

The Lee Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of THE LEE PARISH COUNCIL (TLPC) held at The Lee Scout Hut on Tuesday, 20th June 2023 at 7.30pm

Present	Councillor C Sully (Chair)	CS
	Councillor A Bunce	AB
	Councillor D Chinnery	DC
	Councillor N Rose	NR
In Attendance	Mrs H Farrelly (Clerk)	HF
	One member of the public	
	Bucks Councillor J Macbean	JM
Apologies	Bucks Councillor P Birchley	PB
	Councillor C Little	CL
	Councillor J Wilkinson	JW
Abbreviations	The Lee Parish Council	TLPC
	Great Missenden Parish Council	GMPC
	Little Missenden Parish Council	LMPC
	Buckinghamshire Council	BC

Agenda Number		Action	Item
1.	<p>INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY CHAIR</p> <p>Councillor Sully welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>		23/57
2.	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Parish Councillors Little and Wilkinson and Buckinghamshire Councillor Birchley had sent their apologies.</p>		23/58
3.	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 16th May 2023 were approved. The Chair signed the minutes and a copy will be published on the website.</p>	HF	23/59
4.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES NOT ITEMISED SEPARATELY</p> <p>None</p>		23/60
5.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON FORTHCOMING BUSINESS</p> <p>The Chairman declared a personal interest in a planning application as was a close neighbour.</p>		23/61

Agenda Number		Action	Item
6.	REPORT FROM BUCKS UNITARY COUNCILLORS		23/62
6.1	<p data-bbox="236 275 539 309">Enforcement Updates</p> <p data-bbox="236 353 1182 427">Cllr Macbean reported that current enforcement matters in the parish are ongoing.</p>		23/62/1
6.2	<p data-bbox="236 472 687 506">Installation of VAS at Kings Ash</p> <p data-bbox="236 551 1235 624">Further surveys are required in Kings Ash with regard to the long awaited installation of the VAS machine to help address speeding issues in this area.</p> <p data-bbox="236 669 1214 779">An installation scheme is currently being worked up in Chartridge and Hivings Hill. The Chartridge VAS will hopefully address some of the issues with speeding traffic coming up from Chesham into the villages.</p>		23/62/2
6.3	<p data-bbox="236 819 485 853">Noise Complaints</p> <p data-bbox="236 898 1219 972">Councillors noted that there had been several noise complaints received by TLPC in relation to a business in the parish.</p> <p data-bbox="236 1016 1214 1126">TLPC has little power to address these issues, nor was it felt appropriate to act as a mediator and therefore has signposted complainants to Bucks Council environmental team to address the issue.</p> <p data-bbox="236 1171 1235 1245">Cllr Macbean confirmed that the environmental team have an open case and the matter is being looked into further.</p> <p data-bbox="236 1290 1190 1400">Councillors heard that any antisocial behaviour experienced or witnessed should be reported to the police 111 service or report the matter to environment health.</p>		
7.	<p data-bbox="236 1480 922 1514">COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</p> <p data-bbox="236 1559 1155 1590">One member of the public was present but had no comments to make.</p>		23/63
8.	<p data-bbox="236 1682 496 1715">CLERK'S REPORT</p> <p data-bbox="236 1760 464 1792">Nothing to report.</p>		23/64
9.	<p data-bbox="236 1872 488 1906">CHAIR'S REPORT</p>		23/65
9.1	<p data-bbox="236 1951 448 1984">General Report</p>		23/65/1

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	<p>• Co-option of Cllr: There has been no call to fill the casual vacancy by election. Councillors may therefore now encourage residents to consider applying to be co-opted. In all cases the recommended action is for any interested resident to contact the Clerk. Whilst not necessarily urgent, it would be useful to return to a full complement of Cllrs as soon as possible.</p> <p>• Chesham & Villages Community Board (C&VCB): The Chairman is due to meet Ross Tackley (C&VCB Manager) and to take a tour of parts of the parish and discuss current issues. Matters that will be discussed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of progress on VAS ○ Lee Common School ○ The playground ○ Other possible applications for funding. <p>• Parish Residents have recently been in touch about the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dog walkers ○ Anti-social behaviour / Noise ○ Planning issues and potential planning breaches <p>As appropriate, we have referred them to the relevant legislation and to Bucks Council.</p> <p>• Bucks Cllrs attendance at TLPC Meetings: Unitary Cllrs have only attended 1 of the last 7 TLPC meetings. Even when Unitary Cllrs have attended it has been difficult to make progress on specific items raised by TLPC – e.g. Planning enforcement; VAS machines; BCR Reviews; Broadband; etc. and these have had to be taken up separately with individual Unitary Councillors.</p> <p>Councillors discussed an alternative way of engaging with Unitary Cllrs namely to stop inviting them to the meetings (but can attend as a member of the public) and introduce specific meetings with Unitary councillors to discuss pre-arranged agenda items. Parish councillors agreed at this stage to continue to invite Unitary councillors but would review it again in due course.</p>		
9.2	<p>Response to Boundary Commission Reviews</p> <p>The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has now produced its final recommendations for the new Buckinghamshire Unitary Council (BC) electoral wards, to go to Parliament for approval.</p> <p>The Lee Parish Council (TLPC) made comments on the initial consultation to the effect that The Lee would very much prefer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be grouped together in a county electoral ward with similar rural parishes, • to be served by a single county councillor. • not wish to be grouped with Chesham, • ideally be grouped with Ballinger and South Heath. 		23/65/2

