

**Minutes of Meeting  
Chalfont Heights Roads Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting of the  
59<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**Held at the Parish Church Hall, Chalfont St Peter at 19.30 on**

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

**Present:**

66 residents (representing 49 properties)

Members present: J Pegler (Chairman), M Simmons, K Krokosz, G Eykyn, J McGowan, K Quilter, J Garnham, and A Marchetti

Member Apologies: S Allright

Residents apologies: Maureen & Granville Camsey, Paul & Sheila Down, Clive & Sally Sherling, Mike & Julia Pallant, Michael & Marsha Reynolds, Brenda Wickham, John O'Neill, Grahame Allen, Gary Wynne, Peter & Carol Carter, Rob and Carol Scott, June & Alan Cook, Keith & Fiona Tozzi, Charles & Teresa Watters, Jon Sitwell, John & Jackie Green, Dorinda Lafone, Pamela Bryan, Vera Humphreys, Des O'Callaghan, Dr & Mrs Grieve, Kennedy & Corinne Morrison and Brian Kerr.

Secretary: T Boden

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**59.1 Welcome**

The Chairman opened the meeting by reading the list of apologies and outlined the agenda for the evening.

**59.2 Minutes**

The minutes of the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting, held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2013 were submitted for approval.

Proposed: Robin Mellor. Seconded: Terry Ansell. All agreed. JP signed them.

**59.3 Constitution – Jonathan Pegler**

JP outlined the principal aspects of the proposed changes to the constitution of the Company and the reasons for them. The 2009 Constitution closely followed the guidelines of a Residents Association and this new Constitution is more open. There had been concerns expressed by several residents that the 2009 Constitution was “undemocratic” because the only members of the Company (which is and remains a company limited by guarantee) are the members of the Roads Committee. The proposed new Articles allow residents to become members, and provide for certain decisions (such as any proposed sale of the roads) to be reserved to the members in general meeting. In the event that the Company became insolvent, liability of members would be capped at £1 per household. Each household will receive a Membership Proposal form to read and sign before actually becoming a member.

Some of the issues raised in discussion:

- Richard Dunn: If you do not become a member can you still attend the AGM and vote?
- JP: You can attend AGMs and vote on proposals affecting the Estate but not on formal Company matters.
- Richard Dunn: What property on the Estate is not a dwelling?
- JP: The Youth Centre currently pays three subscriptions, but does not have voting rights; there had not been a final decision as to whether to invite them to become members of the Company but the new Articles would allow us to do so.

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- Alistair Graham: When people move out of the Estate will they still be members?
- JP: No. When they move they cease to be eligible to be members; the new owners of the property will be asked if they want to join and have voting rights.
- Tim, Sandy Rise resident: some properties on the Estate are rented out. Do tenants get to vote?
- JP: No. Only property owners.
- Shawn McCormick: Why are we doing this?
- JP: Previously some residents felt strongly that the Estate's Constitution was undemocratic. This would give people the opportunity to become a member. It is more coherent and would give greater clarity about Estate affairs.
- Richard Dunn: We do have some 99-year leaseholders; could they become members?
- JP: It is stated in the new Constitution that membership is only for freeholders of a dwelling, or leaseholders of a flat. It does not cover short-term leases.

Motion to accept new Constitution proposed by: Brian Davies. Seconded: Alistair Graham  
All agreed. No votes against.

### **59.4 Financial Report – Keith Quilter**

The Financial Report had been circulated previously.

All subscriptions have been paid apart from one lady who is abroad and will pay upon her return.

The reserves have increased to £20,000.

Motion to accept the accounts proposed by: Barry Hulme Seconded: John Williams

All agreed. None against.

### **59.5 Chairman's Report – Jonathan Pegler**

The Chairman's Report had been circulated previously.

A few housekeeping points were raised:

- Residents were asked to remind contractors that work is not to commence before 8am, and should cease no later than 6pm Monday to Friday; Saturday work hours should be limited to 8am to 1pm; and there is to be no work on Sunday.
- Please ask contractors and visitors not to park on the verges.
- Speeding seems to be on the increase; residents and their visiting guests were asked to respect the speed limit.
- There is a noticeable increase in traffic through the Estate when the roads in the village are closed (eg. due to flooding) and a noticeable decrease when the bridge across the A413 is closed.

Finances: JP thanked KK and MS for the extensive and extremely detailed work they had done on the proposal for the road repairs and resurfacing. He noted as background that the last rise in subscription fees had been 4 years ago from £150 to £160 per annum; since the fee was set at £150 eight years ago, the increase in the government index of resurfacing costs has been 72%; in the meantime our roads have become 8 years older and there was insufficient money set aside for resurfacing. Recent winters of snow and heavy rain had not helped matters. KK and MS had approached five contractors over the cost of potential work. The cost for the immediate repairs alone will amount to approximately 2 years' worth of subscription income. Each household currently contributed £80/£90 per year towards the running of the Estate without taking into account the cost of necessary road repairs; the cost of resurfacing all our roads at expected prices would be approximately £100 per household per year. Based on expected costs of resurfacing, there is a reserves deficit of £130,000. JP said that, in theory, we could ask for a lump sum payment of £650 per household now and then raise the subscriptions by small amounts annually; but it was recognised that that option would not be feasible for many households. JP explained that if we raised subscriptions to £200 per year (£16.67 per month), the roads would significantly deteriorate. If subs rose to £240 (£20 per month), we could probably do some resurfacing but would not have anything in reserve. At a contribution rate of £270 (£22.50 per month), we would be able to carry out the resurfacing, have a modest buffer and replenish our reserves by 2021. If we went to £300 (£25 per month) we would be able to achieve the needed activity above and, depending on the cash and

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reserve position, then be able to consider reducing the subs again or undertaking other discretionary spending. All figures had been circulated previously, as Annex A.

### **59.6 Communications – George Eykyn and Jon McGowan**

The Communications Report had been circulated previously.

175 households currently choose to receive the Estate's emails -- that is 85% of all residents.

The CHRC website continues to be useful with the site metrics showing an increase in visits by web users.

GE requested that if any resident noticed that a new neighbour had moved in, could they please introduce them to him (ideally via email – [geykyn@btopenworld.com](mailto:geykyn@btopenworld.com)). They can then be sent a welcome pack of information and asked whether they would like to receive emails and so on. The same request for information applied when residents changed their phone numbers or email addresses.

### **59.7 Development Report – Jonathan Pegler**

The Development Report had been circulated previously.

There were currently 13 properties on the Estate that had had work approved by the Committee and/or Chalfont District Council which were yet to commence work.

The proposition to use the fields by Winkers Nightclub as a possible site for travelers had now been dropped.

The proposed redevelopment of the whole of the Winkers site (over which the Estate holds restrictive covenants) with 5 new houses would represent an improvement on the properties currently there. The

Committee had neither written in support, nor objected to this proposal, but had indicated that it would not oppose it.

### **59.8 Roads – Kris Krokosz and Mark Simmons**

The Roads, Signs and Snow Report had been circulated previously.

The road sweepers made more visits with fewer sweepers this year, which had been received well by residents. It was yet to be decided whether we needed one more sweep this winter.

There had been no snow so far this winter – but the extensive rain had presented other problems. The grit bins should be full; if any resident was aware of any empty ones they were asked to inform KK or MS.

The last work done on the roads was 2 years ago. We have not had a contractor in place since then. With reference to the planned road repairs mentioned above, KK had received 5 costed tenders and was in the final stage of choosing a new contractor. Work will need to cover the drains/soakaway at the bottom of Chiltern Hill which will need to be excavated and reconstructed, also the main junctions of roads, where they receive a lot of wear and tear and the possible sink hole in upper Chiltern Hill as well as many other holes etc. KK has a full report if anyone would like to see it. The first phase of work would cover 37 separate pieces of work, and cost £65,700 inc. VAT. It had not been confirmed but it was hoped that the first pieces of work would begin from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2014 for two weeks: this would cover the Easter school holiday, when it was expected the Estate might be quieter from a traffic point of view.

With regard to resurfacing all the roads, this would be a considerable expense. There had already been two price rises during the last few months. The resurfacing programme would be done over 5 years at approximately £220,000 inc. VAT. Completing the work in a piecemeal fashion would be much more expensive. Woodside Hill was a good example of repair work conducted all in one go: the road is lasting well and is a lot less likely to deteriorate when used by heavy lorries regularly. The road humps elsewhere are retro-fitted and this is part of the problem regarding wear and tear: as an alternative we could look at road narrowing, as this also slows traffic. It would not be appropriate everywhere on the Estate, but might be used instead of humps in certain areas. This would also need extra signage on the Estate.

Mr Ballantine of Cherry Garth in Sandy Rise raised the point that the amount of traffic from the Montessori School was not in proportion to the amount paid in subs, and in his view massively exceeded it. The Committee agreed to re-examine this.

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### **59.9 Trees – Jasper Garnham**

The Trees, Islands, Verges and Gates Report had been circulated previously.

David McGrory-White of Warren Lodge, Upway, wanted to express his apologies for the length of time and disruption that his contractors have caused. The redevelopment was due to be finished soon and the damaged verges would be reinstated then.

If anyone would like logs for their boundaries, could they please contact JG.

### **59.10 Neighbourhood Watch – George Eykyn**

The Neighbourhood Watch report had been circulated previously.

80% of residents now subscribed to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme and received email alerts.

Between February 2013 and February 2014 there had been approximately 30 crimes reported in the Estate, most of which were opportunistic. Car and van break-ins typically happened very soon after the vehicle was parked.

GE drew the AGM's attention to two types of camera, one of which residents could mount in a window if they wanted, connected to their broadband router. This "Jabbakam" palm-sized camera is triggered by movement, and uploads any images recorded immediately. It costs £59 and comes with free online storage. The other camera was for externally mounting. The price of these has dropped significantly and a good one can be bought for as little as £250-300 inc Vat. The police were supportive of cameras, and of the estate having recourse to pictures in the event of any crime.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- Derek Bryan: To install two or three external cameras covering the main routes through the estate for the benefit of its roads and properties would only cost £5 per household.
- Barry Leather, Winkers Lane: I have been a resident for 12 years and have been burgled; CCTV has not been of any use.
- Jim Ballantine: There are legal obligations and requirements if any cameras were installed.
- JP: Obviously that would need to be looked into as a priority.
- Barry Bradbrook, Orchard House, Sandy Rise: I have been burgled 3 times and have had CCTV images. Because the image was slightly blurred the police were not able to proceed.
- Brian Davies: Could we put it to a vote to mandate the Committee to look at this further, examine the issues and take advice, and proceed up to a maximum of £500 per camera, or £2,000 overall?

Motion proposed by Brian Davies, Cartref, Chiltern Hill. Seconded: Steven Flynn, Wyngate, Chiltern Hill.

All present voted in favour; the Chairman noted that from correspondence received before the meeting, it was evident three households would have voted against the motion.

Lynne Taylor from Lavender House, Lewis Lane would like some information covering year on year crime figures and any trend. GE agreed to provide this.

Discussion ended with a reminder that Thames Valley Police have asked residents in the Estate to be vigilant, keep an eye out for each other's property, and to report any suspicious activity, vehicle or persons to them by calling the non-emergency number 101 without delay.

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### 59.11 Key decisions opened to discussion and a vote

#### Subscriptions

JP had previously spoken about the need for an increase in the annual subscriptions and the issue was opened up for questions and comments, as follows:

- Richard Dunn: We have had a 3% increase per year in works figures, but we have not seen the detailed calculations.
- John Williams: It is a pain to keep changing Standing Orders and as we cannot collect subs via Direct Debit it would be best to make a rise that does not need to be changed regularly.
- Shawn McCormick: Once the road works and reserve figure is achieved by 2022, might subs then be reduced?

JP: Subscriptions will always be reviewed annually but there is no reason why they could not be reduced at some time in the future if the cash and reserves position at the time indicate that that is the sensible course..

- Terry Ansell: Planned maintenance is the most logical financial way forward.
- Michael March: Could we have a one-off cash call?
- JP: It could be a possibility but it would probably be excessive for some households' budgets.
- Lynne Taylor: Are we voting on road repairs and gates in the subscription amount?
- JP: We are voting on subs – what the money is used for is primarily roads. Discretionary spending on very significant items like gates would not happen without the agreement of residents in an Extraordinary or Annual General Meeting.
- Toni Marchetti: Could we pay two or three years subs in one go so as to put an immediate bulk of money into the account?
- JP: If anyone would like to do this please contact Keith Quilter. It will also be possible to pay subscriptions monthly, by Standing Order.

Terry Ansell proposed an increase to £25 per month, £300 per year.

Seconded: Brian Davies

Agreed: 49 households present at the meeting, and 7 via written comments prior to the meeting.

Against: 6 present and one other via written comments.

KQ will send out Standing Order Mandate forms.

#### Development Fees

Since the beginning of 2013 the Committee has applied an area-based formula (sq.m. of each floor plus double of ground floor (all plus an allowance for demolition) x £2.50 to calculate the value of the Development Fee payable. A maximum of £5,000 on each development was imposed when development fees were introduced many years ago. The Committee was asking to increase the multiplier to x £4.00 -- representing a 60% increase -- and to remove the £5,000 cap on the fee.

It was commented from the floor that this would not nearly cover the amount of damage caused to the Estate's roads, and that we should be doubling the multiplier or making it even higher – even up to £10.00.

Comments made in discussion:

Terry Ansell: We should remember that the development fee covers small extensions as well as demolish/rebuilds, and could affect every one of us. Could extensions and teardowns be differentiated?

JP: It is fair as it stands now. It's worth remembering that construction and delivery lorries do much more damage to roads that are in a bad state of repair than to roads that are well maintained.

It was proposed by Derek Bryan of Fingest, Chiltern Hill, that the multiplier be doubled with immediate effect and the £5,000 maximum removed. Seconded by Ken Robey, Oak Lodge, Chiltern Hill.

In favour: 49 households present

Against: 7 present

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### Committee Appointments

Among the current Committee, Paul Cassell was standing down, and was thanked for his contribution over the years. Other members were all willing to be re-elected:

Chairman – Jonathan Pegler

Deputy Chairman – Steve Allright (remaining on Committee but standing down from Deputy Chairman role)

Treasurer – Keith Quilter

Communications – George Eykyn and Jon McGowan

Roads – Kris Krokosz and Mark Simmons

Trees – Jasper Garnham

Planning – Jonathan Pegler and Ann Marchetti

The Chairman also thanked others who help and support the Committee, notably Tracy Boden (Secretary), Terry Ansell (Architectural Adviser) and Derek Bryan (Chairman Emeritus).

Proposed: John Williams. Seconded: Adrian Foy

All present in favour; none against.

JP then made a call for volunteers to join the Committee, particularly anyone interesting in serving as development lead or assisting JG with trees/verges. JP made the point that current composition of Committee was not representative of the Estate as a whole, and that the Committee would welcome greater diversity. Please contact JP if you are interested in joining the Committee in any role.

### **59.12 Any Other Business**

Mike Greaves had approached JP prior to the meeting to bring up the subject of a residents' group to consider vehicle access to the Estate, and in particular the suggestion that some form of gates may be appropriate.

Mike Greaves put forward that in a general meeting there were bound to be many differing views on the topic and it could get pretty contentious. He proposed that a sub-committee be formed and mandated to research the issue in detail and assess the level of support within the Estate for some form of gates. He had already emailed all residents and there had been 35 replies: 3 were against gates or cameras, 2 gave comments but no preferred solution, and 30 had offered support for further work to be conducted by a sub-committee. This sub-committee would contact all residents, find out the legal position, speak with police, local authorities and contractors and present its findings at the next AGM or possibly an EGM. Residents were assured that no decisions to proceed or commit budget to such a proposition would be taken without the whole Estate having a formal opportunity to discuss and vote on the matter, which in any case needed many months of detailed work to be done first by the voluntary group.

In further discussion the following points were made:

- John Williams: When this was previously looked at, did we need a total agreement from all households to proceed with gates etc?
- JP: Not sure, but the sub-committee could look into this.
- Linda Dent: How will the sub-committee be balanced?
- JP: Very good point. We would need to look at having people who agree with gates etc, and also people who are against the proposal.
- Lynne Taylor: If there are 196 households on the Estate and only 35 responded to Mike Greaves email that was only a 15% response. Maybe that is the view of the Estate?
- Mike Greaves pointed out that his email canvas had only been an open invitation to express views, and not in any sense a survey or vote. JP invited Lynne Taylor to join the sub-committee.

The motion to form such a sub-committee to conduct further research was proposed by Mike Greaves.

Seconded: Paul Aldworth.

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In favour: 55 Against: 5.

It was then asked if there was anyone present who would be willing to volunteer.

Paul Aldworth, Chris Holland, Ian Dallow, John Holmes, Adrian Foy, Shawn McCormick, Brian Davies, Steven Flynn and Lis McGowan responded.

JP noted that all previous studies would be made available to the sub-committee.

Residents thanked the Committee for all their hard work. The meeting closed at 10.05pm.