

CHOLESBURY - CUM - ST LEONARDS PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held at Cholesbury Village Hall on Tuesday 28th May 2019

Present: Cllr Chris Brown (Chairman), Cllr Nigel Blomfield, Cllr Bill Ingram, Cllr Francis Sanger, County Cllr Patricia Birchley, Mrs Hayley Farrelly (Parish Clerk), Guest Speaker Mr Tom Beeston and Mrs Linda Walton Chiltern Society and 4 members of the public.

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Phillip Matthews, Cllr Diane Brackley, District Cllr Nick Rose
2. **Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting**
 - a). The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 8th May 2018, taken as read, were approved and signed by the Chairman.
 - b). There were no matters arising.
3. **Guest Speaker: Tom Beeston, Chief Officer, The Chiltern Society**

Tom Beeston, newly-appointed Chief Officer presented to the Annual Parish Meeting on the important work that The Chiltern Society does in the area and his thoughts on the future, opportunities for and threats facing, the Chilterns. Mr Beeston expanded on the work they carry out in four areas: Wildlife and Landscapes, Heritage and Development, Community and finally Central Support. A summary, provided by Mr Beeston, of the points covered on these four areas is included as Appendix 1.
4. **Parish Council**
 - a) **Chairman's Report** – Cllr Chris Brown presented the annual report to the meeting which is included in full as Appendix 2
 - b) **Financial Report** – Parish Clerk Hayley Farrelly presented a report on the financial accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019. The meeting heard that the full accounts will be published on the website in due course. Summary accounts provided to the meeting are included as Appendix 3.
5. **Bucks County Council:** County Cllr Patricia Birchley echoed Cllr Brown's comments regarding the excellent work that John Allen had done during his time on the parish council. Cllr Birchley highlighted the work for the new Buckinghamshire Unitary Authority continues to gather pace and more information will be communicated as and when it emerges through parish council meetings.
6. **Chiltern District Council:** District Cllr Rose could not attend the meeting but had sent a written report that was read out at the meeting and is included as Appendix 4.
7. **Rural Policing Group:** Cllr Bill Ingram reported on rural policing matters. The new police officer from Chesham Police Neighbourhood Team is yet to be confirmed for our parish area following the sad death of PC Kevin Flint earlier in the year. The parish council meets with the police on a regular basis to discuss issues in the area and to receive a report on crime figures.
8. **Springal Hill Allotments and The Green, Buckland Common :** Cllr Nigel Blomfield gave a brief history on the allotments The land was purchased from Chiltern District by the parish council in the 1980s. The allotments are popular with residents but there are a few plots available and Cllr Blomfield urged residents to consider using this much-valued parish asset. The Green at Buckland Common is currently mowed twice a year and in recent years the parish council has taken notice of the residents' requests to leave certain parts of the common un-mowed to encourage wild flowers to grow to support the natural habitat of wildlife whilst the top part of the Common is mowed earlier so it can be enjoyed by children.
9. **Any other business:** None

The Chairman thanked all present for their attendance and contributions. The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....

The Chiltern Society

Our job: to protect and promote the Chilterns

- Volunteer led: over 500 volunteers, including over 125 in key roles
- 7,000 members and growing
- Our ask: membership, volunteering, support our campaigns and using our services (sign up on Facebook and for our online newsletters)

Wildlife and Landscapes

- 12 owned/leased sites (Cholesbury Camp Site Co-ordinator Linda Walton)
- 18 volunteer work party groups (sites, roaming and rivers and wetlands)
- Farm liaison
- Partnerships: Chilterns Woodland Project, Chalk Streams Project, Beacons of the Past, Chalk Cherries and Chairs, North Chilterns Landscape
- Wildlife conservation, footpath maintenance, sustainable outreach and education

Heritage and Development

- Heritage Group (Living Village/GIS, Festival, Save our Pubs, Ancient Monument Conservation)
- HS2 and Greenway Group
- Planning Group (38 key volunteer officers) (Local Co-ordinator Merrin Molesworth)

