

MINUTES of Chalfont St Peter Parish Council
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE held on
Thursday 12th October at 7.30pm in the Council Offices, Gravel Hill,
Chalfont St Peter, Bucks, SL9 9QX



MINUTES

THE CHAIRMAN ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING EMERGENCY EXITS IN THE EVENT OF FIRE

Present: Cllr Darby (Chair), Cllr Jha, Cllr Rush, Cllr Shinner & Cllr Vladar

In attendance: Mrs Vikki Murdock (VM), Assistant Clerk, Cllr Smith

41. Apologies: Cllr Dale, Cllr Dickson & Cllr North

42. Declaration of Interests: Cllr Darby & Cllr Rush – Buckinghamshire Council

43. The minutes from the following Finance & General Purpose Committee meeting from 14th July 2022 were reviewed and approved as a correct record. Proposed Cllr Rush & seconded by Cllr Vladar. All agreed.

44. Review Action Points:

19. It was noted that a working party for the Village Guide was not yet established as Cllr Dale, who is leading the project had not been available. It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk would contact all councillors on behalf of Cllr Dale to see who wants to be involved in the working party and ask them to contact Cllr Dale directly so that the project could begin. **ACTION VM/ Cllr Dale**
78. It was agreed that at present there was no demand at the Parish Council Office for an electric charging point and that this item would be deferred in the event any future demand is identified. **Completed.**
90. Finance & General Purpose Terms of Reference – see item 47 below.
29. The e-mail subscription database is up and running with 45 residents having signed up so far. Several issues were raised about the database:
- i) It was hoped that going forward residents could go onto the Parish Council website and enter their own e-mail details rather than complete a handwritten slip, which required office time to input. **(ACTION Clerk to research).**
 - ii) A discussion took place on how to 'grow' the number of subscriptions including asking existing community groups to inform their members, for example, the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators, local schools via bookbags, The Chamber of Commerce and the Community Centre.
 - iii) Cllr Vladar suggested that a QR code could be placed on notices advertising the database in the village noticeboards that could direct residents to the site to subscribe. Cllr Darby to look into this. **ACTION Cllr Darby**

Name:

Date:

Page: 1

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- iv) It was agreed that the database should provide two types of communication, firstly a newsletter/ update, maybe sent quarterly and secondly 'urgent' or timely single item bulletins. The purpose of the database is to 'update and advise' on important village and Parish Council events.
- v) The format of what should be sent to subscribers was discussed. It was agreed that access to the database and items posted on the database should come from the office only and that a protocol would be helpful regarding who drafts the content and what can be said. To be placed on the agenda of the next meeting for discussion. **ACTION VM**
- vi) It was agreed to monitor the number of subscribers at Committee meetings going forward. **(ACTION Clerk/VM)**

35. Updated prices for renewing the gas contract for the office were discussed and demonstrated both the increase in price and volatility of the market. VM was asked to monitor the prices and to collate more data prior to the November Main Council. If the situation appeared favourable, this could then be discussed at that meeting. **ACTION VM**

45. Correspondence:

- i) NALC – Briefing Analysis of Council Tax Levels of Local Precepting Authorities 2022-23 - noted

46. Non time sensitive communications as requested from committees:

Amenities & Planning

- i) It was agreed that it would be helpful to publish a weekly list of planning applications on the Parish Council website. The PPO, Ana, was checking whether the Bucks Council version, with applicant names, could be uploaded. Cllr Rush would investigate what was published in local press publications (**Action Cllr Rush**) and Cllr Shinner suggested that a rider be attached to any list that is published stating the data is from an external source. This will be fed back to the A&P Committee at their next meeting where a format can be agreed.
- ii) Cllr Smith explained that the request from A&P to produce a leaflet regarding the Epilepsy Society planning application had been superseded by the production of a leaflet by SENSE advertising the public meeting on 9th November 2022. The issue of how much involvement the Parish Council would have with SENSE going forward was discussed. Cllr Darby informed Committee that SENSE were producing a banner to advertise the meeting and had asked whether the Parish Council logo should be included. They also asked whether it could be put on our railings in the village.

