

Chesham Bois Parish Council

Minutes of the Council Meeting held remotely at 8.00pm on Monday 12th April 2021

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs S Payne (Clerk), Bucks Cllr Graham Harris, Mr T Dennison a representative from Meeting Place Communications and 1 Member of the Public.

The Chairman opened the meeting with a one-minute silence to remember HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, who died on 9 April 2021.

62.1 Questions and Comments from the Public.

Bucks Cllr Harris reported that there had been an error in the administration of the repair to the Bois Lane railings. Only the damaged section should have been replaced rather than the entire railings. TfB did not understand the historical connection the railings had with residents. The new railings are not yet finished, and Cllr Harris has requested that the work be completed promptly.

The Amersham Road VAS Road match funded by the Amersham Community Board has still to be installed and Cllr Harris will contact TfB to find the reason why the work has not been carried out since it was authorised in November 2020.

62.2 Presentation by Meeting Place Communications (MPC) on Aldi's Proposals to Build a Food Store on London Road West, Old Amersham

The representative from MPC apologised to Council as they would not be able to present the proposals at this meeting and will email Council the presentation. It was agreed that councillors would email MPC with any questions they may have regarding the proposals. **Action: All**

62.3 Apologies for Absence.

Noted from Cllr J Harbottle.

62.4 To Receive Declarations of Interest or Dispensations Relating to this Meeting.

Cllr J Large declared an interest in agenda item 62.10ciii as a member of her family is a member of the theatre company.

62.5 To Approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8th March 2021.

The minutes were approved unanimously and will be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity. **Action: Clerk**

62.6 To Consider Potential Speakers for the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was agreed that speakers would not be invited to give a talk at this meeting.

8.25pm Mr Dennison left the meeting.

62.7 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**

62.8 To Receive the Clerk's Report.

- a) *Parish Council Elections: Thursday 6th May 2021:* It was noted that there are 13 candidates for the 11 seats on Council.
- b) *Burial Ground Non-Domestic Rates Appeal:* Council considered the two quotes received from rating surveyors. **It was resolved to appoint DWD LLP as Council's agents in the rating appeal process. DWD fee would be 20% of any savings and had a no win no fee policy.** **Action: Clerk**

- c) *Burial Ground & Office Non-Domestic Rates Payments:* It was noted that since the addition of the burial ground to the rating list Council are not able to claim small business rates relief for the office and have therefore received invoices totalling £5,416.30 for the period 2017 to 2019. Bucks Council have agreed that these backdated charges together with the backdated charges for the burial ground for the same period totalling £37,000.75 can be paid over two years commencing 1st April 2021.
- d) *Remote Council Meetings Update:* It was noted that there was a claim being brought by lawyers in local government over the ability of councils in England to hold remote meetings. The case will be heard by the High Court on 21st April 2021. Should the claim be unsuccessful a meeting room has been provisionally booked for the Council meeting on 17th May at the Kings Church in Amersham. A risk assessment for face-to-face meetings is being drafted. **Action: Clerk**

62.9 Finance.

- a) The financial reports and analysis for March 2021 were noted. It was agreed that funds be vired from other cost centres to cover the 2020/21 non-domestic rates for the burial ground and office. **Action: Clerk**
- b) The 2021/2022 non-domestic rates charges for the burial ground totalling £12,849.25 and the office totalling 2,644.70 are to be paid by direct debit during the year. **It was resolved that the 2017-2019 backdated non-domestic rates for the burial ground and office will be paid by direct debit over two years from General Reserves. The 2021/22 rates will be paid by direct debit over the current financial year as a 2021/22 budget item.** **Action: Clerk**
- c) **It was resolved to approve the Asset Register as at 31st March 2021.** **Action: Clerk**
- d) The following payments were approved:

Payments	NET	VAT	Amount	Description
Amersham Business Services	£41.00	£8.20	£49.20	Plan printing
Buckinghamshire Council	£268.70	£0.00	£268.70	April 21 instalment of 21/22 Office Rates
Buckinghamshire Council	£1,284.25	£0.00	£1,284.25	April 21 instalment of 21/22 Burial Ground Rates
Buckinghamshire Council	£2,644.70	£0.00	£2,644.70	2020/21 Office Rates *
Buckinghamshire Council	£12,849.25	£0.00	£12,849.25	2020/21 Burial Ground Rates **
BMKALC	£60.00	£0.00	£60.00	Data Protection Training: Clerk/Cllr Conway Read
Buckland Landscapes	£969.62	£193.92	£1,163.54	March 21 Grounds Maintenance
Chesham Town Council	£517.00	£103.40	£620.40	March 21 Verge Cutting/Footpath strimming
Clearwater Pond & Lake Mgmt	£620.00	£124.00	£744.00	March 21 Pond maintenance & aquatic chalk treatment
DCK Beavers	£25.00	£5.00	£30.00	20/21 Year End Payroll Administration
More to Life	£237.50	£0.00	£237.50	BG advert in Farewells digital magazine Issue 5
Mrs S Payne	£14.39	£0.00	£14.39	April 21 Zoom Software
Printerland.co.uk	£209.85	£41.97	£251.82	Printer Black & Yellow Toner
SLCC	£45.00	£9.00	£54.00	Clerk attendance at Virtual Regional Training Seminar
South Bucks Tree Surgeons	£320.00	£64.00	£384.00	Emergency Treework - South Road
SSE	£48.76	£2.43	£51.19	Chapel Electricity 20/21 Q4
SSE	£262.85	£50.37	£313.22	Streetlight Electricity March 21
UK Safety Management	£136.59	£27.32	£163.91	PAT Testing of electrical items.
Utility Warehouse	£37.11	£7.42	£44.53	Feb 21 Telephone/ Broadband
Your Amersham	£117.00	£0.00	£117.00	BG Advert in Your Amersham March 21
Your Chesham	£118.00	£0.00	£118.00	BG Advert in Your Chesham March 21
Payroll	£2,504.70		£2,504.70	April 21 Payroll
			£23,968.30	

