

# Chesham Bois Parish Council

## Minutes of the Council Meeting held remotely at 8.00pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020

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**PRESENT:** Cllr C Woolveridge (Chairman), Cllr J Bailey, Cllr D Buckingham, Cllr D Conway Read, Cllr J Harbottle, Cllr R Harrison, Cllr R Hartley, Cllr R Heath, Cllr J Large & Cllr C Thomas.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs S Payne (Clerk) and 1 Member of the Public.

- 57.1 Questions and Comments from the Public.** A member of public was interested in the detail behind the proposed lighting of the War Memorial. It was noted that this issue was to be discussed under agenda item 57.10.
- 57.2 Apologies for Absence.** Noted from Cllr D King.
- 57.3 To Receive Declarations of Interest or Dispensations Relating to this Meeting.**  
Cllr Thomas declared an interest in agenda item 57.14e, as members of his family are volunteers with the charity seeking a grant.
- 57.4 To Approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020.**  
The minutes were approved unopposed and will be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity. **Action: Clerk**
- 57.5 To Review and Adopt the Updated Financial Regulations.**  
**It was resolved to adopt the updated Financial Regulations.** **Action: Clerk**
- 57.6 To Review the Grant Awarding Policy.**  
The Grant Awarding Policy was reviewed. **It was resolved that the Grant Awarding Policy did not require amending and was approved in its present form.** **Action: Clerk**
- 57.7 To Review Outstanding Actions.**  
Council reviewed outstanding actions. An updated list will be circulated to Council. **Action: Clerk**
- 57.8 To Review Progress Against the 2020/2021 Action Plan.**  
Council reviewed progress. The updated Action Plan will be circulated to Council and uploaded to the website. **Action: Clerk**
- 57.9 To Note the Completion of the Clerk's Annual Review and Agree the Clerk's Priorities for 2021/22.**  
Council noted the completion of the Clerk's Annual Review. A number of the Clerk's 2020/21 priorities will be brought forward as they have been delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions. **It was resolved that the Clerk's priorities for the year to April 2022 are (i) the digital mapping of the burial ground, (ii) the Village Fete, (iii) local elections and (iv) the implementation of the following policies: Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity and Communications.** **Action: Clerk**
- 57.10 To Resolve to Provide Power & Lighting to the War Memorial at an Estimated Cost of £5,200.**  
**It was resolved that due to the late submission of documentation and insufficient details on the works proposed for the provision of power and lighting to the War Memorial, this agenda item would be deferred to the next Council meeting.** **Action: Transport WG/Clerk**
- 57.11 To Resolve to Refurbish the Pond at an Estimated Cost of £30,000.**  
Council agreed that there was a need to put aside reserves to build up a fund for refurbishing the pond which is expected to cost in the region of £30,000. **It was resolved that the pond would be refurbished at an estimated cost of £30,000 and reserves will be set aside for this activity.** **Action: CWBGM WG/Clerk**

**57.12 To Resolve to host an Open-Air Theatre Event on the Common at an Estimated Cost of £2,000.**

**It was resolved to hold an open-air theatre event on the Common next summer at an estimated cost of £2000 on the condition that any commitment with a contractor is subject to the ability to defer the event, at no loss of funds, to the following year if it has to be cancelled due to Covid19 restrictions.**

**Action: VC WG**

**57.13 To Receive the Clerk's Report.**

- a) The 2021 Council and Committee dates were noted. The proposed event dates were agreed with the addition of the Beautiful Burial Grounds wildflower session on 15<sup>th</sup> June. The dates will be displayed on the noticeboards and uploaded to the website. **Action: Clerk**
- b) It was noted that the Clerk would be on leave and the Council office closed from 22<sup>nd</sup> December until 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021. The Clerk agreed to divert calls to her home so that any emergencies and burials can be dealt with. **Action: Clerk**

**57.14 Finance.**

- a) The financial reports and analysis for November 2020 were noted.
- b) The following payments were approved:

Payments	NET	VAT	Amount	Description
Amersham Business Services	£32.70	£6.54	£39.24	Stationery: Papers/lamination pouches
Buckland Landscapes Ltd	£969.62	£193.92	£1,163.54	Nov 20 Grounds Maintenance
Cllr Buckingham	£240.00	£0.00	£240.00	Christmas Tree.
Chesham Town Council	£1,034.00	£206.80	£1,240.80	Oct/Nov 20 Verge Cutting/Footpath strimming
Chesham Town Council	£745.00	£149.00	£894.00	Amersham Rd Path Clearing/Fly-tipping Removal
Clearwater Pond & Lake Mgmt.	£495.00	£99.00	£594.00	Nov 20 Pond Maintenance Visit
DCK Accounting Solutions	£50.00	£10.00	£60.00	Nov & Dec 20 Payroll Administration
Holmes & Hills LLP	£850.00	£170.00	£1,020.00	Legal Services for potential Judicial Review
HMRC	£1,473.25	£0.00	£1,473.25	HMRC Q3 payment
Mrs S Payne	£54.59	£0.00	£54.59	Nov/Dec 20 Zoom Subs/Stamps/Poster Software
SSE	£222.93	£11.14	£234.07	BG Electricity Actual Reading at 16 Nov 20
SparkX	£470.00	£94.00	£564.00	Christmas Lights: Store/install/replace 2 lights.
St Leonards Church	£83.70	£0.00	£83.70	Office Electricity July-Sept 20
Your Amersham	£117.00	£0.00	£117.00	BG advert in Nov 20 issue of Your Amersham
Your Chesham	£118.00	£0.00	£118.00	BG advert in Nov 20 issue of Your Chesham
SSE	£232.47	£46.47	£278.94	November 2020 Streetlight Electricity
Utility Warehouse	£41.85	£8.37	£50.22	Oct 20 Telephone/Broadband
Staff Salaries	£2,165.15	£0.00	£2,165.15	Dec 20 Payroll/Pension Contributions
			<b>£10,390.50</b>	