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	<p>The initial proposal from the LGBCE was for The Lee to be part of a redesigned 'Chiltern Ridges Ward', with a single BC councillor. The new ward would have included six rural parishes surrounding Chesham. TLPC noted that this met the first three of our four requests (Ballinger and South Heath were in a different ward).</p> <p>However, a further round of consultation has resulted in the 'final proposals' which now find TLPC in a new 'Chesham North Ward' with some other local parishes but also with half of Chesham Town... and represented by three County Councillors. In other words, with none of our four requests, in an even larger, mainly urban ward... and farther from what we would prefer than we are now.</p> <p>It seems that, whilst The Lee Parish Council and others supported the new Chiltern Ridges Ward idea with a single councillor, the Chesham and Amersham Conservative Association, the Conservative-led Buckinghamshire Council and four (Conservative) County Councillors all opposed it.</p> <p>The LGBCE therefore decided that linking The Lee Parish into a large three-councillor ward with half of Chesham Town would <i>"provide a stronger reflection of our statutory criteria"</i>.</p> <p>All this raises two important issues:</p> <p>1) If the LGBCE thinks our links with Chesham are so strong, why in a separate review is the Boundary Commission Review (BCR) of Parliamentary Constituencies proposing to move us (against our preferences) away from the Chesham and Amersham parliamentary constituency, into one centred around Princes Risborough?</p> <p>2) Why are the views on electoral ward boundaries of the local Conservative Association, the Conservative-led County Council and Conservative appointed County Cllrs apparently being given more weight in defining the new boundaries than the non-political local parish representatives and local residents?</p> <p>After discussion, Councillors agreed for the Chairman to write to the LGBCE and BCR (copy our MP) pointing out these unsatisfactory aspects of the reviews and inviting their response.</p>	CS	
10.	FINANCE & GOVERNANCE		23/70/1
10.1	<p>Internal Audit Report and Observations</p> <p>The meeting considered and approved the Internal Audit Report and Observations</p>		23/70/1
10.2	<p>Approval of Annual Governance Statement</p> <p>The meeting considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement.</p>		23/70/2

Agenda Number		Action	Item
10.3	<p>Approval of Accounting Statement and Other Associated Documents The meeting considered and approved the Accounting Statement and Other Associated Documents.</p>		23/70/3
10.4	<p>Notice of Public Rights The meeting considered and approved the Notice of Public Rights for the period from 30th June to 11th August 2024. The notice would be published on the 26th June 2024 on noticeboards and the website.</p> <p>As TLPC income was above the £25K threshold, a limited assurance external audit was required and the Clerk would arrange the necessary paperwork to be sent to the auditor.</p>	HJF	23/70/4
10.5	<p>To note the Accounts for period ending 31st May 2023</p> <p>See APPENDIX 1 for Financial Summary – 1st April 2022 to 31st May 2023</p>		23/70/5
10.6	<p>Bank Accounts and Mandate</p> <p>Nick Rose has been added to the bank mandate, which needs to be activated before he has access to the online banking facility.</p>		23/70/6
10.7	<p>Invoices Noted as Paid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sovereign Play Equipment/Beam - £360.00 • Internal Audit - £140.00 • 50% PO Box - £198.00 		23/70/7
11	<p>COUNCIL PROPERTY – REPORTS AND ACTIONS</p>		23/71
11.1	<p>Playground Equipment</p> <p>The clerk has been in contact with Chesham Town Council's parks team to arrange a date for the installation of the replacement beam on the trim trail.</p>		23/71/1
11.2	<p>Sovereign Estimate for Replacement Matting</p> <p>The Clerk continues to discuss costs of replacement matting with other providers.</p>		23/71/2
11.3	<p>Benches and Tables at the Playground and Allotments</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>		23/71/3
11.4	<p>Grass, trees, hedges, gates and fencing at the allotments and playground</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>		23/71/4

