

PARISH OF CHOLESBURY-CUM-ST LEONARDS

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held at Cholesbury Village Hall on Monday 18th May 2015

Present: Cllr John Allen (Chairman), Cllr Nigel Blomfield, Cllr Chris Brown, Cllr Philip Matthews, Cllr John Minting, Cllr Francis Sanger, County Cllr Patricia Birchley, Mrs Hayley Lewis (Parish Clerk) and 10 members of the public.

1. Apologies: District Cllr Nick Rose and Cllr Judy Joseph.
2. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12th May 2014, taken as read, were approved and signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.
3. Chiltern Society – Talk on the future of Cholesbury Camp by Barney Tyrwhitt-Drake. Mr Tyrwhitt-Drake explained that the Chiltern Society has agreed a 99-year lease with Buckinghamshire County Council for a one-acre area of the site, roughly from the entrance by the church drive around to the first crossing footpath. The Society's plans for management of the land, in line with its listing as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, initially include removal of a power line post, scrub management (in order to preserve existing footpaths) and replacement of stiles with gates. In conjunction with Historic England (the statutory arm of English Heritage) the Society is working on a five-year plan for the site, which it will share with all interested stakeholders in due course. Two members of the public present raised objection to the plans as they felt that removal of scrub had a negative impact on wildlife and encouraged erosion and in general did not wish the site to be "over managed". Mr Tyrwhitt-Drake replied that the Society is keen to involve the local population and to work in consultation with them on all matters.
- 4a. Parish Council, Chairman's report: Cllr Allen reported the Council's main activities for the year, which included review of 36 planning applications, notably including the application for change of use of the coach depot site in Taylors Lane to residential use, for which the Parish Council offered support and was eventually successful and also the application for change of use of The White Lion public house to residential use for which the Parish Council opposed the application and was recently successful, although the current residents still have leave to appeal. The council has reported six cases this year to Planning Enforcement, three of which have been resolved, two are still outstanding and one is currently subject to a retrospective planning application. The council also reported two blocked footpaths to the Rights of Way Officer. One footpath had stiles replaced with gates and the other is being investigated further by the council as having its status as a Right of Way reinstated. In terms of the roads, the flooding at Sandpit Hill was finally resolved and many roads have been repaired, although the list of outstanding matters is continually added to. The current main objective of the council is to obtain an upgrade of The Vale road, with many areas in need of repair. In addition, the council installed a defibrillator onto the side of Cholesbury Village Hall, is in the process of installing the equipment to have shared use of a Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS) at three points through the Parish and investment was made in the upkeep of the Parish noticeboards and commemorative seat by the cricket pitch. Thanks were given to Hawridge and Cholesbury Cricket Club for mowing around the seat. The council also

contributed to the New Local Plan by the District Council, which is a twenty-year plan for housing development; feedback was given in support of protection of the green belt and encouragement of facilities for at-home working and agricultural businesses. In relation to this, support has continued to be provided to the Superfast Broadband (SFBB) Working Party, resulting in superfast broadband being available in the area by September of this year as well as there being an upgrade of the existing exchange, which in itself will improved download speeds. It was reported that the allotments were fully occupied and that the common at Buckland Common will be mowed as usual this year, according to the agreed regimen (weather permitting). Future plans for the remainder of the year include development of a new Parish Council website. Finally, Cllr Allen extended his thanks to all of his fellow councillors for their efforts this year.

- 4b. Parish Council, financial report: Hayley Lewis presented the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2015 and gave a short report.
5. Bucks County Council: County Cllr Birchley reported that in a year where funding has been cut by 37%, the major challenges faced by the County Council have included preparation for compliance with the Care Act, which came into force on 1/4/15, requiring local councils to provide care at reduced rates for all, regardless of personal circumstance and with the threshold at which care must be provided free of charge being reduced; minimisation of bed-blocking within local hospitals in order to increase capacity; increased investment and improved management in the safeguarding sector following an inadequate inspection report and also continuous pressure on the road infrastructure requiring extensive maintenance. For all these reasons, council tax was raised this year.
6. Chiltern District Council: No report.
7. St Leonards Parish Hall: Michael Joseph, Chairman, reported that the aim of the committee is to maximise use of the hall and to this end there is a program of refurbishment planned for over the summer to include decorating and improved catering equipment. There is a joint application with Cholesbury Village Hall to apply for SFBB access and fundraising events include the annual fete on 6th June and an inaugural pub night on 24th June from 6-10.30pm.
8. Cholesbury Village Hall. Cllr Allen reported that following termination of the hire agreement with the nursery this year, a program of refurbishment had been undertaken to include re-decoration and improvement of the catering equipment. There is the shared SFBB initiative with St. Leonards Parish Hall, and the hall is developing a website. A 100 club is being considered. The hall would like to improve occupancy. A recent new hire by a social club for older people has had limited success, but it is hoped that this may still improve. A member of the public asked a question about the restrictions concerning sticking items to the walls when hiring the hall and Cllr Allen agreed that the committee would discuss a solution to this.
9. Chiltern Local Area Forum: The priorities for this group, which encompasses Chesham and several parishes in the local area, over the last 12 months has included aiming to enhance the sense of community in local villages; reduce social isolation for the elderly and enable small-scale road improvements that otherwise would not receive funding. This has led to part funding of the refurbishment of the kitchen at Cholesbury Village

Hall and the purchasing of the MVAS system. Cllr Brown is the Parish Council representative for this group.

10. Chesham Rural Policing Group. Cllr Brown reported that himself and Cllr Joseph meet 3 or 4 times per year with the local representative from the police force, PC Flint, to monitor crime levels and discuss relevant issues and initiatives. In the last few years the Parish has experienced its lowest crime levels of recent times with a total of 12 crimes in the last year out of a total of 1,400 in the Chiltern area. The majority of crimes involve break-ins to outbuildings and cars.
12. The Turpin Charity: Cllr Allen is a Trustee and gave a short history of the Charity and its aims and reported that the developer with an option to buy the land trusted to the charity is in the process of gaining an amended planning consent and once this is completed, the charity is likely to receive a substantial sum, which will be invested and the interest used to support the needy and young in parishes of Aston Clinton and Cholesbury-cum-St. Leonards.
13. There was no other business.

The Chairman thanked all present for their attendance and contributions. The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....