

The Lee Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of THE LEE PARISH COUNCIL (TLPC) held at The Lee Parish Hall on Tuesday, 12th November 2024 at 7.30pm

Present	Councillor C Sully (Chair)	CS
	Councillor D Chinnery (Vice-Chair)	DC
	Councillor H Barrett-Mold	HBM
	Councillor A Bunce	AB
	Councillor C Little	CL
	Councillor N Rose	NR
	Councillor J Wilkinson	JW
In Attendance	Mrs H Farrelly (Clerk)	HF
	Sergent Roy Evans	
	Community Support Officer Jasmine Allport	
	Three members of the public	
Apologies	Bucks Councillor Birchley	
	Bucks Councillor Macbean	
Abbreviations	The Lee Parish Council	TLPC
	Buckinghamshire Council	BC

Agenda Number	Action	Item
1		24/85
<p>INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY CHAIR</p> <p>Councillor Sully welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>		
<p>VISIT FROM LOCAL POLICE</p> <p>Following a series of car-related crimes in the parish earlier this year, Sgt Roy Evans and Community Support Officer Jasmine Allport attended the Parish Council meeting to discuss these issues with the Parish Council and residents.</p> <p>Sgt Evans described the current policing model in the Thames Valley area and explained how individual crimes (such as theft from vehicles) could end up being investigated by officers from well outside of the immediate area (for example, in the case of vehicle crimes by Units based in Oxford or Milton Keynes). Nonetheless he explained that the local community police are there to support such investigations and if a victim feels they are not receiving proper support and feedback from the Unit investigation, then they should complain and request a community officer visit.</p> <p>We discussed both the reporting of crimes and the steps that residents can take to reduce the risk of vehicle crime. Some follow-up actions were agreed at an individual and parish level, including more regular visits to the local area by police officers. For further information on how to minimise the risks associated with vehicle crime, see Prevent theft from a vehicle Crime Prevention Thames Valley Police</p>		

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	<p>The officers also brought with them leaflets on 'Home Security' and ' Marking and Registering your Property' as well as a small supply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number Plate Security Screws • 'Card defenders' • Car windscreen scrapers • 'Faraday Key Pouches' • Property marking pens 		
2.	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Buckinghamshire Councillor Birchley and McBean sent their apologies.</p>		24/86
3.	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th September 2024 were approved. The Chair signed the minutes, and a copy will be published on the website.</p>		24/87
4.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES NOT ITEMISED SEPARATELY</p>		24/88
	<p>The following actions were carried forward to next year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of volunteer jobs • Arranging an arborist to inspect PC trees • Bench locations 	CS	
5.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON FORTHCOMING BUSINESS</p> <p>None</p>		24/89
6.	<p>REPORT FROM BUCKS UNITARY COUNCILLORS</p> <p>None</p>		24/90
7.	<p>COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</p> <p>None</p>		24/91
8.	<p>CLERK'S REPORT</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>		24/92

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9	CHAIR'S REPORT		24/93
9.1	<p>Chesham & Villages Community Board – application for funding support (see also Item 11.1)</p> <p>TLPC are pleased to report that the Chesham and Villages Community Board (CVCB) have agreed to make a 50% contribution to the playground improvements in the fort / slide area. This grant amounts to £3,711 which will be matched by TLPC funds from its Playground Reserve.</p>		24/93/1
9.2	<p>The Lee Parish Hall Committee</p> <p>The Clerk, Cllr Rose and Cllr Sully met Trustees of The Lee Parish Hall Committee (TLPHC) in late September to discuss matters arising from the transfer of the freehold of the site at Lee Clump Road to the Parish Hall Committee (the site currently owned by the Stewart-Liberty Estate). As well as discussing governance and management issues, we also agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TLPC may use the storeroom/cupboard at the back of the hall for Parish Council records • TLPC and TLPHC will give more thought to designing / specifying a permanent development at the rear of the hall, taking the opportunity to apply for a CEF grant. The first steps are to define the 'need' and to design some solutions. • TLPC to consider using Hall for small meetings in future (e.g. Finance, HS2, Bucks Council) • TLPC to explore 'free office furniture' possibilities with ALIGN. 		24/93/2
9.3	<p>Other Questions raised recently by residents include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic monitoring on Ballinger Road • Permitted development of walls on property boundaries • High and over-grown hedges affecting public rights of way and individual properties • Road closures – not just in the parish • Bucks Council's expenditure survey • St John the Baptist Church • Vehicle Crime 		24/93/3
10	FINANCE & GOVERNANCE		24/94
10.1	<p>To note 2024/25 Accounts to 31st October 2024</p> <p><i>[A reminder that committed expenditure items for 2023/24 in respect of Clerk's pension and Chesham Town Council invoicing, did not find their way into the accounts for that year and were also not reflected in the budget for 2024/25. As these were significant sums and we run on 'cash accounting' (i.e. no accruals) we allocated part of the end of year Reserves for 2023/24 to cover these items in 2024/25.]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Finance and Governance Group have recently made a revised projection of the financial out-turn this year (2024/25) on the assumptions that: 		24/94/1

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The reserves described above from 2023/24 will be 'released' at the year end. ○ The agreed playground improvements are completed in 2024/25 (see 11.1) ○ VAT recovery on the above also takes place this year ○ The pond land registration is completed (but the sale is carried over to 2025/26) ○ Any hedging/fencing replacement at the allotments / playground area is funded by the HS2 project. ● If any of these proves not to be the case, then the out-turn position may be different and new 'nominated reserves' may have to be provided at the year end. ● On the above assumptions the projection for the current year is for a deficit of £312 cf a budgeted deficit of £67. ● The accounts have been reconciled with Bank Statements. ● Agreed a £75 grant to Lee Common School to support the frog patrol project. 		
10.2.2	<p>To discuss initial thoughts on a Budget and Precept for 2025/26</p> <p>Based on the above, the 3-year projection last reviewed by the Council has been updated (with an extra year added) and was circulated to all councillors. New assumptions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the introduction of NI contributions on the Clerk's salary w.e.f. 1st April 2025 (being reviewed by NALC with the Government) ● Any further significant improvements at the playground are CEF funded or financed from reserves. ● At this stage the expected revenue from the sale of the pond (£9,000) has not been included but will clearly make a significant difference if/when it happens. <p>Otherwise, a continuing pattern of income/expenditure is assumed, with non-salary costs rising at 6% per annum. In order to continue to slowly build our general reserves, Precept increases each year between 5% and 6% have been assumed.</p> <p>Councillors were asked to consider the proposed budget with a decision on the final budget to be made at the January 2025 meeting. Once this has been approved, councillors will be asked to set the precept, noting this needs to reported to Bucks Council by the 31st January 2025.</p>		24/94/2
10.3	<p>Bank accounts and mandate</p> <p>No progress has been made on adding Cllr Barrett-Mold to the bank mandate. This will be actioned in due course.</p>	HJF	24/94/3
10.4	<p>To note salary increases agreed wef 1st April 2024</p> <p>Local Government have now agreed the pay scale increases from the 1st April 2024 for the clerk role. Current SCP20 pay grade is £15.75 per hour and this is increasing to £16.37 per hour. Back pay will be paid in the December payroll of £193.44.</p>		
10.5	<p>To receive an update on Pension arrangements</p> <p>TLPC have finally got to the bottom of why DCK are not deducting pension contributions at the level anticipated.</p>		24/94/4

