

## **CHANDLER'S FORD PARISH COUNCIL – FULL COUNCIL**

### **26 JANUARY 2015 VELMORE CENTRE, FALKLANDS ROAD, CHANDLER'S FORD**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor Atkinson (Chairman), Councillors Aubry, Boyes (Vice Chairman), Broadhurst, Cox, Duguid, Foulds, Grajewski, Hughes, Jolly, Luffman, Pragnell and Simmonds.

**In Attendance:** Duncan Murray (Parish Clerk), Sukey Spurlock (Assistant Parish Clerk), PC Richard Moody and PCSO Ian Nicholson.

There were no members of the public present.

#### **531 APOLOGIES**

These were received from Cllrs Bicknell, and Scott

#### **532 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were none

#### **533 COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE**

The Chairman opened the floor to PC Moody who reported that initiatives were underway with trading standards officers targeting rogue traders. He also reported on burglaries, 2 in the Hiltingbury area and 2 in Chandler's Ford. Public houses were being scrutinised for drug use and licensees were being proactive in their support, and that overt operations would be continuing over the next few weeks.

The Chairman thanks the officers for their input and time.

#### **534 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman gave her report which she requested to be reported verbatim in the minutes:

Councillors may recall that at our last Council meeting there was an unpleasant exchange of views which involved a challenge being made by Cllr Scott as to the accuracy of the Minutes of the previous Council meeting, held on 27 October 2014.

I am very pleased to report to Council that Cllr Scott has given a full and unqualified apology for his behaviour that evening which has been fully accepted.

I am also pleased to report that, having listened to the recording of the meeting of the disputed Minutes, Cllr Scott was able to accept their accuracy as presented to Council on 1 December 2014 without alteration.

For the record I believe it is worth quoting from the 'bible' for Parish Council law and proceedings – namely Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration ninth edition as follows:

Pt:7.36 "Minutes of proceedings of a council and of its committees must be kept. *They are intended to be formal reports of official acts and decisions, not reports, still less verbatim reports of the speeches made by councillors.* Minutes should, therefore,

be as short as is consistent with clarity and accuracy, and the arguments used in the discussion need be recorded only if the decision cannot be clearly expressed in any other way. Short simple minutes are less likely to be defamatory than long reports.”

These and other personnel matters have necessitated urgent and necessary legal advice in order to properly protect the Council and ensure we are treating our employees fairly.

I am also mindful that many of our Councillors were new to Council following elections last May, and have not received Code of Conduct training.

I think such training would be beneficial for all Councillors – even for the more experienced members – as some of the procedures at Parish Council level can differ significantly from those at Borough. I have therefore asked our Clerk to arrange such training to be made available to all Councillors and I sincerely hope that all members will participate.

I trust that having clarified the above matters that this Parish Council can now move forward and work together on the matters that are important to our Parish as a whole so we are able to bring about improvements to our amenities for the benefit of all our Parishioners.

I am pleased to report that our application for grant funding under the HCC ‘Granted to You’ scheme has been approved and we will be receiving £5,000 from HCC for this event. As last year the Parish Council will match fund the event so £10,000 will be available for local charities and organisations to bid for on the ‘Granted to You’ evening. We are planning to host this event in March, and full details will be publicised as soon as arrangements have been finalised.

**535 TO APPROVE/ACCEPT MINUTES OF MEETINGS:**

- a) To approve the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 1 December 2014.

With the correction that Cllr Aubry was not present and following a show of hands the minutes were AGREED.

- b) To approve the minutes of the Planning and Licensing Committee of 7 January 2015.

Following a show of hands the minutes were AGREED.

- c) To accept the minutes of the Asset Management Committee of 8 December 2014 and to approve the minutes of that committee’s meeting of 12 January 2015.

The minutes of 8 December were accepted and following a show of hands the minutes of 12 January were AGREED.

- d) to approve the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee of 19 January 2015, to note the financial reports, and to ratify the payments agreed by that committee.

Following a show of hands the minutes were AGREED and the financial reports and payments made were noted and ratified respectively.

**536 AGREEING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- i) To AGREE to the RECOMMENDATION from the Policy and Finance Committee to set the Budget for 2015 – 2016 as submitted

Cllr Broadhurst tabled an amendment to the draft budget and precept. Although the amendment was made rather late in the proceedings it was decided between the Clerk and the Chairman that it could be accepted if Standing Order 1(e) was suspended. This was proposed by Cllr Luffman and seconded by Cllr Foulds and carried on a show of hands.

Cllr Broadhurst proposed his amendment which was seconded by Cllr Pragnell and therefore moved.

Cllr Broadhurst suggested an alternative budget that differed in terms of the level of funds being required for the improvement and replacement of assets, a reduction in the investment in new playground equipment and also removing any contingency fund from the budget. The overall Precept was suggested at £341,419 with a presumed Council Tax Support Grant of £26,038 a Band D charge of £38.04 representing a 27% increase.

The Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer for the Parish Council responded with the Chairman's permission and as author of the original recommended draft budget. He reported that the draft budget had been prepared in line with adopted reserves policies and the requirement for risk management they imposed on the Clerk. The Clerk also commented that a lack of adequate inward investment would be unsustainable for the Parish Council. He also confirmed that in his opinion a 39p per week increase in the Band D Parish Precept was the very minimum Council needed as an increase.

Following these statements Members entered debate on the issues to hand, concentrating on the levels of reserves needed as well as investment required across the parish's facilities. Forward planning, risk assessment and management were key features mentioned.

The debate having concluded the Chairman asked for a vote on the tabled amendment which following a show of hands was NOT CARRIED, so the original Agenda Motion became the substantive motion again.

A show of hands was requested and with their being 8 votes for, with 7 against and 1 abstention the motion was CARRIED and the Budget for 2015-2016 set as per the RECOMMENDATION from Policy and Finance.

- ii) To AGREE to the RECOMMENDATION from the Policy and Finance Committee to set a Precept of £451,186 with a Council Tax Support Grant of £26,038 a total Precept of £477,224 representing a 68% increase in the Precept to a Band D tax of £50.27 per annum.

There being no debate requested and following a show of hands the RECOMMENDATION was AGREED.

- iii) To AGREE to the RECOMMENDATION from the Policy and Finance Committee that the Clerk prepare and have distributed to every household a Budget/Precept newsletter for early March 2015;

Following proposal by Cllr Grajewski and seconding by Cllr Boyes and a show of hands the RECOMMENDATION was AGREED.

- iv) To RATIFY the DECISION from the Policy and Finance Committee on the adoption of the Whistleblower Policy in line with the provisions of the Disclosure in the Public Interest Act 1998.

Following proposal by Cllr Grajewski and seconding by Cllr Duguid and a show of hands the RECOMMENDATION was AGREED.

**537 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE CYCLEWAY PROJECT**

Cllrs Duguid, Aubry and Boyes reported back on the progress so far, which had been one of looking at options and there being frustrations. Issues over expected costs being in the region of £1M as estimated by Hampshire County Council meant that it was not being viewed as a high priority. Cllr Boyes suggested he felt it could realistically be delivered for about £300 – 400,000 at a slightly reduced specification.

**539 CORRESPONDENCE**

The only item of correspondence was to report back the project closure report for the restoration of the War Memorial had been accepted.

**540 TO AGREE MATTERS TO BE TAKEN TO THE NEXT AGENDA OF THE COUNCIL.**

There were none

**That being all the business the meeting closed at 8.12 p.m.**

**Date and place of next meeting:** 16 March 2015 Dovetail Centre, Winchester Road

Chairman.....

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