It was agreed that all Councillors should have the opportunity to debate this request and the issue of Parish Council involvement with SENSE in the future and that an EOM would be set up for Tuesday 18th October at 6.30pm to do this. **ACTION VM**

Open Spaces

- i) Cllr Southworth had asked whether she would be able to produce articles for local publications, namely 'My Local News' regarding Tree Guardians and the work they were doing, including pictures and tree facts. It was agreed that this could go ahead in conjunction with Cllr Rush and Cllr Vldar. They would approve all articles before being sent.

Name:

Date:

Page: 2

47. A copy of an updated Terms of Reference for the Finance and General Purpose Committee were circulated and discussed. Amendments were agreed and VM was asked to update the document and circulate. **ACTION VM** It was also agreed to recommend that the last item which requested '*all formal communications received by the Parish Council (not Councillors individually) will be formally acknowledged by the Clerk*', be removed from the Terms of Reference and inserted into the Communication Strategy. **ACTION VM**. Proposed Cllr Rush and seconded Cllr Vldar. All agreed

Recommend to Main Council: The Terms of Reference for the Finance and General Purpose Committee and to insert the above wording into the Communication Strategy.

48. The External Audit for 2022-23 was agreed. It was noted that there was a negative response to item 4 of Section 1 and Committee understood this was due to a technicality and were satisfied that public access to information was not unduly restricted and proper opportunity was afforded to our electors to inspect and ask questions about the Parish Council accounts. Proposed by Cllr Shinner and seconded by Cllr Jha. All agreed

Recommend to Main Council: The External Audit 2022-23 be noted

49. As the leaflet was produced by SENSE no action from the Parish Council was necessary.
50. It was noted that as the Parish Council had not received CIL monies before, there were no guidelines or a policy on how this money should be spent, other than the guidelines issued by NALC (2019). It was agreed to recommend that a list of possible projects be created, which could be added to. Proposed Cllr Rush and seconded Cllr Shinner. All agreed

Cllr Vldar also asked whether consideration could be given to using some of the CIL monies as a donation to the CAPP Skatepark Group for a Flood Risk Survey and the cost of their Planning Application. Approximate cost for the survey based on one quote obtained so far would be £2500 incl VAT and the Group were waiting for advice regarding the type of Planning Application they need before the cost could be ascertained. (She asked whether the Bucks Councillors present could chase Planning as so far there had been no response). It was agreed that in principle the Committee were in favour of supporting this request, and that this would go onto the CIL project list.

Recommend to Main Council: Creation of a project list suitable for payment using CIL monies.

51. Sponsorship for village projects. C'fwd.
52. It was agreed to renew the annual subscription for Parish On-Line up to a net cost of £250. Proposed Cllr Jha and seconded by Cllr Vldar. All agreed

Recommend to Main Council: Renew annual subscription for Parish On-Line up to cost of £250.

53. It was agreed to provide a Christmas Tree on Gold Hill Common up to a net cost of £400. Proposed by Cllr Shinner and seconded by Cllr Rush. All agreed.

Recommend to Main Council: To provide a Christmas Tree for Gold Hill Common up to a cost of £400

Name:

Date:

Page: 3

54. i) Cllr Vladar reported that use of our social media seemed to be growing. There were currently 1063 followers on Facebook and gave examples of the number of views for certain posts, with both the Sunflower Competition and M25 Planning Application receiving over 3900 each. The current demographic was that Facebook was being used mostly by women in the 38-49yr age range.

ii) Currently there were 45 e-mail subscribers. Committee asked whether we could count the number of hits to the news page on the Parish Council website? VM to investigate. **ACTION VM**

55. The Finance Reports at 30th September 2022 were reviewed and noted.

56. The Bank Statement and Reconciliation Report at 30th September 2022 were reviewed noted and signed by those present as being correct.

57. Information Items:

- i) Cllr Smith said Bucks Council Enforcement Department had decided that the frontage should be re-instated at 3a Market Place. Regarding the HMO Planning Application, this had been re-submitted for 4 rooms instead of 5.
- ii) VM informed Committee that the branch of Nat West Bank in Gerrards Cross will be closing in February 2023.

58. To resolve that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw (Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960s1). **None**

Date of next meeting: Thursday 17th November 2022 at 7.30pm

Meeting ended at 9.35pm

Name:

Date:

Page: 4

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