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	<p>There is a threshold salary (£1,560 per quarter) up to which no pension contributions need necessarily be made. We recognised that in the paper circulated for the December 2024 TLPC meeting but then didn't clarify it when reporting in the Minutes: <i>"After discussion the council agreed the pension contributions for the clerk roles, which will commence in quarter 3."</i></p> <p>DCK assumed the pension contributions were only for taxable pay above the threshold; however, a letter subsequently sent to the Clerk confirmed that <i>"... councillors approved a pension for the clerk role... with employer contributions of 10% of gross annual salary and 5% contributions from the employee."</i></p> <p>Councillors confirmed this decision that pension contributions would be on gross salary and will instruct DCK accounting to ask them to recalculate and deduct employer and employee contributions from October 2023 at 10% and 5% respectively of total taxable pay.</p> <p>If this proves impossible (because of the elapsed time), then TLPC will DCK to make these changes w.e.f. 1st April 2024.</p>		
10.6	<p>To approve invoices since the last meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surrey Hills Solicitors - £1,080.00 • Sinorrah – £361.73 • DCK Accounting - £45.60 • Tactical Facilities Management - £485.00 (2 x £242.50) • Poppy Wreath (Cllr Sully) - £24.49 		24/94/5
10.7	<p>To approve invoice for payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tactical Facilities Management - £242.50 • RG Bunce Hedge Cutting - £960.00 		24/94/6
11	<p>COUNCIL PROPERTY – REPORTS AND ACTIONS</p>		24/95
11.1	<p>Playground Equipment</p> <p>The arrangements for the modification and surface to the fort area and trim trail repairs are now progressing and should be completed by end of the financial year. Matched funding has been agreed.</p> <p>The climbing frame is regularly criticised in external inspection reports. The structure is deteriorating and is being inspected regularly. There are concerns on the monkey bars . The bars do deteriorate and have been replaced as needed. There has been failure with teenagers using the bars. There is ongoing consideration on replacing the climbing frame, but this will require funding. In the meantime, the options are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the unit and reinstate the ground surface • Remove the monkey bars on the climbing frame • Continue to monitor <p>Councillors agreed to cut the monkey bars off the climbing frame to avoid any further issues.</p>		24/95/1

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	<p>The playground has recently been inspected and the report has been circulated.</p> <p>EKFB have been contacted to discuss the removal of the hedge between the allotment and playground and replace with a fence. This is being discussed with the Social Value Manager and contractor to see if this can be progressed.</p>		
11.2	<p>Benches and Tables at the Playground and Allotments</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>		24/95/2
11.3	<p>Grass, trees, hedges, gates and fencing at the allotments and playground</p> <p>The volunteer group will meet in the new year to clear debris from the unused allotments. Cllr Sully also agreed to contact the scouts to see if they could offer any help.</p>	CS	24/95/3
11.4	<p>Allotments and Tenancies</p> <p>Colin Little to determine the boundary line behind the playground / allotments and the property to the East / South-East. Hayley Farrelly will obtain the registry title plan for the allotment and playground from the Land Registry.</p>	CL/ HJF	24/95/4
11.5	<p>Well and Memorial</p> <p>Well and memorial are in good order.</p> <p>Overhanging tree branches are rubbing on the top of the well tiles. Hayley Farrelly will contact the resident to ask if this can be cut back.</p> <p>It had previously been agreed to not replace, the now rotten posts around the memorial. In the new year, the volunteer group will arrange to carry out pointing work at the memorial and fill in the post-holes.</p>	HJF	24/95/5
11.6	<p>Roadside Benches</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>		24/95/6
11.7	<p>Lee Clump Pond</p> <p>Communication has been made with the solicitor to update the council on progress that has been made, but a response had not been received before the council meeting.</p>		24/95/7
11.8	<p>Barnaby Osborne Memorial Tree</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>		24/95/8

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12.	TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ON BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL ISSUES		24/96																																	
12.1	Footpaths Some repair work to footpaths is currently being done by the Chiltern Society in the parish.		24/96/1																																	
12.2	Roads Concern has been raised by some residents and councillors about an potential encroachment onto Bucks owned grass verges and highways which is being investigated by the Highways team.		24/96/2																																	
12.3	BMKALC Update Street trading consultation has gone quiet so nothing further to comment on the matter.		24/96/3																																	
13.	PLANNING APPLICATIONS		24/97																																	
13.1	The Clerk reported the following: <table border="1" data-bbox="225 1043 1235 1872"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="225 1043 472 1128">Planning Application</th> <th data-bbox="472 1043 935 1128">Address</th> <th data-bbox="935 1043 1235 1128">Decision</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="225 1128 1235 1191">Decision Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="225 1191 472 1276">PL/24/0572/FA</td> <td data-bbox="472 1191 935 1276">Thearon Oxford Street Lee Common Buckinghamshire HP16 9JT</td> <td data-bbox="935 1191 1235 1276">Conditional Permission</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="225 1276 472 1361">PL/24/2287/FA</td> <td data-bbox="472 1276 935 1361">North Acre Swan Bottom The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NN</td> <td data-bbox="935 1276 1235 1361">Conditional Permission</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="225 1361 472 1447">PL/24/2446/FA</td> <td data-bbox="472 1361 935 1447">High Beeches Village Road Lee Common Buckinghamshire HP16 9NE</td> <td data-bbox="935 1361 1235 1447">Conditional Permission</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="225 1447 472 1532">PL/24/2599/FA</td> <td data-bbox="472 1447 935 1532">White Gables Swan Bottom The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NQ</td> <td data-bbox="935 1447 1235 1532">Conditional Permission</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="225 1532 1235 1594">Decision Pending</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="225 1594 472 1680">PL/22/3510/FA</td> <td data-bbox="472 1594 935 1680">Land to The Rear of White Cottage Swan Bottom The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NH</td> <td data-bbox="935 1594 1235 1680">Comments submitted Decision Pending</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="225 1680 472 1765">PL/24/2062/FA</td> <td data-bbox="472 1680 935 1765">Elmwood Swan Bottom The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NQ</td> <td data-bbox="935 1680 1235 1765">Comments submitted Decision Pending</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="225 1765 1235 1827">Decision yet to be submitted</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="225 1827 1235 1872">NONE</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Planning Application	Address	Decision	Decision Completed			PL/24/0572/FA	Thearon Oxford Street Lee Common Buckinghamshire HP16 9JT	Conditional Permission	PL/24/2287/FA	North Acre Swan Bottom The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NN	Conditional Permission	PL/24/2446/FA	High Beeches Village Road Lee Common Buckinghamshire HP16 9NE	Conditional Permission	PL/24/2599/FA	White Gables Swan Bottom The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NQ	Conditional Permission	Decision Pending			PL/22/3510/FA	Land to The Rear of White Cottage Swan Bottom The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NH	Comments submitted Decision Pending	PL/24/2062/FA	Elmwood Swan Bottom The Lee Buckinghamshire HP16 9NQ	Comments submitted Decision Pending	Decision yet to be submitted			NONE				24/97/1
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13.2	Other Planning Matters Nothing to report.		24/97/2																																	

