

Chaddleworth Parish Council

Clerk to the Council: Mrs Kim Lloyd
07867 310121
clerk@chaddleworth.net

MINUTES

TUESDAY 5th NOVEMBER 2019 – 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr. Murphy (Chair), Cllr. Ballard, Cllr. Mcallister, Cllr. Homersham, Cllr. Beard and Cllr. Mills.

Clerk: Mrs K Lloyd.

1 Member of the Public.

1. **APOLOGIES RECEIVED**

No apologies received.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON AGENDA ITEMS.**

No declarations of interest received.

3. **NOMINATIONS FOR A VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Cllr. Mills proposed Cllr. Ballard and Cllr. Homersham seconded. Cllr. Ballard agreed to be Vice-Chair. The Acceptance of Office was signed and the Clerk witnessed.

4. **OPEN FORUM - un minuted**

Norris Lane pot holes were raised by one member of the public, Cllr. Murphy said this will be discussed under item 7.

A concern was raised regarding a brick wall possibly hindering a driver's view when pulling out of a junction. Cllr. Beard said he would speak to the owner of the house.

A vehicle leaking oil was also reported, the Clerk was asked to contact Highways.

ACTION: Cllr. Beard/Clerk.

5. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.**

The Members of Council viewed the planning application for **19/02393/HOUSE** 25 Nodmore.

A single and two storey extensions with internal alterations including new first floor window.

<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=19/02393/HOUSE>.

It was agreed to neither support nor object this application as the Parish Council had received some concerns from close neighbours, but no members of public attended the Parish Council meeting. It was agreed to send 'comments only' to the planners at West Berkshire Council (WBC). The Parish Council asked the Clerk to inform WBC to assure that the three car park spaces are completed before any building work commences on the building itself. Nodmore is a very congested street for parking and understand that the work will take some time to complete. The street cannot lose further car park spaces for skips while the work is being done. With this in mind the three car park spaces could accommodate skips/work vans/ cars, which will help to reduce congesting the street. The question of the tree which is on the shared access was also raised as a matter for consideration by WBC before the work is started.

To note an email for additional support sent to West Berkshire Council for 19/01701/FUL Conversion of the Coach House at the Vicarage, Main Street, Chaddleworth.

6. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.**

Members **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** to confirm and adopt the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1 October 2019.

7. **NORRIS LANE POT HOLES UPDATE**

Following the last meeting Cllr. Murphy reported the ROW officer would be visiting the road in Norris Lane. Cllr. Murphy found data from 2014 that read that West Berkshire Council (WBC) had a duty of care to ensure 'ALL' roads were safe and suitable for public users, and not just the roads owned by WBC.

Cllr. Murphy had emailed pictures to Elaine Cox ROW Officer at WBC and reminded Mrs Cox that WBC were kind enough to remedy some deep pot holes at Cross Pits Cottage adjacent to Sheephouse Way and asked that they afford a similar service to the residents/walkers who use Norris Lane. A response from Mrs Cox was that they do have a duty of care for pedestrians, as this is a footpath but have no obligation to provide a surface suitable for vehicles, or any other class of use. Mrs Cox assumed the potholes have been caused by private vehicular access, and asked if the Parish Council could arrange for a contribution for the upkeep of the footpath in view of this wear and tear which is not caused by public use. WBC usual approach in such circumstances is to request that the residents who benefit from this private access arrange for appropriate maintenance to take place.

The member of public asked if the Parish Council would support a meeting including all the parties involved to try and find a solution, with winter approaching there is concern to the residents of the condition of this road. Cllr Ballard raised the question to the member of public to contact a solicitor to read the property deeds to find out the legal status and find out if anything further can be done. The member of public was asked to forward the name of a contact at Sovereign to the Clerk.

8. **SID UPDATE /SPEEDING IN NORRIS FIELD**

No further update, Cllr. Mcallister is still waiting to hear back from WBC on the timescale of borrowing the Speed Indicator Device.