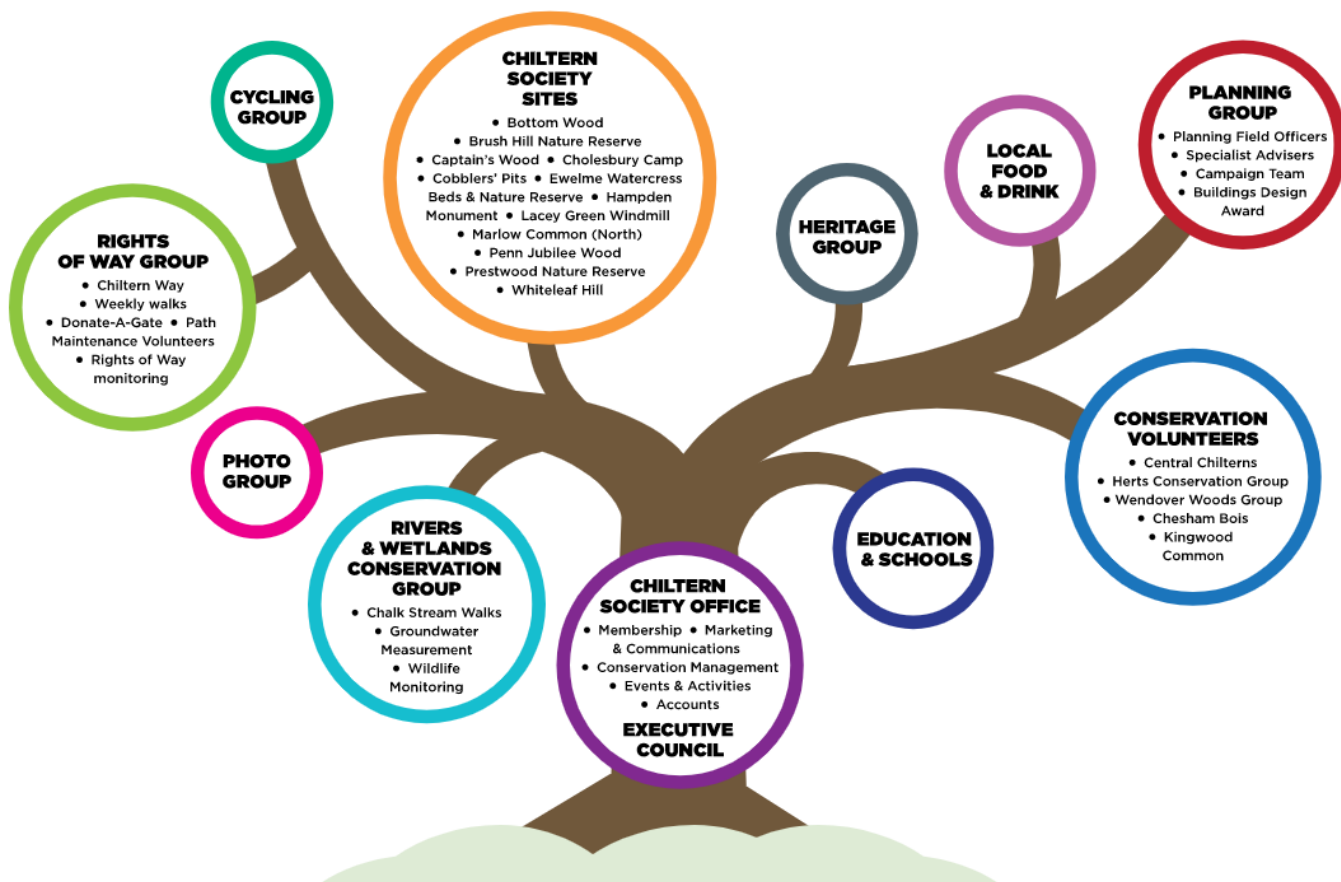
Community

- Photo Group
- Cycling and Walking Groups
- Rights of Way Group (31 key volunteer officers)
- Events

Central Support

- Central Support: 8 staff (6 full-time equivalents)
- Fundraising
- Raising awareness and education
- Guidance and support

Our Work



Chairman's Report to Annual Parish Meeting Tuesday 28th May 2019

Before going through the main events of the year I would like to put on record a note of appreciation for John Allen who stepped down as Chairman of the Parish Council at the end of April. John had served the residents of this parish for over 12 years and as our Chairman has led this Council for the past 9 years. Throughout this period John conscientiously led the council and pursued matters of concern to residents with dogged determination. In particular, this often involved the frequent chasing of both county and district councils when they dragged their feet in responding to parish council's enquiries.

