

MINUTES OF CHRISTLETON PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING

INCORPORATING KING GEORGE'S TRUST

Held on TUESDAY, 16th June 2020 at 7.0 pm

Via ZOOM Virtual Meeting

SIGNED

Present Cllr Luke Henley (Chairman) Susan Robson, John Beckitt, John Eccles, Elizabeth Inall, Kate Sinclair, Damian Murphy & Janet Brown

In Attendance: CWAC Cllr Stuart Parker, Lisa Tiplady & Sue Thwaite (Clerk)

Apologies: There were no apologies for this meeting.

Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

Minutes of the last Meeting

1. The Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 19th May 2020 were approved as a true and correct record and will be formally signed by the Chairman following lockdown restrictions being lifted.

Public Forum

2. Cllr Parker confirmed that CWAC are still incredibly involved with dealing with all the aspects of the COVID-19 crisis.
3. He also confirmed that the Northgate Development has now started, and it is expected to be completed in a 2-year timescale.
4. Early feedback from the non-essential shops opening in Chester on 15th June had started at a steady pace.

Planning

Planning Applications

5. A list of planning application previously circulated to all Councillors was considered. Comments were noted by the Clerk for submission to CWAC Planning Authority. All comments can be viewed on CWAC website.

Update from University of Law Working Group

6. Cllr Eccles reported on the following:
The Parish Council confirmed with the Developer regarding the former playing fields at the site and confirmed that we already provided and were responsible for similar facilities on King George's Field site and saw no need for duplication and that the former playing fields should be left as accessible green space not forming part of any future development. The Developer confirmed that they found this extremely helpful.
7. Temporary Access to the Site: Having emphasised to the Developer that construction access to the UOL site via the village centre was a major safety issue and the firm view of the Council therefore was the need for an alternative route to bypass the centre should be explored.
8. Two routes were considered (1) via Pearl Lane and (2) via Little Heath Road The Developer pursued these options in private discussions with the landowner and the Council has been informed that the Little Heath Road option is now the outcome. We are awaiting details of the exact position but expect it to run from the gate nearest to the Pit and take the shortest possible route to the development site.

9. The Developer will have to include the temporary construction route when submitting their planning application to CWAC Planning Department in due course.
10. As a matter of courtesy, the Council will make Littleton Parish Council aware of these developments.
11. Village consultation: it was agreed that the Parish Council will now put in place a public consultation with the Village. Due to the current COVID-19 situation this will have to be by a leaflet drop to all properties.
12. It will not only cover the plans for the University, potential Section 106 money, Civic Architects Village Design Brief to address traffic issues, Air Quality Working Group report, Asset Improvement working Group, the Beechmoor Nurseries development plans and other topics that need to be brought to the residents attention giving them the option to express their views on the plans.

Beechmoor Nurseries Site

13. Following the recent virtual presentation by Retirement Villages, the new developer of the Beechmoor Nurseries site, to the Parish Council a number of concerns on the proposal were raised including the proposed height of buildings 4-5 floors in places, access and egress to the village, the increase by 40% population over the previous scheme and the proximity to the Hamburger roundabout with volume of traffic and air quality issues.
14. It was agreed that the Parish Council continue to engage constructively with the developer and to go back to them voicing their concerns.

Action: Cllr Henley to draft a response to be forwarded to the Developer.

Traffic & Road Safety

Update re Planit-IE design brief and related matters

15. Cllr Beckitt outlined the process leading to the choice of Planit-IE as the Civic Architect firm to deliver the Design Brief for looking at ways to improve the quality of the life and environment for residents of Christleton Village, together with improving safety for cyclists and pedestrians, reduce vehicular speed, reducing vehicular flows, reducing pavement mounting and gridlocks in the centre of the village, improve air quality, improving safety at key junctions and providing designs of potential parking locations
16. A top London Town/Village planning company identified several companies who had the skills to do this work but recommended Martin Stockley locally who visited Christleton and works alongside Planit - IE, an Altrincham based company. Planit -IE were well known by CWAC, sat on one of their design panels and had substantial experience of Frodsham Street and various other location in Liverpool and Manchester as well as their hometown of Altrincham that they have redesigned. A Traffic Working Group team visited their studios in Altrincham and walked around the redesigned areas and concluded that Planit-IE were best equipped to deliver the outcomes the council wished to achieve.
17. An updated brief was circulated outlining a number of changes and the schedule of work to be carried out in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the brief, the fee proposal reflecting the changes had been received and the fee of £10,000 + VAT (which is recoverable) was approved.
18. All the proposals in the design brief will be included in the public consultation leaflet drop which is to be delivered to all households in the near future.

Update on proposed Gateways/Buildouts

19. The design for the proposed gateways/buildout was agreed by the Parish Council but there was nothing further to report on this matter to this meeting.

To discuss setting up a joint Parish Council Cycling Group

20. It was confirmed that a joint Parish Council Cycling Group between Great Boughton, Christleton, Littleton & Huntington has now been formed who are investigating the potential of reducing the dependence on car travel in the region of Chester. The group will endeavour

to give the Parish Councils an achievable means by which their community can become more cycle friendly. The objectives and tasks will be set out and we will receive regular reports.

21. Mr Paul Sinclair is the representative for Christleton on the group

KING GEORGE’S TRUST ITEMS

22. The following retrospective expenditure was approved

Finance

The following expenditure was approved.

Payments	£	Act	Cheque No:
Rob Pierce – Groundwork Maintenance – MAY 2020	1080.00	Open Spaces Act 1906	161
Stewart M Sim – Mowing woodland at KGF	80.00		162
INCOME:			
BANK BALANCE @: 20/05/2020	945.15		

To consider request from Christleton Sports Club for a reduction or rent freeze

23. A request from Christleton Sports Club for consideration to be given to a rent freeze or reduction as they had not generated any income during this year due to the extensive damage caused by vandalism and the COVID-19 crises was discussed and it was
Resolved: To award a grant of £325 to the club to offset the first quarters rent and to monitor the situation going forward following the easing of lockdown measures in the coming weeks.
Action: The Clerk to write to the Sports Club with this decision.

Update on progress with improvement to the First Field

24. Following the decision to engage the services of a Playing Field Specialist to carry out a full survey of the field to bring it up to playing field standard to enable the Trust to find ways to generate future income and to decide on which sports could benefit from this facility i.e. junior football, ladies cricket, hockey etc.
25. Cllr Murphy has investigated and has spoken to a firm of Agronomists who are expert in cultivating land for the purpose of sport, this would include the inspecting and assessing the quality of the surface and assess and advise on drainage issues at a cost of £710 + VAT (which is recoverable).
Resolved: It was agreed unanimously to engage the services of the Agronomist to report on current state of the field and how to improve it to playing field standard.
Action: Cllr Murphy will action this item.

Inspection report on Little Heath Play Area

26. One of the posts to the entrance gate to the play area has been broken, the groundworker it to install a new post to secure the play area.
27. There were no other issues to report this month.

Future Projects & Groups

Update from Air Quality Group

28. Cllr Beckitt circulated a report to all councillors with updated data with the levels of pollution on the A51 continuing to justify putting a hold on the A51 road improvements until CWAC has carried out their own promised measurements and can accurately predict the effect of increased traffic on air quality. Pressure on CWAC to carry out their promised survey need to continue.

29. The Working Group will continue to monitor air quality in the centre of the village and the Hamburger Roundabout. Possible staggered start and finish time for the High School could also be considered to improve air quality in the village.

Update from Asset Working Group

30. Resurfacing of some roads in the village is due to start mid-July or early August.

Allotments

Update from Allotment Group

31. The Clerk confirmed all but one-half plot was now occupied with a couple of rents still outstanding, these have been sent follow-up invoices with a reminder that non-payment of rent could result in them being given notice to quit.