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11.5	<p>Allotments and Tenancies</p> <p>At the Open Meeting with allotment tenants on 6th June 2023, the Parish Council agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. introduce a more structured method of individual feedback from regular plot inspections B. consider how best to refurbish unused allotments and bring them back into use C. re-visit/review the current policies/decisions on fencing, parking, chemicals/tools/storage on site and, where appropriate, engage with tenants' representatives. <p><u>A: Plot inspections and individual feedback</u></p> <p>Three general conclusions were drawn from the meeting and subsequent research:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TLPC allotments are unusual in the fact that they share the area with a children's playground and public footpath, both of which are used regularly. 2. TLPC's Terms and Conditions are very much in line with everyone else's; although some minor tweaking might be considered. 3. TLPC has been much more lax in the past in ignoring non-compliance than other parishes / towns, which also seem to have a clearer policy on inspection, compliance and enforcement. <p>Although TLPC have recently carried out inspections, one of the criticisms levied on the council at the open meeting is the way allotment holders were communicated with on a blanket basis with requests/instructions to take action. It was felt that a more individual approach was needed. Subsequent research by the Clerk and Cllrs has discovered that most parish/town councils have a clearer policy on allotment inspection and contravention procedure based on a plot-by-plot review.</p> <p>TLPC considered the idea of 'independent' inspections (perhaps by employing another council's officer or an ex-officer). However, this is not common and TLPC realistically only has the option of continuing to use the Clerk and Councillors. Although time-consuming, this is thought to be the only sensible plan.</p> <p>Having researched at length, held discussions with other parishes the parish council approved a new Policy for Allotment Inspections, which will be circulated to allotment tenants.</p> <p>The member of the public present asked to speak and standing orders were suspended in order to do so. The question was raised as to why the opportunity to collaborate with allotment tenants was not taken when considering the content of the Allotment Inspection Policy. The Chairman highlighted that the introduction of a site-by-site inspection policy had arisen directly out of the open meeting, that there had not been any further communication from allotment tenants since the open meeting and that policy and terms and conditions of the use of the allotments was the remit of</p>		23/71/5

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	<p>the landowner, in this case, the Parish Council. Furthermore, extensive research and discussions had taken place with other parishes in order to ascertain a reasonable and fair policy with regard to allotment inspections. Allotment tenants at The Lee Common Allotment site were not being expected to adhere to any unusual or unreasonable terms and conditions, and it had been agreed that in recent years the enforcement of these terms and conditions had become lax. The Allotment Inspection Policy would strengthen the expectations of tenants during their yearly tenancies.</p> <p><u>B: Refurbishing used allotments</u></p> <p>TLPC currently have three vacant plots which have become over-grown with grass and weed; prospective allotment holders on the waiting list have been reluctant to take over plots in such condition, even though, in the past, some have. At present, TLPC policy is keep the grass / weeds down on these sites by contractor strimming.</p> <p>The Clerk has also spoken to a local contractor who has offered to clear the site of grass and weed after strimming, removing it all from the site, with a quotation of £1,700 + VAT per plot. He has also offered alternatively to spray and rotovate each plot for £800 +VAT per plot.</p> <p>TLPC councillors and the Clerk discussed the costs and agreed that this was outside the budget allocated for allotment maintenance. Chesham Town Council parks team will be asked to brush cut the areas and the Clerk will offer the plots to prospective tenants free of charge for the first year, if they choose to take on the tenancy.</p> <p><u>C: Review of current policies / decisions</u></p> <p>C.1 Fencing & gates</p> <p>TLPC carried out an extensive investigation into the feasibility and cost of fencing parts of the allotment/playground area in 2021/22. The proposal brought to council was to demarcate the different areas, by erecting 280 m of fencing, 6 x pedestrian gates and 2 x vehicle gates. The fencing would be 4 feet high, with stock-proof fencing on the lower part and single strand wire on the upper.</p> <p>In July 2022 (at Min 22/73) council discussed the advantages and disadvantages of erecting fencing in the allotments and also whether any proposed fencing solution would address the issue of protecting allotments from dogs, children and deer. Having considered the cost implications, ongoing maintenance, the proposed fencing, the fact that not all allotment holders wanted this change, and the issue in hand, Councillors unanimously agreed that fencing around the whole of allotments was not a viable proposition and therefore would not take place. Instead, in October 2022, TLPC agreed to permit individual fencing of plots, subject to prior permission, approval of fencing type and £150.00 deposit with the Council (in case removal of the fencing at the end of the tenancy is required). It was clear from the recent meeting that some tenants (but not all) would still like the two allotment areas completely fenced-in. However, having re-examined</p>		

