



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AS HELD ON MONDAY MAY 22ND 2023 AT 7.30PM AT THE PAVILION, FRIENDLESS LANE

Number: 2/2023

Present: Cllrs Tim Parsons, Cllr Dave Humphreys, Jane Timmis, John Williams, Natalie Crowie

Also present: Caroline Freer – Clerk; County Cllr Terry Douris; Borough Cllr Ed Barradell

1. **Election of Chairman** and receive the Chairman’s Declaration of Acceptance of Office: Cllr Crowie proposed Tim Parsons to be Chairman, seconded by Cllr Humphreys - agreed by all
2. **Election of Vice Chairman** and receive the Vice Chairman’s Declaration of Acceptance of Office: Cllr Timmis proposed Cllr Humphreys as Vice Chairman, seconded by Cllr Williams, all agreed.
3. **To receive and approve apologies:** Cllrs Boothman, (work) Pither (medical), Wild (no reason given).
4. **To receive declarations of interest on agenda items:** Cllr Humphreys for planning application on 15 High St
5. **Co-option of councillor update:** One councillor to start next month – one vacancy available John Williams and David Boothman are re co-opted following the election process. All agreed.
6. **To confirm that 2 Councillors Samantha Kent and Gary Poultney have stepped down**
7. **To resolve that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 2023 are a correct record.**
Proposed by: Cllr Parsons
Seconded by: Cllr Crowie

It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24 April 2023 having previously been circulated as a true and accurate record of the proceedings be duly signed by the Chairman. All agreed

8. **Public and press participation** (15 minutes maximum): Cllr Ed Barradell introduced himself as the newly elected Borough Councillor. Terry Douris was also re-elected as County Councillor as was Jane Timmis as Borough Councillor; congratulations to all.
9. **County Cllr Terry Douris to update the meeting:** Terry to have a meeting with Westmoreland re the truck stop improvements. 7.5 tonne limit for Trowley Hill Rd – no updates as yet. Public bus has been seen on River Hill – no explanation for this choice of road. Terry to chase for signage on A5183.
10. **To discuss and agree whether to support the Methodist Church for the replacement windows.** Current ones are in poor condition and need replacement. The PC is happy to donate to the window fund on the basis that the building is a village resource – but Jane Timmis will run a check with DBC to ascertain the church angle of the request.
11. **Planning:**

i) To consider new Applications:

1	23/00977/FUL Barn At The End 5 Cotton Spring View	Construction of new timber framed stable block	No objections
2	23/01120/FHA and 23/01121/LBC 15 High Street	Proposed two storey rear extension and replacement outbuilding	The PC objects to this application for the following reasons: It is extremely close to the adjacent property (no. 13 High St) and there is a flying freehold

			<p>which is not noted in the plans. The upstairs window next to the proposed extension belongs to no. 13 and the window below to the applicant. The extension is right on the boundary and does not give the 45 degree angle of splay from the upstairs window which will impact on the right to light as well as being very intrusive.</p> <p>An extension of this size will impact considerably on no. 13 as it will partially obscure the view of the garden from the upstairs window. Furthermore it will not be possible to build this extension without doing so from the garden of no. 13.</p> <p>The dwelling is listed and in the conservation of the village and the PC is surprised that it hasn't been to pre application planning to ascertain what is acceptable.</p> <p>This is already a fairly congested area in the conservation area and the replacement garage does represent an increase in mass and reduce the number of parking spaces. There are currently 3 parking spaces on the site, not 5 as stated on the plans.</p> <p>The driveway is also the access driveway to no. 13 so this area cannot be used for parking.</p> <p>There is also concern that converting a garage into a separate unit opens up the possibility of it being used as a separate dwelling/Air bnb as has happened elsewhere on River Hill where conversions have been permitted. There is no spare capacity on the road for off street parking so this is a concern.</p>
3	23/01057/LDP Cheverells House	Change the off road driveway into the communal area of Cheverells House from gravel/shingle surface to conservation block paving	No objections
4	22/03152/FUL Acorn Lodge	Construction of four dwellings	<p>The PC objects for the same reasons as before. The PC would like to stress quite strongly the potential danger for anyone walking along the path (which currently does not exist and would be hard to maintain) to the bus stop or to the village.</p> <p>There are plans to redevelop the truck stop and alter the egress from Chequers Hill. This will involve relocating the entrance to the MV site to nearer the proposed development - so heavy vehicles will be entering here.</p> <p>It is very difficult and dangerous exiting from Chequers Hill on to the A5138 and it will be the same for those living in the proposed</p>

			development. Plus it is an additional exit point to hinder the traffic flow. Danger to pedestrians is of great concern.
5	23/01168/LBC and 23/01168/LBC Cheverells House	For an above ground swimming pool	The PC objects to this proposal as it is in the curtilage of a listed property. There is no information on how the pool will be maintained - ie where will the plant room be located. It is also not clear from the plans as to whether the pool in question is above ground or sunk into the ground. Two example photos were included in the application but as they are quite different - they cannot be commented on. There is implication that the pool will be at the level of the low wall in the garden, but this would be a sunken pool not an above ground pool as per the application description. Due to the lack of information and the fact that the house is listed and it would substantially impact of the outlook from the house, the PC will object.

