

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 15th September 2014 at 7.30 pm in the Council Offices, Langley Road, Abbots Langley.

Those Present:

Chairman:	Councillor Jane Lay
Councillors:	Councillor Sara Bedford Councillor Martin Brooks Councillor Jean Bowman Councillor Derryck Croker Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst Councillor Jeff Hill Councillor Brenda Kersey Councillor David Major Councillor Owen Roe Councillor Keith Williams
Officers:	Tim Perkins - Clerk to the Council
Police:	PC 1379 David Herring

The meeting opened at 7:30pm.

157. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, accepted and recorded from Councillor Gloria Keaveny, Councillor John Wyatt (both unavailable) and Councillor Belinda Phipps (other commitment).

158. Declarations of Interest

None.

159. Public Participation

No members of the public had expressed an interest in addressing the Parish Council.

160. Hertfordshire Police

Two motorcycle thefts over the past weekend, one from Summerhouse Way, an arrest has been made. The other theft from Ovaltine Court appears to have been well organised, good CCTV evidence is being followed up.

Investigations are ongoing into a spate of vehicles being scratched.

Investigation into rogue tree surgeons are continuing. An elderly member of the public who had paid for poor quality work has declined to take the matter further.

Members have been successful in getting some street lights in Summerhouse Way taken out of the County Councils street lighting reduction programme, this was due to anti-social behaviour in the area.

Pavement parking continues to be a major problem in the area. Members are concerned that this has been raised multiple times in this meeting, but little appears to be done. Other areas are having resources allocated to reduce the problem.

There are multiple "hot spots" in the area and pavement parking is a major issue for residents with mobility and visual impairment, parents with pushchairs and other vulnerable groups.

Members asked that this is given attention.

Members were concerned that the "Safer Streets Campaign" held in the Boundary Way area on August Bank Holiday Monday had not been notified to residents groups or Parish and District Council ward members.

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161. Minutes of the Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Brooks, seconded by Councillor Jeff Hill and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2014, copies of which had been sent to all Members of the Parish Council prior to the meeting, be taken as read and were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

162. Minutes for Adoption

The following committee minutes were adopted, approved for publication on the Council's website and passed to the committees for resolution.

Planning & Highways Committee - 16th July, 6th August & 27th August 2014.

Finance & Administration Committee - 28th July 2014.

Leisure Committee - 20th August 2014.

163. Matters Referred from Committees

Staffing Committee (min 52.) - Staff Recruitment

It was proposed by Councillor Keith Williams seconded by Councillor Brenda Kersey and **RESOLVED** that the Delegation of Responsibility for Officer and Staff Recruitment be accepted as presented.

It was requested that para. 1 on Clerk recruitment be amended to read "minimum of three members".

Staffing Committee (min 53.) - Henderson Hall Communications

It was agreed a member would be nominated to act as a communication conduit between the Managing Trustees and the Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to discuss with the Chairman of the Managing Trustees and if agreed to bring back to the Parish Council for a nomination to be agreed.

164. Henderson Hall - Managing Trustees

Members noted the nominations, but felt unable to reach a decisions as some members did not know all, or any, of the candidates and the contributions they could make to the Managing Trustees.

The Clerk was asked to write to the nominees and request a 100-200 word biography.

Members would then consider the appointment, possibly at a brief Parish Council meeting to be arranged.

165. Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) - Hertfordshire County Council Division

Members considered the draft recommendations from the above on Hertfordshire County Council division boundaries.

The draft recommendation proposes six divisions will remain in the Three Rivers District Council area, but the boundaries of these divisions will change. Boundary change is needed due to the current Abbots Langley division being one of the largest divisions in the county, measured by electorate and it is continuing to grow. The LGBC is required to ensure divisions are numerically balanced and take future growth into consideration.

The proposal creates a new "Three Rivers Rural" division. This is made up of Hunton Bridge, Bedmond, Primrose Hill and part of the current Chorleywood division, including Sarratt.

It is also proposed that the parish ward of "Bedmond Village" is recreated. The ward had been taken out in a previous boundary review.

It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council support the draft recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission and the reinstatement of the Bedmond Village Parish Council ward and that the Clerk responds to the Commission accordingly.

166. Hertfordshire County Council - Funding for Bus Services

Hertfordshire County Council are consulting on a reduction in the subsidy that they provide to bus services. The proposal would withdraw subsidy on services operating after 6:30 pm Monday to Saturday and all day Sunday. Possible savings of £700,000 were detailed in the consultation, but further reports of which members have had sight indicate the savings maybe as high as £850,000.

The proposals would affect all areas of the parish, with the major impact being on the Arriva no. 8 service (Abbots Langley-Watford-Mount Vernon Hospital) which has 82,200 passenger journeys per year and the 320 service (Hemel Hempstead-Bedmond-Abbots Langley-Watford-Rickmansworth) which has 75,200 passenger journeys per year.

Members were concerned that these proposals would adversely affect many residents who would find access to their jobs, services and leisure opportunities considerably reduced.

The proposal would adversely impact on those residents who do not have access to their own car. Many residents have no option but to use bus services because they cannot afford to run a car or pay for regular taxi journeys. Included in this are:

- Evening and late night commuters, those that work in the leisure economy that require an early morning start or late night finish.
- Employees who work during the day will not be able to work later than the last bus service and will be unable to maintain their employment.
- This will particularly affect the low waged shift workers.
- Many older residents and those with mobility impairment are unable to drive, so the bus is their only form of transport.
- The reduction will adversely affect the most vulnerable and needy residents significantly restricting their access to transport services, not only from the proposed bus service reduction but also limiting access to the main line railway, London Underground and Overground stations.

Members were concerned that;

- The consultation documents presented no supporting evidence base of the level of subsidy on the specific routes and the number of journeys undertaken.
- No alternatives on how residents are supposed to travel if services are withdrawn was provided.
- No economic impact study was presented. How are the low waged expected to get to and from work when the services are withdrawn?
- The proposals are solely financially based and take no account of initiatives and strategies being developed by the District and County Council to improve social mobility and access to employment and services.
- No Equalities Impact Assessment was presented.
- The proposal would have a disproportionate impact on Gade Valley area residents, due to local social and economic factors related to the number of residents in low paid shift work in the evening and night time economy. Reductions in services and the access to key employment areas such as Watford and Hemel Hempstead will lead to unemployment, economic deprivation and greater reliance on benefits.
- Sunday is a key day for residents to visit inpatients in the main local hospitals in Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Mount Vernon all of which have multiple specialist and acute services.
- If these proposals are implemented, there will be no Sunday buses within the Parish Council's Primrose Hill ward or serving Kings Langley railway station.

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It was proposed by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Sara Bedford and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council respond to the consultation in line with the comments detailed above.

All members were in agreement

167. Wreath Laying

The following members will lay wreaths at the Battle of Britain Parade and on Remembrance Sunday.

Battle of Britain Parade (21st September)

Councillor Jane Lay - St. Pauls Langleybury

Clerk to arrange - Airfield Memorial, Warner Bros.

Remembrance Sunday (9th November)

Councillor Jane Lay - St. Lawrence

Councillor Keith Williams - St. Pauls Langleybury

Councillor Jean Bowman - Church of the Ascension, Bedmond

Councillor Martin Brooks - Leavesden War Memorial, Leavesden High Road

Clerk to arrange - Airfield Memorial, Warner Bros. (Chairman to attend if available)

168. National Association of Local Council - Legal Briefing

Members noted the briefing (L07-11) on The Bribery Act 2010.

169. Hertfordshire County Council - Transferable Bus Ticketing

Members noted the correspondence with Hertfordshire County Council. Councillor Keith Williams thanked the Clerk for his work on the matter.

This will be followed up later in the year to see if there has been any further progress.

170. Neighbourhood Plan

Members deferred any decisions on the above to the next meeting.