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	<p>the earlier analysis it is not clear that there is an acceptable solution for the Council.</p> <p>TLPC agreed that the current policy regarding fencing would remain in place.</p> <p>C.2 Parking TLPC have had several reviews of parking in the recent past:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general review of parking in Oxford Street resulting in Bucks Council agreeing to white-line painting near the school and road junctions. • A possible on-site parking area at the allotments and near the allotments. This idea was again rejected on cost/benefit grounds, pedestrian safety and difficulties on policing who would and would not be permitted to park there. • A proposal to ask allotment holders and residents to park alongside the hedge side of Oxford Street. <p>At the recent meeting, tenants requested that ideas such as opening the 'spoilt allotments' to 'rough parking' and/or more structured parking on the allotment side of Oxford Street be considered, as both would result in more spaces nearer to the allotment gates. However, having re-examined the earlier analysis, these ideas cannot sensibly be taken forward by TLPC. This is due to the fact that the allotments share an area with the playground and a public footpath and vehicle movements in the area must be kept to an absolute minimum for the health & safety of all users of the area.</p> <p>TLPC agreed to retain the current policy, but will be open to discussion if any new proposal comes forward.</p> <p>C.3 Chemicals / tools / storage on site The current T&Cs require: <i>13. The Tenant shall not store on site any chemicals of any kind... Chemicals which are used either for weed eradication or plant propagation must be removed from the site after use.</i></p> <p>TLPC agreed to retain the current terms and conditions regarding chemicals</p> <p>Some tenants would like to see a secure general storage area on-site, as often they are not able to park nearby and have to carry tools in/out. Whilst a general storage area might have some advantages to tenants, it is difficult to see how secure access could be maintained by TLPC.</p> <p>Some equipment is difficult to keep inside locked storage. In principle the Council accepts that there may be other safe ways of keeping tools / equipment on site and will review this during inspections.</p> <p>TLPC agreed that a secure general storage area would not be implemented. The terms and conditions requiring the safe storage of tools will remain.</p>		
11.6	Well and Memorial		23/71/6

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	The Clerk was asked to remind Cllr Wilkinson that the parish council approved cleaning of the war memorial at the May meeting.	HF																
11.7	Roadside Benches Nothing to report.		23/71/7															
11.8	Asset Ownership The Chairman and Clerk have been in contact with a number of local residents in connection with a parcel of gifted land to the parish council many years ago. An informal meeting has been arranged to discuss ownership, maintenance, access and boundaries and councillors will be updated on the progress of this meeting in due course.		23/71/8															
11.9	Barnaby Usborne Memorial Tree The Barnaby Usborne Memorial Tree has now been planted. Councillors noted that the tree would need regular watering throughout the summer season and agreed to organise a rota to do so.	NR	23/71/9															
12.	TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ON BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL ISSUES		23/72															
12.1	Footpaths Report circulated		23/72/1															
12.2	Roads Nothing to report.		23/72/2															
12.3	BMKALC Update Nothing to report.		23/72/3															
13.	PLANNING APPLICATIONS The Clerk reported the following: <table border="1" data-bbox="236 1749 1230 2074"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="236 1749 432 1825">Planning Application</th> <th data-bbox="432 1749 1023 1825">Address</th> <th data-bbox="1023 1749 1230 1825">Decision</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="236 1825 1230 1872">Decision Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="236 1872 432 1948">PL/23/1199/FA</td> <td data-bbox="432 1872 1023 1948">The Cart House Arrewig Lane Chartridge Buckinghamshire</td> <td data-bbox="1023 1872 1230 1948">Conditional Permission</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="236 1948 432 2024">PL/23/1060/FA</td> <td data-bbox="432 1948 1023 2024">Kiln Cottage Swan Bottom Road The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NX</td> <td data-bbox="1023 1948 1230 2024">Conditional Permission</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="236 2024 432 2074">PL/23/1418/KA</td> <td data-bbox="432 2024 1023 2074">Guild Cottage Lee Clump Road The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9LZ</td> <td data-bbox="1023 2024 1230 2074">TPO shall not be made</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Planning Application	Address	Decision	Decision Completed			PL/23/1199/FA	The Cart House Arrewig Lane Chartridge Buckinghamshire	Conditional Permission	PL/23/1060/FA	Kiln Cottage Swan Bottom Road The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NX	Conditional Permission	PL/23/1418/KA	Guild Cottage Lee Clump Road The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9LZ	TPO shall not be made		23/73
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14.	HS2 CONSTRUCTION AND ENGAGEMENT		23/74																														
14.1	<p>The earth-moving season is in full swing, and all the usual traffic impacts can be expected to continue (see below).</p> <p>There have been no more sink holes as the tunnelling machines pass under the River Misbourne, Shardeloes Lake and the A413. There are also no updates on plans for the bridges at Leather Lane and Bowood Lane.</p> <p>Local support for community projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions on HS2 project support for Lee Common School have stalled and no clear project has emerged yet to be taken forward. The school seems to be ineligible to apply for CEF funds and offers of Forest School developed are hampered by the conditions attached to their leased area of The Park. Further discussions are also needed before a proposal to replace safety matting in the children's playground can be put to the Council. EKFB have offered fencing and (possibly) a modest financial contribution. <p>'Rebalancing' of the work for local Main Works Contractors (MWCs) The continuing delays in the construction of the railway between South Heath and Wendover (which have been apparent to local residents for some time) seem to have been finally recognised by HS2 Ltd. They recently announced that they now plan to 're-balance' the work in our area between ALIGN (the tunnellers approaching South Heath) and EKFB (the surface workers north of South Heath). It has long been apparent that the tunnelled section is being built an awful lot quicker than the local surface section, so asking ALIGN to take over some of EKFB's surface package is not a total surprise. Just a pity they haven't asked them to keep on tunnelling.</p>																																

