

Charlton Kings Parish Council

26 Church Street Church Piece Charlton Kings Cheltenham GL53 8AR

FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Charlton Kings Parish Council on Monday 26th July 2021 at 7.00pm

Members present: Cllrs Williams, Hall, Hodges, Holt, Honeywill, Johnson, Munro, Palmer, Parnham, Reid and Smith.

In attendance: Helen Johnston (Administrative Officer)

No members of the public attended the meeting.

The meeting was opened at 7.00 pm.

63/21/22 Recording and filming of meetings

There were no requests from members of the public to record or film the meeting.

64/21/22 Public Session

No members of the public attended the meeting.

65/21/22 Issues raised by members of the public in advance of the meeting

None.

66/21/22 Apologies

Apologies from Cllrs Cockwill, I Gosling, K Gosling, Grimshaw, Lansley and O'Sullivan were considered and accepted. The Clerk had also provided her apologies which were considered and accepted.

67/21/22 Declarations of interest (Localism Act 2011)

Cllr Reid declared that he is a trustee of the Charlton Kings Youth and Community Centre in relation to agenda item 76/21/22 'Kings Hall'.

68/21/22 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 28th June 2021 (previously circulated) WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL and **were signed by Cllr Williams as an accurate record.**

The following were matters arising from the minutes that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda:

- Cllr Williams reported that he and Cllr I Gosling have planned to walk the commons in support of their work on the Restoring Cheltenham's Limestone Grasslands Project.
- It was suggested that the mosaicist and his associate be invited to the opening of the water rill, as well as the Cheltenham Borough Council's Green Spaces manager and the head teachers of the local schools.

69/21/22 Reports or apologies from County and Borough Councillors

The Administrative Officer reported that, disappointingly, no reports or apologies had been received from County and Borough Councillors.

70/21/22 Monthly Accounts

The accounts for the year to 30th June 2021 (previously circulated) were APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY by the Council.

Cllr Hodges commented that following an overspend in the previous financial year, the accounts so far were well within budget.

Cllr Munro asked if the Stanton Hall bookings had started to recover following the easing of Covid restrictions. The Administrative Officer confirmed that bookings had been steadily increasing and we are expecting a return to previous levels of room hire from September.

71/21/22 Payments

The Council reviewed the list (previously circulated) of all payments issued in the calendar month June 2021 and UNANIMOUSLY RATIFIED the payments totalling £12,589.60 (£12,082.39 plus VAT of £507.21) which **Cllr Williams signed in his role as Chair**.

72/21/22 Financial matters

- **To consider a donation to Cotswold Wardens in thanks for their work in relation to the Parish Council's Rights of Way projects**

It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY that a donation of £500 is made to the Cotswolds Wardens. The donation will be made from the Rights of Way reserve.

- **To consider renewal of Office365 licences by TechOp**

Cllr Munro queried the quantity of staff licences which was listed as 8 on the TechOp quote. It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY that subject to the quantity of staff licences being clarified by the supplier, the quote from TechOp for £1,817.28 was approved.

- **To note any unspent balance against budget in relation to Church Piece upgrade project and, if appropriate, to consider how this might be used**

Cllr Munro reported on the progress with the upgrade project to date. A small amount of 'snagging' remains to be completed, as well as the electrical repairs to the bench lights. The contracted electrician has encountered a number of problems in his attempts to pinpoint the damage. His investigation is ongoing, but one possibility is that the entire electrical system may need replacing rather than just the transformers. Taking account of work completed or commissioned, there is currently £325.46 balance remaining in the contingency for the project.

Cllr Munro also reported that the project had expanded to include a number of 'nice to haves', such as repainting the barrier in the car park and cleaning the stones around the rill. It was proposed that the unspent budget of £1,000 for additional security cameras (which cannot now be installed due to the construction of the library roof) be used for these additional items. The Chair emphasised that repairs to, or replacement of the bench lights needed to be expedited, as this was a potential safety hazard.

It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY that the balance available from the budgeted security camera installation, is used to cover the additional cost of the upgrade.

73/21/22 Strategic Three-Year Financial Forecast

Cllr Hodges spoke to the strategic three-year forecast, which had been previously circulated. He reminded Council that its recently revised policy was that the General Reserve should, over a period, move to being equal to one year's Precept in accordance with NALC guidance. In order to recover the shortfall in the General Reserve, as well as to address increasing spend on priority projects, an increase in the Precept over three years, could be considered, especially in the context of our Parish Council's Precept requirements compared to those of equivalent-sized Gloucestershire Parish and Town Councils.