- c) *2021/2022 Budget:* The draft budget had been circulated to Council for consideration. It was noted that there was a potential burial ground business rate charge of £10,000 which has been added to the budget. Council agreed amendments to common maintenance, pond maintenance, Chiltern Society work and events. The provision for war memorial lighting was removed and £2000 was added for an open-air theatre event. With a 3.5% increase in the precept there was a £4,405.24 budget deficit. Council did not want to increase the precept further during the current economic conditions residents were encountering and agreed to cover any deficit from reserves. **It was resolved to approve the 2021/2022 budget with these amendments.**
- d) *2021/2022 Precept:* **It was resolved to set the precept at £86,577.94, an increase of 3.5%.** The Clerk was authorised to request this sum from the principal authority. **Action: Clerk**
- e) *Grant Application:* A grant application had been received from Restore Hope and was considered. **Council voted 8 – 0 not to approve the grant application. Cllr Bailey abstained, and Cllr Thomas had declared an interest and did not vote.** **Action: Clerk**

## 57.15 General Purposes – To Receive Reports from Working Groups

**a) Common, Woodlands and Burial Grounds Maintenance:** Cllr Thomas' report was noted.

- i. *Management Plan:* The Chiltern Society have carried out further clearing of debris in Bois Wood with one more session booked later in December. Replanting in Tenterden Spinney is complete. Year 2 tree work in the eastern section of the Common will commence this week with 52 trees scheduled to be felled. Some of the trees donated to the Council by a resident will be used to replace the felled trees.
- ii. *Common:* Work on the soakaway near South Road has been completed. The working group are considering a proposal to develop an outdoor learning environment in the western section of the Common.
- iii. *Pond:* One quote for the pond refurbishment has been received and others will be sought.
- iv. *Tenterden Spinney Play Trail:* The contractor has been delayed and will commence installation during December.
- v. *Burial Ground:* Cllr Thomas had met with one contractor and is in the process of contacting others to discuss specifications for the surfacing of the track in the New Formal Burial Ground. This is a critical project as plots are now being sold at the top of the burial ground.

**b) Environmental & Sustainability:** Cllr Conway Read's report was noted.

- i. *Repair Cafe:* The working group are investigating the possibility of starting a repair café in Chesham Bois.

**c) Parish Centre Redevelopment:** Cllr Woolveridge's report was noted

- i. *Proposal to Widen Access Splays Over Common Land:* Council had been circulated the application pack and a copy of the notification that a Commons Act 2006 Section 38 application had been made with the closing date for comments of 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021. In line with Council's decision at its 12 October 2020 meeting (minute 55.11ciii) Council would not consider requests until a Section 38 application had been approved.

**d) Village Community:** Cllr Bailey's report was noted

- i. *Open-air Summer Theatre:* An event will be held during the summer on the Common. The working group are contacting theatre groups for dates and quotes. **Action: VC WG**
- ii. *Long-stay Parking on North Road Layby:* It has been noted that the same car has been parked in the layby for a number of weeks and has not been moved. This layby forms part of the Common and therefore the Common's bylaws apply. It was agreed that the Clerk will contact the owner and inform them that they are parked on Common Land and need to remove their vehicle. Should this not succeed legal advice will be sought. The Clerk will seek quotes for a sign that states that the layby forms part of the Common and that there is no overnight parking and that engines should be turned off. **Action: Clerk**

**e) Burial Ground Management:** Cllr Large's report was noted.

- i. *Burial Ground Administration:* The Clerk has completed working through the identified anomalies.
- ii. *Improving the Site Amenities:* A quote to remodel the entrance area has been received and another is being sought. There is also a requirement to replace the diseased box hedging in the Garden of Remembrance. The working group are awaiting the results of the Royal Horticultural Society's trial on the best slow-growing and robust hedge plants before deciding on which species to use for the hedging and taking forward the appropriate works.
- iii. *Burial Ground Events:* The working group plan to hold another Open Day as part of the 2021 National Heritage Festival.

**f) Transport:** It was noted that the Chair's report had not been received in time to be considered and will be deferred to the next Council meeting. **Action: Transport WG/Clerk**

## 57.16 Planning Committee

- a) The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were noted.

The meeting closed at 10.15pm