ACTION: Cllr. Mcallister

9. **GMG SERVICE AGREEMENT SCHEDULED VISITS**

The Clerk reported the contractors had gone over the service agreement of scheduled visits which also did happen last year. Last year it was agreed they would contact the Clerk if this happened again. The Clerk noted an increase in the invoices for Sept/Oct and emailed GMG.

GMG said the grass growing season has long changed and on some sites they are cutting twice in November. The football pitch & areas where children play, the grass would have been extremely long had they not cut twice in September & October. The Clerk proposed the visits were increased for the budget but then reminded Council the two year contract expires on 6th November 2019. With this in mind the Members of Council asked the Clerk to contact further contractors for quotes. The budget for grass cutting will be increased for 2020-21.

The Clerk was asked to get a quote from GMG for the War Memorial Garden hedge that is encroaching on the garden's footpath.

ACTION: Clerk

10. **BUDGET 2020-21 AND TO SET THE PRECEPT**

The Clerk had previously emailed Members of Council the Budget and Cashflow.

From April 2020, the Clerks salary was agreed to go up one point to point 30 (**NOTE.** New SCP scale is now Point 24) on the National Society of Local Council pay scale.

The Clerk added 'Councillor Expenses' and 'Councillor Travel Expenses' as a new forecasted expenditure to the 2020/21 budget. (I.e. for travelling/parking to District Council meetings/ training sessions/ phone calls/ printing/postage) The Clerk said some of her other Parish Councillors she worked for claimed expenses and that Chaddleworth Parish Councillors had never claimed anything.

Three Members of Council said they would not claim expenses and would continue not claiming any expenses. One Member of the Council felt this may put off other Councillors from joining the Parish Council. The Clerk said Cllr. Murphy often must spend his own money on Parish Council business and the Clerk felt he should claim, but Cllr. Murphy kindly declined.

£250.00 was then budgeted for 'Councillor Training Expenses'.

The 'Donation/Contribution/Grants' item was agreed to include a £250 towards the Newbury Library and Handybus donation was increased from £100.00 to £150.00.

The 'Newsletter' printing costs item was increased by £100 now a total of £1,300.00.

The 'Playground New Equipment' item was funded for £1,000.00 (£1,000.00 will be transferred into the Reserve Account once the funds are moved from Barclays to the Metro, see Agenda tem 14)

The 'Playground Repairs and Maintenance' item was reduced to £500.00.

The 'War Memorial' item was agreed at £600.00.

The Total Budget for 2020/21 is £20,058.50 this figure included adding a 10% Contingency.

The Cashflow spreadsheet showed a balance of £15,775 on 31/03/2020 of ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE.

It was agreed to set the Precept in our December or January meeting when the tax base rate is known from West Berkshire Council. The Clerk reminded Members of Council the deadline for the submission of the Precept is 31/01/2020.

11. **OVERHANGING TREES NEXT TO THE SCHOOL**

No further update.

Cllr. Mcallister reported the Sign at the bottom of School Hill had a lot of overgrowth, Cllr. Mcallister said he would cut back the overgrowth. Cllr. Murphy thanked Cllr. Mcallister.

ACTION: Cllr. Mcallister.

12. **DETRITUS LEFT IN SKITTLE ALLEY UPDATE**

Following the September Parish Council meeting Cllr. Murphy reported detritus had been left in skittle alley by a SSE worker. After numerous attempts emailing SSE, a worker from SSE then visited and raked out the detritus to make it appear less obtrusive.

Cllr. Murphy asked the Members of Council if they would like Cllr. Murphy to continue pursuing this matter with SSE to ask them to remove 'ALL' of the Detritus. All agreed. **ACTION: Cllr. Murphy**

13. **FINANCE**

a) Bank Accounts

Balances on 7 October 2019

Parish Council	£21,129.34
Bakers Trust	£5,628.21
Football Field	£1,261.71

b) Payments to be approved in the meeting.

