

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Assembly of Chalgrave held on Tuesday April 26th, 2016 at the Memorial Hall, Tebworth at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr. Phil Parry (Chairman); Cllr. Ken Green; Cllr. Debbie Hampson; Cllr Barbara Jackson; Cllr. Mike Wells; Cllr Paul Whitton; Clerk Lesley Smith.

Also present: Ward Cllr. Mark Versallion Heath & Reach Ward

Representatives from:

Living Landscape Officer (Bedfordshire)-Wildlife Trust: Laura Downton
Chalgrave Memorial Hall; Mr Roger Masters
Sports Club; Cllr Mike Wells
Chalgrave Senior Citizens' Committee; Mrs Lynn Green
Chalgrave News; Mr Roger Parker
Chalgrave WI; Mrs Tina Cocking

Public present: 27

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Andrew Selous MP; Police.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH ASSEMBLY-APRIL 28th, 2015

Signed as correct by the Chairman.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman welcomed residents, introduced the council members and explained their roles within the council. He also introduced guest Laura Downton, Cllr Mark Versallion and Steve Calder. Cllr Parry then gave a brief summary of the Parish Council's activities over the past year. He also mentioned:

- i. Street Party to be held in The Lane on May 14th to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday
- ii. Two training sessions on using the defibrillator which have taken place.

4. REPORT FROM MR ANDREW SELOUS

Mr Selous was unable to attend this evening but he sent the following report:

I am so sorry that we haven't been able to find a mutually convenient date for me to come to the Parish Assembly. I have really enjoyed my visits in previous years and hope to be with you again in the years to come. Locally I continue to have a constituency surgery every week and continue to lobby on a wide range of issues important to South West Bedfordshire. The recent settlement for Bedfordshire Police was better than they were expecting but the national funding formula remains wholly unfit for purpose so far as Bedfordshire is concerned. I joined the other five Bedfordshire MPs to make this case very strongly to the Police Minister. I was pleased, however, that funding for Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group has been increased by 9.6% this year. However, I am very aware of the pressures that our local GPs are under. I am pleased that the expansion of facilities to the Luton and Dunstable Hospital continues to go ahead. I have been told that the A5:M1 link road will open by June next year and that the new Construction and Engineering Skills Centre in Leighton Buzzard is still on track to have construction commence this year. Unemployment has fallen significantly locally with the arrival of

large employers like Amazon and smaller employers like the UK Implant Manufacturing Company making specialist contact lenses in Dunstable.

5. REPORT FROM WARD COUNCILLOR MARK VERSALLION

Cllr Versallion is the uncontested candidate for Heath and Reach Ward. He represents seven parishes within that ward including Chalgrave.

a) New Homes

31,000 new homes are required in Central Bedfordshire and there is an issue as to where to build them. The Call for Sites survey is now closed and Cllr Versallion is not happy about the way the sites have been identified. He assured residents that the A5-M1 link road will be the northern edge of the expansion of Houghton Regis.

b) Green Belt

Cllr Versallion believes that the Green Belt is vulnerable so he and Andrew Selous need to keep acting to protect it, particularly with the proposed expansion of towns like Luton and Houghton Regis.

c) Buses

This year's grant for public transport has been reduced by £15 million. Cllr Versallion is fighting for bus services in rural areas.

d) Social Care

Cllr Versallion is resisting any reduction in social care.

After Cllr Versallion had given his report Cllr Green asked him if CBC was intent on saving as much Green Belt (GB) as possible. Cllr Versallion replied that brown field sites should be built on. However there is an argument that these sites are more costly to develop. Also developers will have to build on GB if brown field sites are not offered. He then said that every parish should have a Neighbourhood Plan as it gives some defence as to where houses are built.

A resident asked about the likely impact of building north of Luton. Cllr Versallion replied that CBC feels it could build east and south. However he thinks that building new towns is a better option.

6. LAURA DOWNTON; Living Landscape Officer-Wildlife Trust (WLT)

Secret Spaces are areas of land rich in wildlife. 7% of Bedfordshire is Secret Spaces and there are thousands spread across Britain. Some are privately owned and some are council owned. Chalgrave has one such site. They have national recognition and have protection against development. They are important for pollinators, wildlife and flood defence. WLT wants to join up existing sites, one reason being to create wildlife corridors. In answer to a number of questions Laura said that open access is shown on Ordnance Survey maps. She asked people to work with landowners as it is they who manage these sites. Volunteering is a good way of helping to manage these sites. Information is available on the WLT website.

7. POLICE REPORT

a) Community Policing Model. The Parish Council has received a news release from Bedfordshire Police stating that the new Community Policing Model is taking shape, which means that there should be more Police Constables on duty. Assisting are Special Constables.

b) PCSOs. The number has reduced from 108 to 44 which means they cannot routinely attend parish council meetings. Technology will be used instead to keep parish councils informed leaving police officers available for active duty.

c) Point of Contact for Parish Councils. Parish councils will be given the name of a PCSO or PO who will act as a point of contact. PC Tau Chamboko has been appointed Rural Matters Liaison Officer, part of which will be coordinating Farm Watch.

d) **Tri-force Resources.** Bedfordshire Police lead the Joint Protective Services. This includes firearms, Major Crime, Scientific Services and Traffic. They also lead the regional Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit and the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit.