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	<p>The only benefit to The Lee that may arise from any changes (for which details are still to be announced) is that with two MWCs working in the immediate local area, Lee Common School may get a second chance to bid for funds (see above).</p> <p>Road / lane closures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday 19th to Friday 24th June: overnight closure of the A413 London Road, Wendover: 8:30 pm to 5:30 am. Friday 30th June to Monday 3rd July: full weekend closure of the A413 London Road, Wendover: 8:30 pm Friday to 5:30 am Monday. Friday 7th to Monday 10th July: lane closure at the same location (single lane operation with traffic lights) 8:30 pm Friday to 5:30 pm Monday. Little Missenden bypass: almost daily single lane operation for short periods during July. Night-time movements of abnormal loads up the A413 into the GM site have started – so far without any apparent complaints. <p>The above dates remain provisional; for the latest updates on HS2 works visit www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/map/</p>		
15.	PARISH COMMUNICATIONS		23/75
15.1	<p>Website/Forum Developments</p> <p>The proposals approved at the last meeting for IT / website / Forum support to be provided by (former Cllr) Ruth Fowler had been implemented and so far were working well. Otherwise nothing major to report.</p>		23/75/1
15.2	<p>Emails and Cloud Storage</p> <p>Nothing to report. (See 15.1)</p>		23/75/2
15.3	<p>To agree items for the next Newsletter</p> <p>TLPC plan to include in the July Newsletter the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr vacancy Audit of Accounts Electoral Boundary Reviews 		23/75/3
16.	<p>DATES FOR MEETINGS</p> <p>Dates for next full meetings is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuesday, 19th September 2023 Tuesday, 14th November 2023 		23/76
	<p>The meeting closed at 9:30pm</p> <p>CHAIR..... Date</p>		

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REPORTING PERIOD: 1st April 2023 - 31st May 2023

1. Current account bank reconciliation			
	Opening balance 1 April 2023	5,849.97	
A	Income - current year	12,737.36	
	Transfers from savings	-	
	Receipts Subtotal	12,737.36	
B	Cheques paid last financial year and presented this year	-	
C	Expenditure - current year(minus unrepresented chqs in this financial year)	4,243.90	
D	Transfers to savings	-	
E	Payments Subtotal	4,243.90	
E	Closing balance = (Opening Balance + A)-E	14,343.43	
F	Cheques paid last financial year that have not been presented	-	
G	Unrepresented cheques this year	-	
H	Unrepresented cheques total	-	
	Total Committed Expenditure to date for financial year (D+H)	4,243.90	

2. NEW Savings account bank reconciliation			
	Opening balance 1 April 2023	15,029.16	
A	Receipts - current year	-	
	Interest	-	
	Income Subtotal	-	
B	Payments	-	
	Expenditure Subtotal	-	
C	Closing balance = (Opening Balance + A)-B	15,029.16	

3. Bank Reconciliation			
	Opening balance 1 April 2023	20,879.13	
A	Current Account	14,343.43	
	Savings Account	15,029.16	
	Total Cash in Bank	29,372.59	