S/O	Kim Lloyd (Parish Clerk) 25 NOV 2019	£429.78
S/O	Mrs H Anderson (Litter picking) 25 th NOV 2019	£20.00
S/O	Chaddleworth Village Hall 25 th NOV 2019	£23.00
100572	GMG Services & Solutions (Sept)	£170.00
100573	Vale Press – Newsletter Printing	£85.00
100574	Mrs K Lloyd (Clerk) stamps.	£7.32

14. METRO SWITCH AGREEMENT SIGNATORY

The Clerk passed Cllr's. Murphy and Ballard a Switch Agreement form given to the Clerk from Metro Bank to authorise the Metro to transfer all funds from the three accounts from Barclays to the Metro.

15. STANDING ORDERS COMPLIANCE

Cllr. Beard did a compliance assessment on the Standing Orders as agreed following the last Parish Council meeting. Cllr. Beard emailed a Compliance Report, (a copy of which shown as Appendix 1) Cllr. Beard also emailed a spreadsheet with his comments against the current data shown in the Standing Orders. The outcome Cllr. Beard determined were 47% of standing orders were in compliance, 15% were not and he was uncertain of 45%.

The Clerk said as the email was only circulated on the evening of 4/11, no one had time to review the content. The Clerk proposed she would review the comments made and add comments, then this would be circulated to the all Members of Council for their comments.

ACTION: Clerk.

16. WEST BERKSHIRE CLIMATE CONFERENCE

Cllr. Beard had attended the Conference and emailed a report to the Members of Council shown as a copy in Appendix 2. Cllr. Ballard asked for the item to be on the December agenda for further discussion.

17. THE IBEX

Following the recent news of the Ibex's current tenants giving their notice. Cllr. Murphy asked the Members of Council their thoughts on the Ibex, and if anything could be done to help. It was noted the current tenants were leaving in March and there had been some interest in the Pub from prospective new tenants. Mr Castle (owner of the Ibex) is advertising the Ibex at a low rent, and hoped this would encourage more interest. Cllr. Murphy said it would be a great loss to the community if no one takes it over. Considering the amount of time the Parish Council spent to help save the pub on attending planning meetings and the money outlay on the Ibex signage, it would be very upsetting to then lose the pub.

18. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS AND REPORTS /UPDATES ON PREVIOUS MEETING ACTIONS

Cllr Murphy attended the District Parish Conference on 11th October. Cllr. Murphy said our District Councillor Clive Hooker who attended the conference was disappointed that there was not a big turnout from the Downland Ward Councillors. The conference speakers gave talks on Brexit and winter preparations and a talk on how to look out for vulnerable people in the community.

Cllr. Mcallister reported the Stile at Chapel Cottage was still in a dilapidated state after attempts had been made to the owner to rectify it, with the offer of help to repair it from the Parish Council. There was no option left but to contact West Berkshire Council as the stile had become a dangerous hazard to anyone who may use it.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr. Beard had no further reports on the Community-Led Housing at this stage but will produce a report once he had researched further.

Cllr. Ballard reported the Village Hall had now raised £16,166 which was 57% of the target of £27,194. This had been raised through donations and grants; this is then match-funded through the Good Exchange. The funds are desperately needed to repair the leaking roof.

If you would like to donate to save your village hall please use the link below.

<https://app.thegoodexchange.com/project/15982/chaddleworth-village-hall/chaddleworth-village-hall-roof-fund>

19. CLERK CORRESPONDENCE/ UPDATES ON PREVIOUS MEETING ACTIONS

The Clerk reported a response was received from SSE and someone would be coming out to look at the overgrown trees in Main Street. The Clerk was asked to provide pictures of the trees in question to SSE. Cllr. Murphy said he would take pictures and email the Clerk.

ACTION: Cllr. Murphy /Clerk.

20. MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION.

Norris Lane Potholes update

Climate Change discussion

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS.

The date of the next Parish Council meeting is on Tuesday 3rd December 2019.

