

Chorleywood Parish Council: Full Council meeting -

**Notes by GH (in attendance as a member of the public)
of matters relevant to Chorleywood Common
raised at the meeting on 15 September 2015**

The **Agenda** is at: <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Full-Council-Agenda-2015-09-15.pdf>

Supporting papers are at: <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Full-Council-Agenda-Committee-Reports-2015-09-15.pdf>

Matters arising from Minutes of Meeting on 30 June:

Cllr Green asked what progress had been made with the digital mapping system; the Clerk explained that it was already in use and proving successful.

Cllr Raw asked whether there had been any developments with London Underground and Shepherd's Bridge; the Clerk explained that London Underground had needed to obtain access from the Common to undertake a tree survey - the trees on the railway land are to be thinned - but nothing further had happened in relation to the bridge itself.

Chairman's announcements:

Village Day had been a great success, and public feedback was positive; the good weather had helped. The stalls fundraising for charities had raised about £1200 between them.

The Chairman had attended the Commons Day at Dunstable Downs celebrating the Chiltern Conservation Board's 4-year project - which had contributed significantly towards the cost of the three information lecterns on Chorleywood Common and works at Christchurch Pond.

The Chairman raised the question whether the public and the press should be permitted to attend meetings of the Play Area Advisory Group: that had not been discussed when the Group was constituted, and was a matter for the Council (rather than the Group) to decide. Cllr Green (Chair of the Group) explained that there would be two or perhaps three more meetings of the Group before it reported to Full Council. She felt the issue was difficult: transparency was desirable, but the matters discussed in the Group were contentious, and the presence of the public and press would be likely to inhibit full and frank discussion. Cllr White said that the matters being considered were complicated and it would not be helpful if the press (coming in part way through the process) were to publish something which was incomplete or inaccurate. The Clerk confirmed that the Group was a sub-committee of the Council which all councillors could attend if they wished. The Chairman proposed a resolution that the press and public be excluded from meetings of the Play Area Advisory Group, which was carried: 12 in favour, none against, two abstentions.

Clerk's Report: the digital mapping equipment has been used to produce the map for

the item 'Signage for the Common' in the Agenda papers for next week's Open Spaces Committee meeting. A group of Travellers came onto the Common, but the byelaws were successfully invoked and they left quickly. The "cut and lift" has taken place and the resulting bales disposed of off-site. The cattle have returned: five cows for up to 16 weeks, depending on weather conditions and what there is for them to eat.

Committee minutes: Play Area Advisory Group, 2 July: Cllr Green explained that the Minutes in the Agenda papers, pages 9-16, are fuller than usual, and are intended to be as nearly as possible a verbatim record, because of the strong and differing opinions expressed by members of the Group. She explained that the paragraph on page 2 about the additional supplementary report from Officers should read "... *had been taken **aback** at receiving ... to see the reports **before** the Group ... report to go out **before the Advisory Group saw it.***" She also confirmed that the supplemental questions to report authors (mentioned on page 6 of the Minutes) would be copied to all Councillors. *[Note: the Minutes refer to reports from the Police and the TRDC Leisure Department and comments from the Parish Officers, and it is understood that the further report by the Countryside Management Service has also been received, since the date of the Advisory Group meeting. None of this material has yet been put in the public domain.]*

Open Spaces Committee, 14 July, Minutes in agenda papers at pages 17-22: the Clerk confirmed, in response to questions from councillors -

- that the ticket machines at the Memorial Hall and Shepherd's Bridge parking areas were out of warranty, and the decision had been taken to enter into the maintenance contract because given the history of the machines, that appeared likely to be cheaper in the long run than paying for repairs as and when needed;
- that 'parkrun' had agreed to the suggestion of a six-month trial period; they were in process of raising their necessary finance and would then meet with the Ranger to arrange a route (not on the horse track).

Planning Committee, 1 September *[see below, "Community Plan etc"]*.

Policy & Resources, 8 September: the Committee had discussed the Nature Trail project and the possibility that one of the officers of the Chilterns Conservation Board would be able to help; and had decided to recommend to the Open Spaces Committee that the Parish officers should be authorised to pursue the project with the of the Conservation Board officer (if available), the cost being taken from the funding available for promoting education on the Common - the Trail being an educational project. The Council unanimously agreed to this proposal. *[Note: the Nature Trail will be among the items considered by Open Spaces Committee at the meeting on 22 September in connection with the 'Four Year Vision'.]*

Community Plan etc: *[not relating just to the Common, but of interest] -*

- Planning Committee on 1 September had recommended that an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council be fixed to present the Community Plan results. Cllr White (Chair of Community Plan Committee) explained that the Plan had been through

two drafts, and the third was to be considered at the Community Plan Committee meeting scheduled for 21 September; it was hoped that this would be the final version. She proposed that there be an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council, to present the Community Plan, on a date to be fixed. Carried.

- Planning Committee also recommended *'that the Council agrees when considering proposals for Neighbourhood Plan the current working party constructing the Community Plan also incorporate a list of community assets to include not only buildings of architectural value but also structures of community value [and] that all Councillors should be able to contribute to recommendations of local assets.'* Put to Full Council and carried. The intention was to combine work on the Neighbourhood Plan with work on the Community Plan, and to include in the former not only buildings of architectural importance but also, for instance, the Library, pillar boxes, and other buildings and structures useful to the community; where something is listed as an asset of community value, the owner has to give the community six months to negotiate to buy it before selling it to anyone else.
- Cllr White further explained that the Neighbourhood Plan and Community Plan raise different issues: the Neighbourhood Plan has to be put to a local referendum and, if adopted, becomes a legally binding part of the planning process. The Community Plan will not take so long to finalise; she hoped it would be ready for presentation to the Council before Christmas 2015.

Memorial Hall [*not relating to the Common specifically, but of interest*]: the Clerk reported that the refurbishment and extension works were running two weeks late, for various reasons, including adverse weather and structural defects which only became apparent when plasterwork was opened up. Such defects had been fully recorded and photographed; the additional work necessary had not proved vastly expensive. The Hall will be available for the Horticultural Society show on 19 September. The October Council meeting will be held there, and in due course so will other Council and committee meetings; that will relieve the pressure on space in the Council offices at South Lodge.

GH