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14.	HS2 CONSTRUCTION AND ENGAGEMENT		24/98
	<p>The HS2 Independent Construction Commissioner, Sir Mark Worthington, visited the area again in November and met with Cllrs from Great Missenden, The Lee and Bucks Councils to hear first-hand of our concerns. We were also joined by our local MP's representative Ian Kelly.</p> <p>At the meeting, we discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delays to the project as a result of the re-assignment of work between Main Works Contractors (MWCs) in the area, • the lack of engagement on rail systems issues (the track, the signals, the catenary and the power supply) and the interface between MWCs and the Rail System Contractors, • unexpected planned lengthy road closures in the area likely to cause additional local social and business impacts, • the continuing impacts on farmers and landowners, • landscaping and tree-planting in the Chilterns National Landscape, • social value projects and their future funding. <p>The Commissioner took notes and will do what he can to bring these issues to the attention of senior managers on the project.</p> <p>At the start of 2025, of immediate interest (and concern) will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late January: 24 hr closure of the A413 during the viaduct 'push' over the A413 and the Chiltern Line railway. • January to July: six months of 24/7 closure of Rocky Lane. <i>[Post-meeting Note: Now delayed to start February.]</i> Discussion with Bucks Council and the project on how best to mitigate the impact continue. • August or later: 24/7 closure of Leather Lane (period to be determined). • The situation in respect of Bowood Lane during 2025 also remains under discussion. <p>Full details of all these plans have still to emerge.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The six-month closure of Rocky Lane next year is causing concern in the parish and elsewhere (especially in Wendover). TLPC have complained that this appears to be way outside the expectation of the local communities and that diversions, signposting and communication all need careful and detailed attention. Bucks Council have yet to formally approve the plans, although there seems little doubt that they eventually will. 2. An onsite meeting was held in October with senior HS2 Ltd and EKFB staff (and Bucks Council) to review the (lack of) tree growth at Jones Hill Wood / Bowood Lane. The senior staff appeared to understand the concern and action is supposed to be taken. We have a greed a further review at the end of the winter. 3. TLPC has had no news of its second applications to the final tranche of the HS2 / Bucks Road Safety Fund, (in respect of VAS / MVAS / SID in the Kings Ash (30 mph) and Lee Gate / Swan Bottom areas (40 mph). 		

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	<p>4. TLPC have approached EKFB in respect of a 'Social Value' project at the allotments / playground area which involve replacing the scruffy hedge between the allotments and the children's playground with new fencing. We await a decision.</p> <p>5. Ideally, we would wish to support the Parish Hall Committee (PHC) in applying for an HS2 CEF grant to construct a parish archive / small meeting room. However other options also remain, including for TLPC to make a second application for improvements at the children's playground.</p>		
15	PARISH COMMUNICATIONS		24/99
15.1	<p>The Lee Forum / Website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Internal Auditor has recommended we publish more information on the website than we currently do about PC finances and meeting papers and make other updates to the website. We have already concluded that we do not wish / need to publish PC Meeting papers in advance on the website but will review (again) the financial information posted. • Some minor updates have been made to the website to clarify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the connection between the Cock & Rabbitt and Midsomer Murders • There have been a few 'issues' to deal with on the Forum over the past few months, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Notice of firework events ○ Recommendations for local pubs 		24/99/1
15.2	<p>Emails and Cloud Storage</p> <p>Still reviewing cloud storage options.</p>	CS	24/99/2
15.3	<p>The Lee Newsletter</p> <p>Possible topics for the December edition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground update • TVP attendance 		24/99/3
16.	<p>DATES FOR MEETINGS</p> <p>Date for next full meeting is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 14th January • Tuesday 11th March 		24/100
	<p>The meeting closed at 9.40pm</p> <p>CHAIR..... Date</p>		

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REPORTING PERIOD: 1st April 2024 - 31st October 2024

1. Current account bank reconciliation		
	Opening balance 1 April 2024	6,613.09
A	Income - current year	27,431.98
	Transfers from savings	-
	Receipts Subtotal	27,431.98
B	Cheques paid last financial year and presented this year	-
C	Expenditure - current year(minus unrepresented chqs in this financial year)	13,968.11
D	Transfers to savings	-
E	Payments Subtotal	13,968.11
E	Closing balance = (Opening Balance + A)-E	20,076.96
F	Cheques paid last financial year that have not been presented	-
G	Unpresented cheques this year	-
H	Unpresented cheques total	-
	Total Committed Expenditure to date for financial year (D+H)	13,968.11

2. NEW Savings account bank reconciliation		
	Opening balance 1 April 2024	15,426.97
A	Receipts - current year	
	Interest	213.44
	Income Subtotal	213.44
B	Payments	-
	Expenditure Subtotal	-
C	Closing balance = (Opening Balance + A)-B	15,640.41

3. Bank Reconciliation		
	Opening balance 1 April 2024	22,040.06
A	Current Account	20,076.96
	Savings Account	15,640.41
	Total Cash in Bank	35,717.37