8. **ALL SAINTS CHURCH REPORT**

Cllr Parry informed residents that the church had permission to replace the stolen lead with a stainless steel roof. This will cost £80,000 approximately.

9. **CHALGRAVE MEMORIAL HALL REPORT by ROGER MASTERS**

- a) **Finances.** The hall hopes to break even this year despite the low hire rates. One objective is to keep the rates as reasonable as possible. Roger thanked the parish council for its 2015 grant. There was a small surplus made from the Chalgrave Games.
- b) **Bookings.** There are regular users e.g. the WI and PC as well as weddings and funerals etc.
- c) **Maintenance.** The hall has received a National Lottery grant of £9,500 to replace the boiler and carry out some small refurbishments.
- d) **The Chalgrave Games** will take place on Saturday June 25th, 2016. The theme is pantomime. The Games are run by the trustees and other parishioners. There will be a grand draw with the first prize being an iPad. Helpers and sponsors are still required.

10. **SPORTS CLUB CHAIRMAN'S REPORT read by CLLR WELLS**

- a) **Club House.** The club has received a generous donation towards a new club house. The old club house has been demolished and its contents are in storage. We are very grateful for the help received from Roger Fenwick, Roger and Anne Costin, Rob Flitton and Callum Angel.
There is now a concrete base so the new club house will be built over the next few weeks followed by a grand opening.
- b) **New Landlord.** Roger Fenwick is the club's new landlord. The future looks more secure and we hope for a long and happy partnership with Roger.
- c) **The Cricket League.** The 2015 season started poorly with several matches cancelled due to bad weather and the opposition not turning up. However the 10/10 day was a success particularly as we won. We are planning our cricket fixture list for 2016 and anticipating 10 matches plus the 10/10 Festival of Cricket.
- d) **Race Night** was successful and raised much needed funds. Thanks to all those who helped.
- e) **Plough Inn Golf Society** golf day was held at Chalgrave Manor Golf Club, finishing with a meal at the Plough, between Christmas and New Year. Special thanks to Paul Levy for organising the day.

Commented [LS1]:

11. **SENIORS CITIZENS' COMMITTEE REPORT by MRS LYN GREEN**

The old committee originally gave a chicken at Christmas to every senior citizen and concerts used to be held. These days Christmas cards and presents are given. There are 70 people on the list but only 14 attend anything the committee organises. Please let Lyn know if you have any new ideas.

The committee is down to 4 members now. The main income comes from the Christmas Float and, because of the funds raised by it, no extra money is needed at the moment. Christmas 2015 raised £500, £260 of which was in Tebworth and Wingfield.

12. **CHALGRAVE NEWS REPORT by MR ROGER PARKER**

The Chalgrave News has survived another year. It is circulated free of charge on a quarterly basis to about 225 homes within Chalgrave. Its aim is to take a light-hearted look at village life with coverage of local events and always with lots of photographs.

- a) **Contributors.** The News has a pool of regular contributors whose input is essential. Some are in the room tonight and The News thanks them for the effort they put in.
- b) **Contributions to the News.** The News needs to appeal to the whole community and it wants to encourage people to send in one-off items e.g. a birth or marriage or an event or achievement worth celebrating. Historical pieces, be they about Chalgrave buildings or people, are always of interest.
- c) **Advertising.** The News is largely supported by advertising. Roger asked that if residents use the services of the companies who are advertising to let them know that they found them in the News.
- d) **Fundraising.** The annual quiz had to be cancelled earlier this month because of low ticket sales. Despite the loss of profit from this event the finances of The News are reasonably healthy and the advertising rates are the same as they were in 2014. However if anyone wants to give a donation or sponsor a regular feature it would be much appreciated. Alternatively if anyone would like to donate some of their spare time to help with The News this would be most welcome.
- e) **Contacting the News.** The email address is published inside each edition. Past editions can be found on the Chalgrave Parish website.

13. THE QUEEN'S HEAD PUB

Cllr Parry said that Colin, the landlord, was recovering after his illness at the end of 2015. The brewery is probably going to close the pub sometime this year. It is a Community Asset so the community has some say in what happens to it and we are trying to keep it open. Cllr Green added that it needed people to visit it.

14. WI REPORT by MRS TINA COCKING

Chalgrave WI has been running for five years and has 42 members. There have been a number of guest speakers including a Life Coach and a talk on the Tudors. Activities have included Burns Night and learning First Aid. Annual membership is £37.

15. BOOK CLUB REPORT read by CLLR PARRY

The Book Club has been meeting as usual over the year and members have been reading some great books. Meetings are every four to six weeks and members take it in turns to host the meeting and provide coffee and biscuits whilst reviewing the books. It is a great opportunity for 9 or 10 residents to get together to catch up on the latest news. The annual lunch was at The Birch, Woburn again and was enjoyed by all.

Anyone interested in joining please contact Noeleen Thomson on 01525 872168

16. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT PARISH ASSEMBLY

To be arranged for April 2017.

Formal meeting closed at 20.32

The public were then offered refreshments and given the opportunity to talk to cllrs and guests.

Signed by Chairman..... Dated.....