The Clerk was asked to bring forward a report on the next stages.

Members will give consideration to the skills and mix of community members that would be able to contribute to developing the plan.

171. District and County Council Member Reports

District Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Hertfordshire County Council's Highways & Waste Management Cabinet Panel will be taking a decision on the changes to Household Waste Sites when it meets on 18th September. Indications are there will not be any site closures but changes to opening hours are likely at all sites.

The Boundary Way planning application will be considered by Three Rivers District Council at their Planning Committee meeting on 18th September.

District Councillor Keith Williams

Fencing has been erected on the Horse Field site at the junction of South Way and Langley lane, this is for preparatory work on the play area, these works were covered by an earlier planning application.

A planning application is in progress to change the use of the rest of the field from agricultural to public open space. The only works planned so far are the cutting of grass swathes to allow access for walkers. Much of the land will be left as wild and scrub. Pedestrian entrances will be via South Way and Langley Lane, access for works vehicles will be via Furtherfield.

Councillor Williams reiterated that there were no plans for development on the site.

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District Councillor Martin Brooks

Works are ongoing in High Elms Lane to improve traffic congestion in the area.

Heavy goods vehicle parking in the Balmoral and Arundel Road area is causing problems, there have been a number of resident's complaints. Three Rivers District Council are reviewing possible solutions.

172. Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended the following events.

18th July - Presentation of an electric wheelchair at Ta Kwando to Sian Moorcroft who suffers from Spinal Muscular Atrophy and cannot walk or stand. Held in the Community Centre.

19th July - Meningitis Fun Day run at South Way Playing Fields. Run by Sian Turnbull. Her son Jay was diagnosed with pneumococcal meningitis in 2004 and was left blind and brain damaged when he was 16 months old. £2,000 raised.

19th July - Attended the Bedmond Summer Fair at Toms Lane Playing Fields.

2nd August - Kings Langley and Abbots Langley Back to the Front exhibition held at The Nap showing local artefacts, photos etc on WW1.

3rd August - Vigil service of commemoration on the eve of the centenary of the outbreak of the first world war at St Lawrence Church.

4th August - Candlelit Vigil in the Kings Langley village garden and the War Memorial. Run by the Kings Langley and Abbots Langley Back to the Front groups supported by Kings Langley Parish Council.

9th August - St Lawrence Church Fun Day, judged the cakes on display.

13th August - Red Cross Coffee morning in Abbots Road, fund raising event.

24 August - Unable to attend the Safer Streets event at Boundary Way.

13th September - Abbots Langley Gardening Society Autumn Show in the Community Centre. Presented trophies with the Chairman of the Society.

The Clerk was asked to write to the Chairman of Kings Langley Parish Council to thank them for all their efforts in arranging the Candlelit Vigil.

173. Clerk's Report

Members noted the following items which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

- Watford Foodbank.
- Christmas and New Year Working 2014-2015.
- Financial Grants 2014-2015.
- Office Copies.
- Diary Dates.
- Absence from office.

Members were surprised at the reported low number of Foodbank vouchers issued to local residents. Their understanding was demand was higher. This will be followed up by members.

174. Monthly Statement of Accounts

It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford and seconded by Councillor Martin Brooks and **RESOLVED** that the Statement of Accounts for July & August 2014 as notified to the Council be approved and published on the Parish Council's website.

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175. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Part II)

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay and seconded by Councillor Derryck Croker and **RESOLVED** that as the following matters related the terms of a contract into which the Parish Council may be entering, the press and public be excluded from the discussion, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972, ss100 & 102.

176. Abbots Langley Bowls Club

Members noted both of the Clerk's reports and hoped that the meetings scheduled for October will progress the matter. Members understood key decisions would be required at their November meeting.

Members ask that the Watford Observer be advised that discussions were ongoing with the Bowls Club and that the end of season maintenance would be carried out as scheduled. The Parish Council are determined to ensure that bowls will be played on the green next season.

The meeting closed at 9.53 pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____