62.10 General Purposes – To Receive Reports from Working Groups

- a) *Common, Woodlands and Burial Grounds Maintenance:* Cllr Thomas' report was noted.
- i. *Memorial Bench Policy:* the draft policy was considered. **It was resolved to adopt the Memorial Bench Policy with the following amendments: (a) Council will arrange installation (b) Council will maintain the benches and (c) a fee of £100 will be added to cover future maintenance costs.** **Action: Clerk**

- ii. *Burial Ground Maintenance:* A path will be defined initially by wood chippings between the top of the new formal burial ground through to the bench at the top of the woodland burial ground. The current path cuts across graves; the new path will avoid plots and signage will ask walkers to respect graves and keep to the path. **Action: Clerk**

- iii. *Heatherton School Proposal for an Outdoor Learning Environment on the Common:* A legal advisor has been selected to draw up a licence agreement and the cost will be met by Heatherton School. A site visit is to take place on 23rd April with the landscape contractors to look at the design proposals in more detail. **Action: Cllr C Thomas**

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

- i. *Improving the Site Amenities:* An application for match funding towards the Burial Ground Entrance Area project has been submitted to the Amersham Community Board for consideration.
- ii. *Burial Ground Administration:* It was noted that the burial ground database has been fully audited by the Clerk, all entries have been checked against interment paperwork, burial registers, grave purchase registers and the grave book.
The first draft of the digital map has been received and the working group have considered the strategic issues raised by the maps, the siting of memorial benches and the route of minor paths across the site.
- iii. *Woodland Burial Ground Grid Spikes:* The digital map for the woodland burial ground includes a grid reference, underpinned by physical grid markers which are sunk into the ground at regular intervals to support the marking of plots. Three quotes had been received to supply the stakes. **It was resolved to approve the purchase of 62 grid spikes for the woodland burial ground at a cost of £320 from Burial Ground Reserves.** **Action: Clerk**
- iv. *Time Capsule:* The existence of a time capsule, buried in the Chapel entrance, containing memorabilia dated from the Parish Council's centenary in 1994 was noted.

c) Village Community: Cllr Bailey's report was noted.

- i. Council considered if the planned litter pick on 17th April should be cancelled as it is scheduled to take place on the same day as the HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh's funeral. Given the litter pick is taking place in the morning and the funeral in the afternoon and the litter pick is an environmental activity, it was agreed that the litter pick would go ahead.
- ii. *Performance of Macbeth on the Common:* Council considered holding the event on Saturday 5th June 2021. The theatre group have agreed should the event be cancelled due to future covid restrictions all receipts will be refunded. Residents will be asked to bring their own refreshments and seating. **It was resolved to hold a performance of Macbeth on the Common on Saturday 5th June 2021.** **Action VC WG**
- iii. *Theatre Workshop:* The legal and safeguarding requirements for unaccompanied KS2 aged children have been investigated. Given the age group and the nature of the theatre workshop this activity is exempt from any requirements to be registered with OFSTED and therefore there are no specific legal or safeguarding requirements. The associated Code of Practice suggests that all adults involved in the activity have some basic safeguarding training, the approximate costs for an online course is £20 per person, with one councillor taking on the additional training as a designated Safeguarding lead. Council's insurers have requested that a safeguarding policy be adopted, a risk assessment undertaken, references be taken for all volunteers and consideration given to the need for DBS checks. Council agreed to these procedures.

Council considered the draft Safeguarding Policy. It was agreed that the final bullet point in section 5 will be amended to read 'the facilities offered by the Parish Council will be inspected on a regular basis. **It was resolved to adopt the Safeguarding Policy with the amendment to the final bullet point in section 5.** **Action: Clerk**

- iv. *Beating the Bounds (9 May 2021)*: Council agreed that, given the current Covid19 restrictions, the Beating the Bounds event should be rescheduled. An alternative date will be considered at the next meeting of Council. **Action: Clerk**

d) Environment & Sustainability: Cllr Conway Read's report was noted.

- i. *Protect & Enhance Biodiversity*: Quotes have been obtained for the signs which will inform residents of the changes to the mowing regime and the signs will be ordered. **Action: ES WG**
- ii. *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle*: Sustainable Chesham are planning to run a repair cafe in at the end of May or early June.

e) Transport: Cllr King's report was noted.

- i. *Streetlights*: A new LED tray has been ordered for the streetlight on the junction of Green Lane and Long Park. The leaning streetlight in Deep Acres is due to be straightened this week.
- ii. **It was resolved that a weed control application to all footpaths be arranged at a cost of £830 from Devolved Services Reserves.** **Action: Clerk**

62.11 Planning Committee

- a) The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 22nd February and 8th March 2021 were noted.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm