

## The Lee Parish Council

### Minutes of the meeting of THE LEE PARISH COUNCIL (TLPC) held at The Lee Parish Hall on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 7.30pm

<b>Present</b>	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
<b>In Attendance</b>	Mrs H Farrelly (Clerk)	HF
<b>Apologies</b>	Bucks Councillor Birchley	
	Bucks Councillor Macbean	
<b>Abbreviations</b>	The Lee Parish Council	TLPC
	Buckinghamshire Council	BC

Agenda Number	Action	Item
1		25/1
<b>INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY CHAIR</b>		
Councillor Sully welcomed everyone to the meeting.		
2.		25/2
<b>APOLOGIES</b>		
BC Councillors Birchley and Macbean had sent their apologies		
3.		25/3
<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b>		
The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 were approved. The Chair signed the minutes, and a copy will be published on the website.		
4.		25/4
<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES NOT ITEMISED SEPARATELY</b>		
The following actions were carried forward to next year:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community police to be invited back for a Saturday morning session in March to meet the community outside The Lee Shop. This will be communicated in The Lee Newsletter.</li> <li>• New owners for the benches</li> </ul>		CS
		CS
5.		25/5
<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON FORTHCOMING BUSINESS</b>		
None		

Agenda Number		Action	Item
6.	<p><b>REPORT FROM BUCKS UNITARY COUNCILLORS</b></p> <p>None</p>		25/6
7.	<p><b>COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</b></p> <p>None</p>		25/7
8.	<p><b>CLERK'S REPORT</b></p> <p>Councillors approved the use of Deborah O'Brian as the Internal Auditor.</p>		25/8
9	<p><b>CHAIR'S REPORT</b></p>		25/9
9.1	<p><b>Public Rights of Way / Open Access</b></p> <p>Since the last parish meeting, there has been discussion amongst residents regarding the fencing being erected in the field surrounding Park Cottage. Unfortunately, there has also been reports from the new owners of theft and vandalism in the area (which were reported to the police) and of heated exchanges between walkers and contractors working in the field. Parish Councillors spoke to the landowner, visited the field and considered the legal aspects of rights-of-way. At that time, councillors concluded:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is no open access land in the parish, and therefore no general "Right to Roam".</li> <li>2. The Public Rights of Way (PROW) near the area of concern are shown on the plan attached. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o TLE/28A from Oxford Street along the footpath past the school and then along the hedge line to the gate by the shop</li> <li>o TLE/28/1 from the bottom of School Lane down to the Bridleway in the woods (TLE/30)</li> <li>o TLE/31 from Cherry Tree Lane also down to the Bridleway in the woods (TLE/30)</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. NOTE: There is no direct PROW from the bottom of School Lane (TLE/28) to the footpath leading to the shop (TLE/28A).</li> <li>4. There is also no PROW from Cherry Tree Lane to the school, other than via TLE/31, TLE/30 and TLE28.</li> </ol> <p>The owner advised that fencing was being installed alongside TLE/28A and TLE/28. The Parish Council concluded that the fencing being installed was in line with permitted agricultural development and the owners have given an assurance that they will attend to side / over-growth along the footpath and keep it in good order.</p> <p>The Parish Council also noted the consideration given by the owners by including a footpath to join TLE/28 and TLE/28a, as this specifically allows the public to walk behind the school (points 3 and 4 above). The Parish Council posted a message onto the Forum summarising the above.</p>		25/9/1

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	<p>Later in December, residents continued to contact the Council raising questions regarding prescriptive rights of way. Following discussion, Councillors agreed to remain outside of any legal claim involving open (prescriptive) access to these fields but will signpost residents to further information, if requested.</p>																											
9.2	<p><b>Chesham &amp; Villages Community Board (CVCB)</b></p> <p>Ross Tackley (the CVCB Manager) has been in touch to say they are approaching the deadline for funding applications for this financial year and wanted to see if there are any projects which TLPC think the Community Board might be able to support in our Parish, or if we know of any organisations they could support.</p> <p>He also advises that following the re-structure of Community Boards in May (when the total number of Community Boards goes down from 16 to 8), he will become the Community Board Manager for the East Chilterns Community Board (replacing Chesham, Amersham and the Missenden's CBs). TLPC notes that more than 99% of the residents in the new East Chilterns Community Board area do not live in The Lee parish. Furthermore, 96% of those eligible to vote for 'our' 3 new Bucks Cllrs in May also do not live in The Lee parish. This is disappointing.</p>	<p><b>Action</b> <b>All</b></p>	25/9/2																									
9.3	<p><b>The Lee Parish Hall – storage</b></p> <p>The Parish Hall Committee has agreed that TLPC may use the storeroom / cupboard at the back of the hall to store Parish Council records. As soon as we can find some convenient dates, the clerk and Cllr Sully will start moving archive material to the store.</p>	<p><b>CS/HF</b></p>	24/9/3																									
9.4	<p><b>Other Volunteer activities</b></p> <p>At the last PC meeting, TLPC noted a number of other volunteer jobs:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="220 1305 1233 1740"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><b>VOLUNTEER JOBS</b></th> <th><b>Notes</b></th> <th><b>Timing</b></th> <th><b>Who?</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Allotments- clear-up sites</td> <td>Skip Hire Involve Scouts?</td> <td>When renewals are clear</td> <td>HF/AB/et al</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Memorial • slab-cleaning / mortar • post removal/seeding</td> <td></td> <td>Anytime Spring</td> <td>?? ??</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Playground • remove monkey bars • seeding? - after EKFB / Broxap</td> <td></td> <td>Asap (Done) After work</td> <td>DC/CS DC/CS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Barnaby Usborne Tree Bench • buy &amp; install</td> <td>Also review tree</td> <td>Spring</td> <td>NR/CS/ et al</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<b>VOLUNTEER JOBS</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Who?</b>	1	Allotments- clear-up sites	Skip Hire Involve Scouts?	When renewals are clear	HF/AB/et al	2	Memorial • slab-cleaning / mortar • post removal/seeding		Anytime Spring	?? ??	3	Playground • remove monkey bars • seeding? - after EKFB / Broxap		Asap (Done) After work	DC/CS DC/CS	4	Barnaby Usborne Tree Bench • buy & install	Also review tree	Spring	NR/CS/ et al		24/9/4
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9.5	<p><b>Other questions / issues raised recently by residents include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road closures – in particular Rocky Lane</li> <li>• Dog-walking (in general)</li> <li>• Changes in school pupil allocation criteria</li> <li>• Fallen trees blocking footpaths</li> </ul>		25/9/5																									

Agenda Number		Action	Item
10	<b>COUNCIL PROPERTY – REPORTS AND ACTIONS</b>		25/10
10.1	<p data-bbox="220 235 547 271"><b>Playground Equipment</b></p> <p data-bbox="220 315 1201 378">The Clerk has been in contact with Broxap to establish a timeline for work being carried out on the playground but, as yet as not received a response.</p> <p data-bbox="220 416 1182 479">The monkey bars were removed from the climbing frame by the volunteer group.</p>		25/10/1
10.2	<p data-bbox="220 517 986 553"><b>Benches and Tables at the Playground and Allotments</b></p> <p data-bbox="220 591 451 627">Nothing to report.</p>		25/10/2
10.3	<p data-bbox="220 674 1082 745"><b>Grass, trees, hedges, gates and fencing at the allotments and playground</b></p> <p data-bbox="220 790 1217 898">EKFB have agreed to carry out a number of maintenance jobs at the playground and allotment which will improve the area. This includes work on the hedge, willow and adding some fencing and a gate.</p>		25/10/3
10.4	<p data-bbox="220 956 587 992"><b>Allotments and Tenancies</b></p> <p data-bbox="220 1030 1217 1169">Councillors discussed a number of jobs that need to be completed at the allotments including brush cutting unused plots and a general clear up of the area. A skip will be arranged, and a volunteer group will be put together to carry out the clear up.</p> <p data-bbox="220 1216 1193 1288">As spring is approaching, the clerk will contact our grass cutting contractor and ask for them to requote for the next year.</p>	HJF	25/10/4
10.5	<p data-bbox="220 1337 483 1373"><b>Well and Memorial</b></p> <p data-bbox="220 1411 1214 1518">All in good working order but some work on the pointing needs to be considered. It was agreed to contact the Scouts to see if they might be able to help with this.</p>	JW	25/10/5
10.6	<p data-bbox="220 1570 488 1606"><b>Roadside Benches</b></p> <p data-bbox="220 1644 451 1680">Nothing to report.</p>		25/10/6
10.7	<p data-bbox="220 1727 456 1762"><b>Lee Clump Pond</b></p> <p data-bbox="220 1800 1169 1863">Communication has been made with the solicitor to ask for an update on progress that has been made – a response has yet to be received.</p> <p data-bbox="220 1901 922 1937">The solicitor is in receipt of the requested information.</p>		25/10/7
10.8	<p data-bbox="220 1964 679 2000"><b>Barnaby Usborne Memorial Tree</b></p> <p data-bbox="220 2038 847 2074">A tree sleeve will be added to the tree in Spring.</p>	NR	25/10/8

Agenda Number		Action	Item
11	<b>FINANCE &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>		<b>25/11</b>
11.1	<p><b>To receive an update on pension and NIC arrangements (Clerk / Chair)</b></p> <p>Having discovered that pension contributions were being made at a lower level than we expected, TLPC re-confirmed "... a pension for the clerk ... with employer contributions of 10% of gross annual salary and 5% contributions from the employee." TLPC then instructed DCK accounting to recalculate and deduct employer and employee contributions accordingly.</p> <p>They have now reported that they will do this for the current financial year in Jan / Feb ready for the March payroll (this will also mean a backdated recovery and transfer to pension of money paid to the Clerk). However, the issue of the period October 2023 to April 2024 (the previous financial year) is much more difficult because of the elapsed time. The Clerk has offered to waive her additional pension rights over this earlier period, so in effect the 'gross annual salary' decision will only take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. This may offer a sensible way forward for which the Council thanked the Clerk. The Chair will calculate the sums involved and bring them to the Council for a final decision to be made.</p> <p>Separately, the payment of National Insurance Contributions has also been confusing and it is not clear whether any have been paid so far in 2024/25 (estimated at £246 for the full year). This has been provisioned in the budget and DCK have been asked for advice on how it is be paid.</p>		<b>25/11/1</b>
11.2.1	<p><b>To approve invoices since the last meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerks Salary - £2333.78</li> <li>• HMRC - £577.00</li> <li>• Pension Payment - £132.58</li> </ul>		<b>25/11/2</b>
11.2.2	<p><b>To approve invoice for payment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tactical Maintenance - £242.50</li> <li>• DCK Payroll - £45.60</li> <li>• Jubilee Well Lights/Batteries - £16.09</li> <li>• Frog Patrol Grant to School - £75.00</li> </ul>		<b>25/11/2</b>
11.3	<p><b>To note the Accounts for period 1st April 2024 to 31st December 2025 and projection to year end</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Finance and Governance Group have recently made a revised projection of the financial out-turn this year (2024/25) on the assumptions that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The reserves described from 2023/24 will be 'released' at the year end.</li> <li>○ The agreed playground improvements are completed in 2024/25 and the grant from the Community Board is received</li> <li>○ VAT recovery on the above also takes place this year</li> <li>○ The pond land registration is completed (but the sale is carried over to 2025/26)</li> <li>○ Any hedging / fencing replacement at the allotments / playground area is funded by the HS2 project.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<b>25/11/3</b>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If any of these proves not to be the case, then the out-turn position may be different and a revised budget and/or new 'nominated reserves' may have to be provided at the year end.</li> <li>On the above assumptions the projection current for this year is for a deficit of approx. £920. This compares with a budgeted deficit of £67, but ignores the release of 'nominated reserves' (amounting to approx. £2,200), which indicates an 'improved outcome' of approx. £1,300.</li> <li>The overall position appears reasonably healthy with TLPC's contribution to the playground improvements being largely paid from current revenue. This is due in part to additional unbudgeted income in 2024/25 (including from the CIL and bank interest) and to the reduced costs of grass / hedge cutting.</li> <li>The accounts have been reconciled with bank statements.</li> </ul>		
11.4	<p><b>To discuss and agree the budget for 2025/26</b></p> <p>Based on the above, the 3-year projection reviewed by the Council at its last meeting has been updated and circulated. Assumptions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the introduction of higher NI contributions on the Clerk's salary w.e.f. 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 (being reviewed by NALC with the Government)</li> <li>any further significant improvements at the playground are CEF funded or financed from reserves.</li> </ul> <p>Otherwise, a continuing pattern of income / expenditure is assumed, with non-salary costs rising at approx. 6% per annum.</p> <p>Councillors approved the budget.</p>		25/11/4
11.5	<p><b>To discuss and agree the level of Precept for 2025/26</b></p> <p>Having considered and approved the budget for 2025/26, a precept of £26,750 is proposed for 2025/26 (an increase of 4.9%). The Clerk will notify Buckinghamshire Council.</p>	HF	25/11/5
11.6	<p><b>Bank accounts and mandate</b></p> <p>The mandate has been completed and will be signed by signatories and forwarded to Unity Bank.</p>		25/11/6
12.	<p><b>TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND CONSIDER ACTIONS ON BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL ISSUES</b></p>		25/12
12.1	<p><b>Footpaths</b></p> <p>It is likely that there will be timbers fallen due to recent storms so footpaths will need to be checked.</p>		25/12/1
12.2	<p><b>Roads</b></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>		25/12/2
12.3	<p><b>BMKALC Update</b></p>		25/12/3

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13.	<b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</b>		25/13																								
13.1	The Clerk reported the following:		25/13/1																								
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13.2	<p><b>Other Planning Matters</b></p> <p>A previous resident in the parish has been in contact and highlighted that the recent (unsuccessful) change of use application for the methodist church must be considered carefully as there are ashes of loved ones in the grounds of the church.</p>		25/13/2																								
14.	<b>HS2 CONSTRUCTION AND ENGAGEMENT</b>		25/14																								
	<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. The meeting was also joined by our local MP's representative Ian Kelly.</p> <p>The meeting, discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delays to the project as a result of the re-assignment of work between Main Works Contractors (MWCs) in the area,</li> <li>• 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,</li> <li>• unexpected planned lengthy road closures in the area likely to cause additional local social and business impacts,</li> <li>• the continuing impacts on farmers and landowners,</li> <li>• landscaping and tree-planting in the Chilterns National Landscape,</li> <li>• social value projects and their future funding.</li> </ul>		25/14/1																								

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	<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"> <li>• Late January: 24 hr closure of the A413 during the viaduct 'push' over the A413 and the Chiltern Line railway.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• August or later: 24/7 closure of Leather Lane (period to be determined).</li> <li>• The situation in respect of Bowood Lane during 2025 also remains under discussion.</li> </ul> <p>Full details of all these plans have still to emerge.</p> <p>1.</p>		
<b>15</b>	<b>PARISH COMMUNICATIONS</b>		<b>25/15</b>
<b>15.1</b>	<p><b>The Lee Forum / Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• There have been a few 'issues' to deal with on the Forum over the past few months, including use of the Forum for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advertising</li> <li>▪ Disparaging remarks about other residents</li> <li>▪ Trip Advisor type recommendations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<b>25/15/1</b>
<b>15.2</b>	<p><b>Emails and Cloud Storage</b></p> <p>Still reviewing cloud storage options.</p>	<b>CS</b>	<b>25/15/2</b>
<b>15.3</b>	<p><b>The Lee Newsletter</b></p> <p>In preparation for the February edition:</p> <p>From the Clerk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elections - Cllr vacancies in May</li> </ul> <p>From the Chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bucks Council's thoughts on housing planning</li> <li>• Dog-walking</li> </ul>		<b>25/15/3</b>
<b>16.</b>	<p><b>DATES FOR MEETINGS</b></p> <p>Date for next full meeting is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March</li> </ul>		<b>25/16</b>

Agenda Number		Action	Item
	<p>The meeting closed at 9.00pm</p> <p>CHAIR..... Date .....</p>		

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

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

<b>1. Current account bank reconciliation</b>		
	<b>Opening balance 1 April 2024</b>	<b>6,613.09</b>
A	Income - current year	27,491.98
	Transfers from savings	-
	<b>Receipts Subtotal</b>	<b>27,491.98</b>
B	Cheques paid last financial year and presented this year	-
C	Expenditure - current year(minus unrepresented chqs in this financial year)	19,431.65
D	Transfers to savings	-
E	<b>Payments Subtotal</b>	<b>19,431.65</b>
E	<b>Closing balance = (Opening Balance + A)-E</b>	<b>14,673.42</b>
F	Cheques paid last financial year that have not been presented	-
G	Unpresented cheques this year	-
H	<b>Unpresented cheques total</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Total Committed Expenditure to date for financial year (D+H)</b>	<b>19,431.65</b>

**2. NEW Savings account bank reconciliation**

	<b>Opening balance 1 April 2024</b>	<b>15,426.97</b>
A	Receipts - current year	
	Interest	318.19
	<b>Income Subtotal</b>	<b>318.19</b>
B	Payments	-
	<b>Expenditure Subtotal</b>	<b>-</b>
C	<b>Closing balance = (Opening Balance + A)-B</b>	<b>15,745.16</b>

**3. Bank Reconciliation**

	<b>Opening balance 1 April 2024</b>	<b>22,040.06</b>
A	Current Account	14,673.42
	Savings Account	15,745.16
	<b>Total Cash in Bank</b>	<b>30,418.58</b>