No date for the 'Fuel Allotment/Poor's Land Trust (FAPL) was confirmed.

Close -10.30pm

APPENDIX 1 -Chaddleworth Parish Council – Standing Orders compliance

Report to the Chaddleworth Parish Council

Background

During a couple of meetings during the summer one parish councillor became concerned that some of the standing orders agreed by the AGM in May 2019 were not being complied with. A particular instance was in relation to a planning application that was received at a time when it was unlikely that the council would meet during the period of determination by West Berkshire Council. The clerk, or proper officer, acting in good faith and in accordance with custom and practice had applied to West Berkshire Council when the standing order implies the chair should call an Extraordinary Meeting.

Compliance

As a new member of the parish council I have considered each of the standing orders and tried to allocate three judgements. Compliant where I have observed compliance or have good reason to think compliance is observed. Non-compliant where I have observed circumstances where compliance is not clear in either the spirit of the letter of the order. Finally unsure where I have no way of knowing whether compliance or non-compliance exists.

Many of the orders are very formal and it may be that it is expedient in not applying the letter. However it should be the case that the orders are clear. Otherwise who is to decide at any point where an SO applies or does not apply? The Chair has the authority to misapply the orders.

Outcome.

I determined that of the order 47% of S/O was in compliance, 15% were not and 45% there was uncertainty.

A spreadsheet has been supplied with the data.

Matters of particular note.

Most of the procedures about calling the meetings and the administration appear in compliance. It is not clear however whether it is considered that motions are proposed seconded debated amended and carried. If agenda items are motions then they should be supported in writing. It is not clear that an email constitutes a formal motion or not. Some agenda items are just for information. It would be convenient if it was made clear whether a motion is being made or not.

The activities surrounding planning applications need review. This is particularly in the case where an application's determination date is not convenient for an ordinary meeting.

It is not clear what the status of the code of conduct is. It was not part of the package of matters agreed during the AGM.

Conclusion.

The standing orders are very formal and appear more suited to much larger councils dealing with very different matters. We should develop a clearer understanding of what the orders mean, whether they require deletion or amendment and be clearer whether the chair is applying them in any particular meeting.

W. Gareth Beard 04-11-19

APPENDIX 2 -West Berkshire Climate Conference

Report to the /Chaddleworth Parish Council

Background

West Berkshire Council declared a climate emergency in June 2019. They claimed that West Berkshire's climate change strategy would be published in September; it now appears to be in November 2019.

The purpose of the first climate change conference was to enable discussion on what could or should be done in the council area to respond to this emergency.

The conference.

There were a number of keynote speakers including Richard Benyon MP, Tom Heap BBC Journalist. Most sessions were presentations with a Question and Answer Panel involving a number of environmental organisations including Friends of the Earth, Natural England.

Outcome.

Given the urgency being afforded the context of climate change there did not appear to be a sense of urgency. The bottom line is that West Berks in taking its part in the climate change picture in simple terms we need to burn less stuff. This means using energy efficiently, encouraging the switch to low carbon energy sources and improving the sequestration of carbon in the atmosphere by, for example planting more trees.

What should Chaddleworth Parish Council do.

We probably need to discuss the issue of climate change; whether we believe it is a problem for the CPC to participate.

Perhaps arrange our own climate change conference in the village hall and see what the parish would like to see happen.

Perhaps we should await West Berks Council's view. Councillor Hooker attended the conference so perhaps a discussion with him would be helpful.

Equally there is currently General Election and whoever forms the next government will have made a number of pledges on this topic and we should understand these.

My own view

We should try and help people understand what more they can do with their own properties and offers to pay for energy assessments (e.g. EPC) for parishioners through the Bakers trust. This could save money with different levels of investment.

Encourage the uptake of electric and hydrogen vehicles.

Encourage the conversion of oil/lpg heated properties to air source heat pumps, or

Encourage the uptake of photovoltaic self-generation schemes.

Identify any local land with landowners that might be replanted as woods.

W. Gareth Beard

04-11-19