The Parish Council met on 10 occasions in the past year and held one additional meeting of the Planning Committee. **Highways Matters** are the responsibility of Transport for Bucks, the County Council's highways maintenance provider. The parish council has been involved in several exchanges with them to urge them to fulfil their responsibilities to repair our roads. Notable being the very poor quality of road resurfacing on the road from The Vale to Cholesbury Common, the grit removal / resurfacing of Swan Bottom Road and the failure to undertake periodic road junction and white-line marking.

Concerning **Planning Matters** during the year the council has responded to over 40 planning applications and 4 planning appeals. Notable have been the numerous applications excessively demanded by the District planners for the restoration and refurbishment of The White Lion Pub St Leonards. Several unsuccessful applications for the site of the Rose and Crown pub Hawridge have been of residents' interest and most recently an application for 5 properties on part of the site of the Old Britannia in Buckland Common which has since gone to appeal. The parish council has also been pressing the district's planning enforcement team about the delays and procrastinations with regard to several planning enforcement cases which were still outstanding at the end of April.

Initiatives by the parish council this past year have included securing **Bucks CC project grants** for the Cricket Club and Commons Preservation Society.

The council continues to use a **mobile vehicle activation equipment** to monitor vehicle speeds 3 times a year: at St Leonards, Cholesbury and near the school in Hawridge. With minimal exceptions it is reassuring to note that speeding is not currently a particular issue in the parish.

This council receives an annual payment, known as a **devolution grant**, from Bucks CC for carrying out certain transportation-related maintenance work. During last year road side and directional signs were cleaned, the first such clean for many years, and with the generous assistance of a local resident, Richard Charles, the wooden heritage sign at Heath End was skilfully refurbished.

Each year the parish council makes **grants** to the two halls at Cholesbury and St Leonards. Recognising the major contribution these halls and the volunteers that run them make, last year a one-off additional grant of £3,000 was made to each hall.

The Green at Buckland Common and Springall Hill allotments are two assets the council maintains and I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Cllr Blomfield and Cllr Matthews for their work.

In March 2016 Openreach completed its first **Superfast Broadband** installation programme for this parish. In the five years leading up to then this council had been very actively engaged in securing improvements to internet speeds and reliability for as many residents as possible. However, there were still localities that were not catered for in this programme. The largest such area is **Coppice Farm Park/ Taylors Lane** and its pleasing to report that these 60 homes were switched over to SFBB in December 2018.

The parish council is asked to contribute to numerous **consultations** by other public bodies. This year's list includes Chiltern and South Bucks **Open Space Strategy** review and Playing Fields reviews; A proposal to cease using St Leonards Parish Hall as a **polling station** was successfully challenged. A response to the **Heathrow Flight-paths** Consultation was also completed.

In November last, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced a much delayed decision for the creation of the **Buckinghamshire Unitary Authority**. Despite initial disagreements with this decision by the Districts all authorities are now working together to implement arrangements for April 2020. Parish Councillors have been kept briefed on progress by our County and District Councillors and have attended briefings by both authorities. The Parish Council anticipates significant involvement during the next 9 months on the design of the local decision-making Boards and the range of services provided by the Community Hubs.

I would like to thank my fellow councillors for appointing me as their Chairman for the coming year and I would like to acknowledge their endeavours on behalf of residents.

Over the past year the parish council and individual residents have benefitted greatly from the considerable advice and support our **County and District Councillors**, Tricia Birchley and Nick Rose have provided. On behalf of my fellow councillors I would like to express our appreciation for all they do for our community.

To ensure the parish council is run in an organised, cost-effective, as well as a legally and financially compliant manner, Parish Councillors rely heavily on the hard work and diligence of our **Parish Clerk**. I would like to conclude on behalf of my fellow councillors by recording our thanks to Hayley Lewis for her seven years as clerk. Also to Joanne Martins for her short time with us and finally to say I am looking forward to working this year with Hayley Farrelly who has just joined us and is already making improvements to the way the Parish Council operates.

Chris Brown - Chairman

Summarised Financial Accounts for 2018-19

Precept received for this year remained the same as the previous year at £9,800.

Receipts for the year ending the 31st March 2019 totalled £12,524.69 which was an increase of £1859.01. The increase in income was due to devolution funding and the receipt of a BCC grant reimbursement for the Hawridge and Cholesbury Commons Preservation Society.

Total expenses for the year were £17,176.62 which was a significant increase on the previous year of £8,606. At last year's annual parish council meeting a member of the public queried the high levels of reserves and the councillors agreed to discuss this at the next parish council meeting. As a result of these discussions £7,600 was given in grants to Cholesbury Village Hall and St Leonards Parish Hall of £3,800.00 each. Other notable increases in expenditure this year included roadside sign cleaning and finger sign restoration. Elsewhere – hall hire, insurance, subscriptions and dog bin maintenance remained largely flat year on year.

The Parish Council ended the year with a cash deficit of £4651.05 against a budgeted deficit of £67.48. This was largely due to the grant payments made.

Overall reserves at the end of the year were £14,768.05, which equated to 1.5 times the precept amount which is the recommended reserve for parish councils.

The parish council continues to hold three bank accounts, of which £9403.78 is in current accounts and the remaining £6402.27 in the National Savings accounts. At the year-end there were unrepresented cheques of £1038.00.

Bank reconciliation 31/3/2019		£
Lloyds Treasurer, account number ending 5213		7,627.42
Lloyds Bus. Inst. Access, account number ending 1138		1,776.36
NS&I Savings, account number ending 2438		6,402.27
Cash at bank as at 31 March 2019		15,806.05
<i>less unrepresented cheques; see listed below*</i>		1,038.00
add uncleared lodgements		-
Net bank balances as at 31 March 2019		14,768.05

* Unrepresented cheques		Chq no.	£
Cholesbury St Leonards	Hire of Hall Jan to Mar 2019	1080	26.00
BALC Membership	Annual Fee	1079	160.63
Cholesbury Village Hall	Hire of Hall Jan to Mar 2019	1084	18.00
Chiltern Society	Annual Fee	1081	30.00
Castle Water	Feb to March Allotments	1082	3.37
St Leonards Parish Hall	Grant for Hall	1085	800.00
			1,038.00

The net balances reconcile to the cashbook for the year, as follows:-		£
Opening cashbook balance		19,419.98
Add: receipts in the year		12,524.69
Less: payments in the year		(17,176.62)
Closing balance per cash book as at 31 March 2019		14,768.05

Annual Parish Meeting – Tuesday 28th May 2019 Report from Nick Rose District Councillor

The most important thing is for residents to be aware of is that at long last CDC the new **Joint Local Plan** (with South Bucks District Council) was debated at Council last week and it was agreed that the plan should now go out for Public Consultation. It will be published on the 6th June and the consultation will last 6 weeks. Anyone can comment, Parish Councils and any Member if the Public is welcome to submit comments which will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate during the summer. The next stage will be “Examination in Public” at a hearing which we hope will be towards the end of this year, will be presided over by a Planning Inspector. Thereafter timing is a little uncertain but we hope very much that the process can be completed, and the plan adopted, before the Unitary Council comes into being in April.

The process of setting up the new **Unitary Council** has now started, with the new Council in “Shadow” mode and indeed I shall be attending a meeting next Monday. The new Council will be determined based on the current Bucks County Council Divisions and in this ward, Chiltern Ridges there will be 3 places.

Work is continuing on the new **Amersham pool and centre** and the proposed design will almost certainly be on the Agenda for the Council’s next Planning Committee on 10th June. Last time the Committee Members had reservations about the parking provision and the appearance of the rear elevations. I am hoping that both issues will be resolved. We are however, still a long way from a decision to proceed as Members have yet to scrutinise the business case in detail.

Another topic which I know will be of local interest is the status of the **Planning Application for the Rose and Crown** in Hawridge, PL/18/4413/FA. Originally this should have been debated at the Planning Committee meeting on the 23rd May but because of the Euro Elections had to be delayed to the meeting on 27th June when any Member of the Public may attend.

District Cllr. Nick Rose