ii) Planning applications received in last 6 days

1	23/01011/FHA The Farriers, River Hill	Conversion of garage to gym and office	The PC objects to this application - losing the garage parking space further reduces the parking provision on this site. The plans indicate that 4 cars can be parked on this site, but that is not considered possible. There is also a public footpath running along the access road so there is no capacity to park on this track nor on River Hill which is already congested. The PC has also been informed that this conversion has taken place without permission.
2		22/02341/FUL and 22/02341/FUL Proposal: Conversion of building to a single, two-bedroom dwelling with parking and amenity space Address: Twenty Acres Cottages	Defer

iii) Planning Decisions taken by DBC

Wood End grain yard, Village Hall Ramp, 2 Shepherds Yard, 4 Cotton Spring (decking etc) all granted

12 Working Groups:

Luton Airport update regarding the expansion plans; As Cllr Timmis cannot be a HAPTC representative for Luton Airport and be on the Airport Consultative Committee, so it was proposed by Tim Parsons that Natalie Crowie take on the role with the latter. Happily, Natalie agreed – many thanks for taking to take on this role.

This is particularly important due to the huge expansion plans that are being conceived. This would mean an increase to 32 million passengers per year, with the associated increase in infrastructure projects to meet that projection. The LADACAN website (<https://ladacan.org/>) gives clear information on plans and an easy explanation as to how to complain about planes flying off route/unacceptably noisy/at night (<https://ladacan.org/complaints/>). DBC/HCC and St Albans DC are also working together to provide opposition to the expansion plans. Interestingly enough, in order to maintain the carbon footprint limits there should be no aircraft expansion at all anywhere.

Pavilion – storage behind the garage for football gear; -the PC would be very happy to contribute to building a safe area for storage. **Action:** Dave Carter to provide plans/drawings.
Netting to protect pavilion from cricket balls when there are parties at the pavilion;
Action: Clerk to seek estimate for netting.

13 Discussion about the swimming pool at the village school:

First of all, Christy Lee wanted to announce how much money was made at the Coronation Party - £3655 in all. Thanks were given to the PC, Terry Douris for their direct support, plus other sponsors, The Swan Vesta Band, all the helpers and many volunteers.

Pool: Christy ran through the history of the pool which was built in the 1990s and the huge sentimental impact it has on so many villagers, many of whom were involved in its construction. Plans were drawn up in 2019 to have the space repurposed into a multi use area but the application was refused as it was deemed a community asset.

The FOFS want to make use of the space taken up by the pool area as it is currently unfit for any use at all, an eyesore and unsafe and no longer viable to be restored into a pool. Having such a dilapidated area of the school is very off putting for prospective parents when choosing a school for their child.

Following research and local enquiries, it is apparent that the cost of getting a pool up to standard would cost about £200,000 with a £60,000 annual running bill – which is not feasible.

In comparison it costs about £1000 pa to bus the children to Westminster Lodge in St Albans.

Chris Carson as Chairman of Governors at the school went on to explain the potential for that area such as a multi sensory space with race tracks, a library, music room, forest school with solar panels and wind turbine to teach about reusable energy which was part of the original application.

Since then an organisation called Pools for Schools has been set up: This company will install a pool – provide security, liability etc, the cost being about £2000 a week to run.

Having outlined the situation regarding the school pool, the FoFS will draw up plans for the future of this space and keep the PC informed.

14 Julian's bench to go in the churchyard; The PC agreed to pay for the installation.

15 Tree in Parsons Close update: will be felled as the crown is damaged

16 Warden: ask to tidy up the war memorial garden

17 Annual Audit Timetable: Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return) and Accounting Statements (Section 2 Accounting Statements of the Annual Return) to be approved at June 19th 2023 meeting following the Internal Audit prior to sending papers for the External Audit. Dates for the period for the exercise of public rights: 21 June to 2 August 2023

18 Finance: To consider receipts and payments reports from 25 April – 22 May as circulated - To authorise payments by BACS as itemised; to consider expenditure against budget report and to sign off bank reconciliations and bank statements to month end 30 April 2023.

Proposed by: Natalie Crowie

Seconded by: Tim Parsons

All agreed

- 19 Correspondence:** The FGA thanked the PC for the donation of £500 to help towards the cost of tree work at the allotment.

Carbon Literacy Course: no takers

20 Agreed action/By Whom

	Actions from May meeting	Results
Dave Carter	To provide drawings for storage area	
JT	Check viability of a grant for Methodist hall windows	
CF	To seek costings for netting	
	Actions from Mar Meeting	
JT	Fence in Fred's Alley	On going
JT	Check viability of a grant for Methodist hall windows	
	Actions from Jan Meeting	
TP	Speak to Highways re narrowing road on High St	
TP	Clarify how village is closed off for access when M1 is shut	
JT	Inform DBC re Linnins Pond path blockage	
	Planning Enforcement matters	
JT	Request updates on Enforcement Orders for: Shipping container in field on Friendless Lane – notice could be given Gates/barn – not enforced inappropriate gate for a wood yard. Stable at Wood End Farm – refused and has not been removed Newlands Wood Chalkdell Cottages – container in field and other earth works	On-going

Cllr Tim Parsons

Chairman

04 July 2023