Library using the new noticeboard, websites.
2. Protection of Woodlands & open spaces
When asked which features should be protected for future generations, the 3rd most popular response (after The Common & River Chess) was Woodlands & Open Spaces. It is suggested that the Council audits the Parishes green spaces, and considers whether they are under threat, and whether measures to protect them (for example, registering them as a Village Green) are required.
3. Maintenance of the Lawn Cemetery
63% said they were ‘very dissatisfied’ with the upkeep of the Lawn Cemetery. This was both a surprise and a disappointment and the Community groups all agree it is unjustified. The Parish Council need to investigate why this is the case, and to see whether it was a misunderstanding

(were they thinking of Christchurch cemetery) or whether there is a lack of understanding as to why the Lawn Cemetery is maintained as it is.

4. Cycle paths

48% felt Chorleywood would benefit from having cycle paths & 41% said the lack of cycle paths discourages them from getting out on their bikes more often. It is proposed that the Parish Council form a working party to investigate the feasibility of introducing cycle paths to the Parish.

5. GP surgeries.

Generally speaking, most were happy with the provision of GPs services within the Parish. But there is a spike in dissatisfaction in the 25-34 age groups and it is proposed that the Parish Council feeds these results back to GPs to see if they are aware of it, and to give them the opportunity to investigate further should they wish.

6. Parking

62% said there are insufficient parking spaces serving Chorleywood's medical facilities; 52% said there was insufficient parking for shoppers; and 48% said there was insufficient capacity at Chorleywood Station for commuters. The Community Plan group proposed that the Parish Council lobbies TRDC for more designated spaces by medical facilities, and that – perhaps under Planning – the Parish Council resists the erosion of spaces in the Ferry carpark, and at Chorleywood Station for alternatives uses such as supermarket pick-up points etc. The Parish Council might also contact TfL to investigate whether there is any additional capacity at Chorleywood station carpark.

7. Speed Limits

72% wish to see a reduction in speed limits outside schools and in the main shopping roads. St Clement Danes school has a 40mph limit outside it and it is proposed the Parish Council lends its weight to the campaign by CAIRS and the CRA and Neighbourhood Watch to lobby Highways to reduce this limit, and to support any other speed reductions in the areas highlighted.

8. Street lighting audit

28% were concerned about the lack of street lighting after dark. It is proposed the Parish Council works in conjunction with Neighbourhood Watch and CRA to determine if there are specific areas of the village that might benefit from all-night lighting to alleviate some of these concerns, and to lobby HCC accordingly.

9. Fast off-peak Met Line trains

In response to 54% of respondents stating that there are insufficient fast Met Line trains to London, it is proposed that the Council, alongside CRA, lobby David Gauke MP to try and get this service increased.

Of the remaining action points owned by the other groups, CRA, Neighbourhood Watch and Chorleywood Mums have adopted the plan.

Cllr White stated that she thought it was fantastic news that everything contained within this document is - broadly speaking - minor - we must celebrate the fact that when we asked the residents what they wanted, in the main, they were broadly happy with the way things are.

Cllr White advised that assuming the Parish Council adopted the plan, it would be reproduced professional in colour and be delivered to every household. Cllr Worrall advised that funding for this would be attained through grant funding.

The Chairman suspended the meeting at 7.50pm and opened up the room for questions.

Miss Howell wanted to comment on publicity of events – there are no parish noticeboard in Cedars ward and to engage with the public in this area was difficult. She suggested that Email lists whilst onerous in the initial setup would be efficient over time. Cllr White advised that there was a suggestion that the Steering Group set up a Survey Monkey as a one off exercise to enable people to sign up for whatever group they wished. Due to data protection these could not be shared between groups but members of the public would be able to sign up to whatever group took their interest at one signing up point.

Cllr Dickens also advised that the Parish Council had a Facebook page where general information and publicity was published.

Lyn Sutherland asked about the Freedom Pass, a question had been asked in the questionnaire with regard to free travel, and this had not been addressed in the summing up document. Cllr White agreed to address this situation.

Cllr Green asked a number of questions

1. With regard to the dissatisfaction of the lawn cemetery – she wished to know what question was asked, it was suggested that rather than a satisfaction survey an article be written in Chorleywood Matters asking for feedback. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that very rarely did she receive complaints. The Clerk suggested that there may be some confusion between the Lawn Cemetery and Christchurch and Chorleywood Road Cemeteries.
2. It was understood that Budgens had initially agreed to have a public toilet available and had received funding from TRDC towards costs etc. If this was now no longer the case where TRDC still making payments? Cllr White agreed to follow this up.
3. With regard to the community centre – she felt there was a difference between a community centre and what the Village Halls had to offer. In her opinion, a community centre had a bar and was open all day as a drop in centre with classes and play groups etc. It was agreed that further investigation was required to find out what was wanted and if the Parish Council were able to provide such services. Owen Edis suggested that perhaps the new cricket pavilion would be able to fit these criteria.
4. Speed limits – it was felt that more pressure should be put on HCC to enable the speed limits to be reduced. John Sheldon from NHW advised that the Police were currently undertaking random speed checks in Shire Lane, Green Street and Valley Road, with a view of getting drivers to slow down in these areas. Initially offenders were sent a letter but if drivers were caught a second time the Police could take action. It was suggested that the Parish Council talk to Little Chalfont as they had successfully reduced speed limits within their village.

Cllr Dickens noticed that the CRA were looking at street furniture and signage within the Parish. She advised that Parish Councillors were also looking at Gateway signs, therefore it was agreed that the CRA and Parish Council should work together on this and share information.

Cllr Copley stated that the quality and speed of WIFI and mobile covered had decreased in some areas. However he had discovered WIFI hotspots at the Stag, the Gate and at the Station. It was noted that other Parish Councils had been very successful in getting better coverage. It was noted that a high percentage of people living in Chorleywood work from home and therefore there was plenty of evidence to back up the request for faster broadband and mobile coverage.

Angela Killick, representing Chorleywood Library Volunteers advised that there was WIFI and a public toilet at the library and this would be publicised. She also gave names of people who may be able to help with regard to information about lobbying for better WIFI services.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 8.20pm

The Chairman wished to publically thank John Sheldon who had recently required as the Senior NHW co-ordinator. John had served the community for 21 years and had attained 100% coverage in the NHW scheme for Chorleywood West.

The Council

RESOLVED

To formally adopt the Community Plan for Chorleywood as laid out.
To Accept the tasks allocated and set up work programmes to see these achieved.

This was proposed by the Chairman and unanimously approved.

John Sheldon wished to publically thank Cllr Jane White for being a fantastic Chairman who controlled meetings well and always finished on time!

15/54 CLOSURE

The meeting have started at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.26 pm

These minutes have been checked by the Chairman.

Signed Dated

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

SignedDated.....