Finance

32. The following retrospective expenditure for June was approved:

ORGANISATION	Cheque No:		
Sue Thwaite – Clerk Expenses May 2020	50.63	LGA 1972 – Sec 112	2445
S P Beech & Son – Replace 6 x 6 fence post, hinges, and hinge bolts to gate at Birch Heath Common – Time and Labour	100.00	Open Spaces Act 1906	2446
ChALC – Affiliation Fee 2020/2021	698.12	LGA 1972 Sec 143	2447
SLCC – Membership Fees for Clerk	140.00	LGA 1972 Sec 143	2448
Countrywide Grounds Maintenance Ltd – Strim round bollards at Birch Heath Common	24.00	Open Spaces Act 1906	2449
JBC Builders – Re-furbishment of 3 notice boards and cleaning Jubilee Sign	140.00	Open Spaces Act 1906	2450
Rob Pierce – Groundworks	280.40	Open Spaces Act 1906	2451
Boughton Heath Allotment Association – Skip Hire for Allotments	240.58	Small Holding & Allotments Act 1908	2452
No Prior Approval Payments			
Sue Thwaite Clerk – Salary for MAY 2020 & Additional hrs for APRIL 2020	570.50	LGA 1972 – Sec 111	2445
Derek Garner – Village Asst Pay & expenses MAY 2020	90.78	LGA 1972 – Sec 112	2453
HMRC – PAYE MAY 2020	163.20	LGA 1972 – Sec 2	2454
INCOME: VAT refund/Interest/Allotment rents	1936.76		
Bank Balances – @ 20/05/2020			
H/I Account	131238.10		
Current A/C	100.91		
Dredging A/C	11049.26		

To approve Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020

33. All questions on the Annual Governance Statement were read out to the meeting and correctly answered it was:

Resolved: To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020 by all members present, and to be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

To approve the Accounting Statements 2019/2020

34. The Accounting Statement was circulated to all members by the Clerk for consideration it was:

Resolved: To approve the Accounting Statement 2019/2020 by all members present, this to be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

To approve Annual Return and discuss any Internal Audit findings

35. The Annual Return had been inspected by the Internal Auditor and approved.
36. There were a number of issues highlighted on the Internal Audit Report and these matters have been actioned by the Clerk.
37. The Annual Return and all required documents will now be forwarded to the External Auditor for their attention.

Monthly Inspection Report

Capesthorpe Road Community Orchard

38. Cllr Brown reported there were no issues to report this month and the fruit trees are looking extremely healthy with some bearing fruit.

Community Safety Matters

Environment and Litter matters

39. Details of excessive amounts of litter at the Play Area and Bike Track in particular has been reported by the Village Assistant. This included empty box from child's scooter being forced into litter bin at the bike track and by the play area on another occasion it was full of food and food containers, including 15 fish & chip trays. He also picked up 15 Bud Weiser bottles from the play area the previous Sunday.
40. Cllr Sinclair has been approached by a member of the village wishing to form a volunteer group to help tackle the ongoing increasing problem with litter, fly-tipping and other environmental issues. This initiative was warmly welcomed by the councillors, Cllr Sinclair will convey their approval and thanks to the volunteers.

Action Items

To discuss updating Village Directory & Guide

41. The current version of the Village Directory & Guide was very out of date and have been temporarily removed from the website.
42. This was deferred until the next meeting when it will be decided how to action the matter.

To agree actions for Website Accessibility compliance

43. Following previous his report from May and current June report from the Webmaster updating the Council on the requirements for compliance with the Accessibility Regulation due to come into force on 23rd September 2020, he has now been in discussions with a member of CWAC Communications Team who has looked at the progress of our website so far in this regard.
44. He considered it to be one of the best Parish Council sites he had seen from the Accessibility point of view, it was well-structured, logical, font sizes etc were fine as were most colour contract settings.
45. He considered there were 4 matters needing attention of which 3 had now been completed.
46. The Chairman and Councillor went on to express their thanks and appreciation to the Webmaster for all his hard work and efforts he has carried out on their behalf.

To discuss vacancies on the Parish Council

47. The Clerk confirmed that the vacancies for two Parish Councillors have now been posted in the notice boards and on the website. The deadline for expressions of interest to CWAC is 30th June 2020 following that date it will be confirmed whether an election to fill the places need to be arranged or if the places can be filled by co-option

Information Correspondence

48. Information correspondence: a list of items received has been circulated to member prior to the meeting

Information only items

Flooding Quarry Lane/Plough Junction

49. A request from a resident had been received voicing their concerns that due to exceptional recent rainfall flooding has occurred at the junction of Plough Lane & Quarry Lane, which does occur from time to time in severe weather conditions. Following the request to see if the council can assist with investigating these occurrence, the matter will be referred to CWAC Highways & Severn Trent Water to come up with a plan to avoid further flooding.
50. The Village sign on the Village Green paintwork has almost been obliterated on the west side. Plans are being put in place to renovate the sign.

Dates of the next meetings: Tuesday 14th July 2020 at 7.0 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm.