

## **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 18 October 2016**

**Agenda** at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Full-Council-Agenda-2016-10-18.pdf>

**Supporting papers** at <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/agendas/CWPC-Full-Council-Agenda-Committee-Reports-2016-10-18.pdf>

**Public Forum:** Mr Robert Mann thanked the Council for protecting the Common against inappropriate development; and suggested that Wareings Field should be protected as an open space which is also environmentally important.

GH asked the Council to consider Commons Day and Village Day together and to emphasise at both events the special features of the Common, and ‘country crafts’; it might be appropriate to check the tendency towards commercialisation of Village Day.

**Chairman’s Announcements:** the three new councillors elected in the North Ward bye-election, Cllrs Liley, Wright and Westacott, had been allocated committee memberships at the Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council on 8 September. The Council has co-operated with the other Parishes in the Three Rivers District to make arrangements with solicitors to enable swift action to be taken if there are further incidents of trespass by travellers on the Common or other land belonging to the Council [*see further below*]. Despite the weather, Commons Day had been reasonably successful and a number of families had stayed for the film. There had been positive meetings with the new officers of the Residents’ Association; it was noted that Henry Goldberg, Chairman of that Association for many years, had died on 24 September. And it was noted that the Golden Eagle [*recently escaped*] might decide to visit the Common [*in the event it did not*].

**Clerk’s Report:** Village Day had been highly successful, despite the collision at the beginning of the day between a car and an ambulance; and Commons Day been successful despite the rain. It had been necessary for the cows to leave the Common earlier than planned because the bad weather had damaged the electrical circuits of the ‘virtual fence’. The officers’ warrant cards for enforcement of the Public Spaces Protection Order had arrived, and it will be possible to publicise the scheme and start bringing it into force. Plans for the Nature Trail are being prepared and will be brought back to the Open Spaces Committee.

The meeting recorded the Council’s thanks to the office staff and the Rangers for their hard work in making Village Day and Commons Day successful.

**Committee Reports: Open Spaces, 19 July** - the meeting received the report.

**Policy and Resources, 13 September** - Cllr White proposed from the Chair the recommendation that the Council should erect a flagpole outside the Office and acquire a

Union flag, a St George's flag and a Parish flag for use as appropriate; proposal carried 11 in favour, none against, one abstention.

**Open Spaces, 20 September** - the meeting received the report. Open Spaces recommended that the Council should consider (i) whether to combine Village Day and Commons Day and (ii) what would be the best time of year for Commons Day if the events are not combined. (It was explained that the Council's Commons Day is not the same as the Chilterns' Commons Day, which is an event organised by the Chilterns Conservation Board for owners and managers of Commons, and rotates between various Commons in the area.) Cllr Edwards suggested that in view of the current pressure on the Council's staff, the events should be combined for the time being. Cllr Liley thought Commons Day should be repeated to see how well it would go in (it was hoped) better weather. Cllrs Dickens and White were in favour of combining the best of both events next year, and Cllr Edwards proposed that for 2017, Open Spaces committee should consider what were the best elements of Commons Day and arrange to combine them with Village Day; proposal carried 10 in favour, none against, two abstentions.

**Travellers: illegal occupation.** TRDC no longer provide assistance with the legal procedures for evicting travellers who trespass on the Common. The five Parish Councils in the District propose to form a consortium to instruct a firm of solicitors, Penman Nash in Watford, to be ready to act quickly to counteract any incursion by travellers, and it is suggested that each council should deposit £100 with the solicitors so that they will be in funds for the Court fee; it is desirable to act at once when an incursion occurs - the cost to the Council (including the cost of clearing up) is estimated at about £1000 per day. *[Further details are in the Report in the agenda papers.]* The Council unanimously adopted the recommendations in the Officers' Report (1) to join the other parish councils in the District to obtain legal help in the event of illegal occupation by Travellers of Parish Council land, (2) with each of the five other parishes in the District, to place £100 on deposit with the solicitors to initiate immediate eviction action with the courts, and (3) to replace the £500 fund if this Council has to use it.

**Neighbourhood and Community Plans.** The Working Party preparing the draft Neighbourhood Plan are in communication with Three Rivers, and plan to meet with the District's representatives to discuss the draft and amend it to enable TRDC to approve it, so that it can be put to a local referendum: the hope is that it will be agreed with Three Rivers in time for the December meeting of this Council, and that the referendum will be combined with the local government elections in May 2017. When an approved Neighbourhood Plan is in place, the Parish Council will be entitled to a larger share of the 'Community Infrastructure Levy' received from developers in connection with planning permissions granted within the Parish.

The Community Plan has been circulated to all households in the Parish; it specifies various tasks to be undertaken by the Parish Council. The meeting approved the proposed allocation *[in the agenda papers]* of tasks to Committees, subject to transferring responsibility for protecting the library from Planning to Policy & Resources. The tasks allocated to the Open Spaces Committee are:

- to carry out an audit of Open Spaces and consider the level of protection appropriate (to include Wareing's Field);
- to use Chorleywood Matters, the website, noticeboard etc to enhance users' understanding of the use, history and nature of the Common;
- to carry out a feasibility study into the provision of cycle paths within the Parish;
- to consider why the levels of dissatisfaction with the maintenance of Open Spaces *[as expressed in the responses to the Community Plan Questionnaire]* were so high; whether that accurately represents public opinion, and if so, how it can be remedied.

**Controlled Parking Zone.** Cllr Liley agreed to continue to meet with Three Rivers' representatives, and the matter will be considered at the next Full Council meeting.

**Licence for Christ Church School to use the Common:** the meeting agreed to renew the school's licence for two years on the existing terms.

**Consideration of a new post of Assistant Parish Ranger for the Common:** the meeting took this item in private, with press and public excluded, because the discussion would include confidential financial matters. However it was confirmed that the related Report on the website *[the last two pages of the Agenda papers]* is in the public domain: it indicates that the workload of the Rangers has been steadily increasing, including (on the Common) the need to carry out 'cut and lift' to comply with the Stewardship agreement; managing the cattle; enforcing the PSPO; and the increasing Education programme. There are at present three Rangers; two of them manage the Lawn Cemetery, parish paths, and allotments, and the work of managing the Common is considered to be too much for one person. *[It appears that the Council agreed with this, and decided to create the additional post: it is advertised on the Parish Council website,*

<http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/Assistant-Parish-Ranger-Job-Advert-2016.pdf> ]

**GH**