Cllr Williams thanked Cllr Hodges for his efforts in producing the forecast and said that it was important to consider in respect of our future strategic planning, as well as being one of the many criteria in our application to the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) Quality Gold Award. A long discussion followed regarding the impact of publishing this forecast on the website, and whether the focus on the attainment of the LCAS Quality Gold Award should be readjusted to allow for more detailed strategic planning.

A motion was raised by Cllr Williams to continue with the plan to publish the three-year financial forecast, but with the addition of an explanatory caveat to allay any potential concern that these were actual proposals, rather than projections for discussion and agreement at future budget-setting meetings. A secondary motion was raised by Cllr Munro to schedule a full discussion on this subject in advance of publication.

In the absence of a clear majority for either motion, Cllr Williams proposed that no decision be taken, and the LCAS Award Working Group should bring an alternative proposition to Council's August meeting. This proposal was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.

74/21/22 Local Council Award Scheme – Quality Gold Award submission

- **To confirm by resolution that the Council recognises its duty in relation to bio-diversity and crime**

The Council voted to AGREE this resolution by majority (10 in favour and 1 abstention).

- **To confirm by resolution that all documentation and information is in place to support an application for the Quality Gold Award**

It was agreed that confirmation by resolution of this point was not appropriate at this time, due to the previous item's discussion.

- **To confirm by resolution that an application for the Quality Gold Award should be submitted**

It was agreed that confirmation by resolution of this point was not appropriate at this time, due to the previous item's discussion.

75/21/22 Community Development Officer

Cllr Honeywill reported on the recruitment process for the Community Development Officer post, which involved a formal interview and a written task. The preferred candidate after first interview subsequently attended a second interview with the Chair of Council and leaders of Council's three major community-based projects that the post had largely been created to support. The appointment of Anna MacFadzean as the new Community Development Officer was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED. The Clerk will issue the formal employment paperwork to the successful candidate and advise other interviewees that on this occasion, they had not been successful.

76/21/22 Kings Hall Working Group

As Cllr O'Sullivan, who leads the Kings Hall Working Group, was not able to attend the meeting, he had provided a written update which had been previously circulated. Cllr Williams invited comments on Cllr O'Sullivan's report. None were received.

77/21/22

Youth Work

Cllr Williams spoke briefly about the first meeting of the Charlton Kings Youth Work Stakeholders' Group, making reference to his written report (previously circulated). Cllr Williams said the strong attendance reflected the community's concern about these issues, with representatives from Inspire to Aspire, Borough and Parish Councils, police, churches, Friends, and individuals with special knowledge. Many insights from past practical engagements with our young people were shared and networking opportunities established between partner organisations. The next meeting is planned to take place in October/November 2021 and the Clerk agreed to be the focal point for strategic communications.

78/21/22

Restoring Cheltenham's Escarpment Grasslands (RCEG) Project

Cllr Williams reported on the considerable amount of work that has already happened on this project. He confirmed that some £3000 had now been spent, from existing funds, on purchasing walling stone to extend a wall on Leckhampton Hill, but confirmed that there would be no further spending until the full funding from National Grid had been received.

- **To re-consider obtaining legal advice in relation to the collaboration agreement regarding the Restoring Cheltenham's Escarpment Grasslands project (paper from Cllr Williams previously circulated)**

Cllr Williams spoke to his report. As Council's solicitor had declined to act, the Clerk had approached the firm recommended by them. They advised that their starting point would require Council to prove title to the land on Ravensgate Common. This we are unable to do, and on that basis the Chair and the Clerk agreed that, as the greatest part of this collaboration agreement was already in day to day operation on projects such as the replacement of the water rill, Church Piece refurbishment, tree planting by CKPC on CBC land, and a myriad of other collaborative projects and programmes, Council should feel secure that there were no issues particular to Ravensgate Common that would prejudice its interests.

It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY that Council should sign the agreement without further legal consultation.

- **To receive a recommendation from the RCEG Steering Group and agree the contract for a "robocut" of Ravensgate Common subject to receipt of grant monies**

It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY to accept the quote for £2,700 from Mark Wroot Agricultural and Garden Services for a 'robocut' of Ravensgate Common conditional on receipt of grant monies.

- **To receive a recommendation from the RCEG Steering Group and agree the contract for remedial works to sections of the Cotswold Way subject to receipt of grant monies**

Redacted quotes from three contractors were considered by the Council. Cllr Williams advised that the RCEG Steering Group recommended Contractor A for this work.

