

GREAT CHESTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GREAT CHESTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY DECEMBER 9th 2014 AT 7:45PM IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, GREAT CHESTERFORD

Present: Neil Gregory
Tom Newcombe
David Hall
Gareth Bevens
Sharon Tricerri

Julie Redfern
Simon Witney
Howard Rolfe

Alan Cattley – Clerk

Twelve members of the public.

14/192 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. Rowan.

14/193. Declaration of Interests

Cllrs. Redfern and Rolfe declared themselves as members of Uttlesford District Council.
Cllr. Gregory declared an interest in item 14/199 as his wife is a member of the W.I.

14/194. Minutes of the Last Meetings

The minutes of the meeting on 12th November were approved as signed as a correct record of events.

14/195. Public Forum

A member of the public asked why there was an apparent large balance in the PC's accounts. Cllr. Gregory explained that this was being maintained as a "war chest" against the likely costs of establishing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Another member of the public stated that although he held our District Councillors in high regard, in his opinion the Local Plan was shambolic and reported that several of his acquaintances held similarly negative views. He considered it likely that Chesterford would come under great pressure from developers and urged the PC to consider opposing proposals for large scale development and to begin allocating resources to fund this, citing a reported £250k cost for the campaigns mounted in Henham and Elsenham.

Cllr. Rolfe expressed the opinion that much of the language used in criticism of UDC had been inappropriate and suggested that there was a need for the real number of houses required to be accurately assessed. It was hoped that the Strategic Housing Requirement Assessment would be completed by the summer.

There would then be a call for sites and there was a duty to ask developers and land owners to put forward proposed sites. It was likely that a site or sites would be required for upwards of 3000 houses and that a key criterion for such sites would be the potential for further growth.
It was suggested that we would do well to learn from Elsenham and be prepared to invest in talented people to help demonstrate that the Inspector's conclusions were not necessarily well based.

It was noted that there was a requirement for total objectivity in the plan and Chesterford would have to be considered along with all other proposals. The requirement for transparency would mean that all meetings should be cross party and held in public.

It was pointed out that the Inspector's comments were a preliminary statement and did not give a full picture. The timescale was not yet clear, and the existence of a five-year land supply would mean that a

free for all could not happen. There was no immediate reason to be pessimistic, and we had a potential two years in which to establish a Neighbourhood Plan which might help to fend off unwelcome developments or identify possible new sites.

After considerable discussion, it was agreed that a robust response from the village was required and that a steering group would be assembled as soon as possible.

14/196. Planning

It was resolved to await detailed documents from the inspector and to raise an agenda item for the next meeting to consider the formation of a working group to begin work on a Neighbourhood Plan.

14/197. Finance.

The receipts and payments report was noted without comment..

Work on the Asset Register was still in progress.

It was decided to request budget holders to reassess their likely funding requirements and to defer setting the precept request until the January meeting.

14/198.20mph Speed Limit Signs

As the proposed speed limit change would only be enforceable if the prescribed signage was in use it was resolved to grant E.C.C. permission to affix the required signs to the village lamp posts.

14/199 WI use of recreation ground.

It was resolved to ratify previous informal permission for the Women's Institute to hold an event on the Recreation Ground on September 13th 2015.

14/200.Suggestions for Essex Local Highways Panel.

Suggestions included:

To extend the cycle path beyond the section to be provided by the S.106 funding from the NWT development.

Safety improvements on the pathway between Newmarket Road and the recreation ground.

Improvements to the path between Carmel Street and the school entrance.

14/201.ECC Highways Licence.

It was resolved to proceed with an application for a licence to plant trees subject to consultation with residents eliciting no objections.

14/202. Village Google group moderation rules.

It was understood that Tony Redfern as instigator of the Group had already prepared an outline list of criteria. Cllr. Redfern agreed to review this list and circulate it for comment.

14/203. Village Plan

Cllrs. Redfern and Bevens had met Jon Beard and were happy with the results so far. It was agreed that the Parish Council would contribute a summary final page and the group would then proceed to circulate the document. Cllr. Gregory agreed to write this. It was agreed that it would be desirable for the circulation to be carried out in good time for the Annual Parish Meeting.

14/204. Allotments.

Cllr. Witney was thanked for his successful efforts at raising funds for the additional work which would be required. UDC would be laying on a water supply and providing fencing and an access path. An application had been made to the Woodland Trust for funding the laying of a hedgerow; the outcome of this was still awaited.

There are to be 20 half-size plots, and these should be available for use from September. Cllr. Tricerri has a list of interested parties. It was expected that the allotment users should be self-governing after the first year and a committee would need to be established for this purpose. Cllr. Redfern suggested that guidelines be drawn up to ensure the tidy upkeep of the plots and that the PC retain power of reinforcement of these guidelines.

14/205. Preschool.

It was understood that Henry Weir had been in touch with a possible commercial provider and it was agreed that the PC would like to accept an offer to meet them. Cllrs. Redfern and Gregory agreed to represent the PC in this regard. The subject would also be raised at the next liaison meeting with the Genome Campus.

14/206. Matters for further discussion.

Topics included:

Parked cars blocking the drives of properties in Carmen Street. (Cllr. Rolfe agreed to progress this matter which had previously been raised with ECC's Highways dept.)

Possible grant application for replacement swings

14/207. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is to be held on Wednesday 14th January 2015 at 7:30 in the Community Centre.

The meeting closed at 9:25 pm

Signed (Chairman).....

Date: 13th January 2015