It was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY to accept the quote for £15,920 plus VAT provided by Dean Martin (Contractor A) for the remedial works to the Cotswold Way conditional on receipt of grant monies.

79/21/22

Community Grant Application

The Council UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED a grant of £1,000 to Friends of Charlton Kings in support of their youth work and events.

80/21/22

Letter to Cheltenham Trust

Cllr Reid reported on the disappointing decision of the Cheltenham Trust to withdraw funding for the senior health walks. Up Hatherley Parish Council has already written to the Cheltenham Trust to express their dismay at this decision.

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that Cllr Williams would write to Cheltenham Trust on behalf of Council, in support of Up Hatherley Parish Council's position.

81/21/22 Governance

- **To consider for approval an update to the Financial Regulations to reflect the policy for making grant applications and receiving gifts or donations (previously circulated)**
The motions proposed by Cllrs Williams and Munro were considered. After voting, the motion proposed by Cllr Munro was AGREED BY MAJORITY and the updated Financial Regulations were FORMALLY ADOPTED.
- **To consider adoption of updated Terms of Reference for the Community Development Committee (previously circulated)**
The updated Terms of Reference WERE UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED.

82/21/22 Communications and Community Engagement

- **A report on the meeting of the Communications and Community Engagement Working group on 13th July 2021 was received.**
- **To agree the way forward regarding re-design and upgrade of the Parish Council website including agreement of the budget for the work**
Cllr Johnson reported on the research that she, Cllr Parnham and the Clerk had been engaged in, regarding the website upgrade. It is felt that Council has outgrown the functionality of the current website, and in order to maintain momentum with public engagement, a redesign is now required. A brief has been prepared and costed at approximately £5,000, which would be funded from the CK Futures budget. Cllr Johnson asked Council to consider if the website upgrade should be pursued immediately or deferred until 2022. It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the website upgrade should go ahead in the current financial year under the CK Futures budget.
- **Items for August Newsletter (previously circulated)**
The following items were agreed in relation to the August 2021 Newsletter.
 - Update on CK Futures (Cllr Parnham)
 - Update on CK Health Connect (Cllr Johnson)
 - Update on Restoring Cheltenham's Limestone Grasslands Project (Cllr Williams)
 - Update on Youth Work in CK – Stakeholder meeting (Cllr Williams)
 - Update on Autumn Fayre (Cllr Honeywill)
 - Appointment of Community Development Officer (Clerk)
- **To agree the topic for the September Local Answer article**
Cllr Honeywill reported that the September article had already been completed.

83/21/22 Updates on Key Projects

- **CK Futures**
Cllr Parnham reminded the Council about the upcoming webinar featuring local resident Dr Peter Boait on 28th July who will focus on the priority issues around energy-efficiencies that need to be incorporated into homes.
- **CK Health Connect**
Cllr Johnson discussed how the use of surveys, most recently under the CK Health Connect project, had become a key tool in community engagement. She reported on how the feedback from the service providers survey was shaping participation in future events such as the Autumn Fayre.

Cllr Johnson also referenced the previously circulated paper on the proposed youth survey and advised she will follow up with Cllrs Reid and Holt on this subject.

- **Grange Field**

Cllr Palmer reported on the recent meeting, which was on the whole viewed as a positive step forward. Cllr Williams thanked everyone involved in the Grange Field project for their efforts.

84/21/22 Updates on Standing Committees

- **Allotments**

Nothing further to report.

- **Community Development**

Nothing to report.

- **Finance and General Purposes**

Cllr Hodges reported that it had been decided that a second credit card for the office would not be made available.

- **Planning**

Cllr Hall reported on two recent contentious applications, including the proposed redevelopment of the NISA site on Cirencester Road. She also advised, in response to a query from Cllr Williams, that Cllr Grimshaw had not yet reported to the Planning Committee that he had written to Cheltenham Borough Council in relation to instances where its actions had inhibited the Parish Council's ability to provide meaningful comments as a statutory consultee.

85/21/22 External meetings and consultations

- **C5 meeting – 7th July 2021**

Cllr Williams' report, which had been previously circulated, was noted. Cllr Williams made specific reference to the relaunch of the Flood Warden Scheme by Cheltenham Borough Council and suggested that the Parish Council might now be prepared to respond positively to assist the scheme by helping to source local flood wardens.

86/21/22 External reports for information

None.

87/21/22 Any Other Business

None.

The meeting closed at 9.36 pm.