



Cheswick Green Parish Council

Mrs. Marie Zizzi
 Clerk to the Council
 Cheswick Green Village Hall
 Cheswick Way, Cheswick Green
 Solihull B90 4JA

Tel: 01564 700168
 clerk@cheswickgreen-pc.gov.uk
 www.cheswickgreen-pc.gov.uk

CHESWICK GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Thursday 8th September 2022 7pm Cheswick Green Village Hall

Present: Cheswick Green Parish Councillors: Simon Coles, Margaret Gosling, Aimee Moloney
 Michelle Smith and Mick Swain (Chairman).

Clerk: Marie Zizzi

9 members of the public

84. Apologies for Absence and to approve, if thought fit, the reasons if any given, for absence from the meeting.

84.1 Not applicable all Parish Councillors present.

85. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations.

85.1 Cllrs. Coles and Moloney wrote on the form declaring they are members of Cheswick Green Residents Association.

86. Update/report with Mr. Dean Ward, Principal Engineer SMBC.

86.1 Cllr. Swain introduced Mr. Ward; Mr. Ward said he had joined SMBC in 2020; he dealt with flooding, drainage and street lighting; there may be some historical issues that he was not aware of, and he wanted to build bridges and relationships with Parish Councils.

86.1.1 Mr. Ward spoke about Parish Councils having a direct route to him, for him to filter things out and for him to provide a monthly update about matters; he said this would be one channel of contact in and out, it would be a far more targeted focus on getting things right for parishes. He added there would be a learning curve and he would be as open and honest as possible.

86.1.2 Mr. Ward was asked what his role had been in the private sector, he replied designing flood defences for new housing developments.

86.1.3 There were comments about an issue at Illshaw Heath/Vicarage Road junction.

86.1.4 Mr. Ward spoke about Severn Trent being a very big organisation, he said sometimes things fell to the bottom of Severn Trent's list. He referred to a section of the Stratford Road in Hockley Heath and having discussions with the Chief Exec of Severn Trent; he said just because only 3 or 4 properties were affected, it was not acceptable that nothing was being done, he spoke about an issue at a junction on the Warwick Road.

86.1.4 Mr. Ward said it could be difficult for residents to deal with Severn Trent; SMBC could apply pressure, especially if residents had customer reference numbers; he added any correspondence residents had with Severn Trent on issues, sent to SMBC could be used to enforce.

86.1.5 Mr. Ward said SMBC had been enforcing things were carried out with lots of utility providers.

86.1.6 Cllr. Swain requested a specification of what works were carried out in the parish and the frequencies. Mr. Ward said in relation to for example streetlights, columns were checked as and when faults were reported, otherwise they were checked every 5 years and they were replaced every 25 years, if necessary.

86.1.7 Mr. Ward said there were 45,000 gullies in the Borough; SMBC had 4 people that cleared and emptied these; he said there were two teams, his teams were the ones in the blue tankers; he said Veolia, SMBCs contractor had a 2-6 weekly rotating cycle. It was stated things had improved since SMBC had appointed Veolia. Cllr. Swain asked if Amey staff had been retained; Mr. Ward said some had and some were new staff.

86.1.8 Cllr. Swain said 2 years ago, after frequently complaining that an SMBC waste bin was only emptied once a week, they had discovered it was meant to be emptied 3 times a week. He referred to grounds' maintenance, grass and hedge cutting in some areas only being done 3 times a year, saying when this took place a litter pick was also meant to take place, however this was never done.

86.1.9 There were comments about a passage in Cheswick Way and someone just sitting in a van doing nothing. Mr. Ward said these were the things that needed to be reported, he said SMBC relied on being informed about issues, to enable it to meet expectations and in relation to cleansing. Cllr. Swain said they were very happy to feedback.

86.1.10 There were comments from two residents about an issue with some Laurels, blocking drivers line of sight; there were comments about land by Coppice Walk which flooded, a residents area of land behind a gully by part of the river at the back of Coppice Walk, from the garage and the Bloor development, where trees had come down, causing a blockage and some damage; it was stated Bloor had sorted this out previously and the garage maintained the land it owned. It was stated this was privately owned land and this affected about 15 houses. Mr. Ward explained how to find out who the land was registered to.

86.1.11 Mr. Ward said the Bloor development had not been handed over to SMBC yet; therefore, Bloor's were still responsible; he said some more trees were due to be taken down; he referred to outstanding 'snagging' issues; he said SMBC would not adopt the site until it was in an acceptable condition and lack of adoption was costing the developers money, so they have an incentive to get things fixed.

86.1.12 Cllr. Swain referred to SMBC agreeing to the specification for the paths; it was stated they were meant to be self-binding but they were not; it was stated the bridge was not fit for purpose, as any not able-bodied person could not use it; Mr. Ward said the bridge was designed to flood and he explained why; he added that not every footpath in a development had to be DDA compliant. Cllr. Smith said Mr. Ward was the first person to inform them that the bridge was designed to flood.

86.1.13 Cllr. Swain spoke about trees, reeds/plants growing in the swales; he enquired whether these should be looked after in some way. Mr. Ward replied yes, there should be a maintenance plan, the longer things like this were left, the more remedial work the developer would have to do. He said he had been surprised to see a water buoy had been padlocked.

86.1.14 Mr. Ward reiterated that SMBC would not adopt something if it had to go in and do any work. He spoke about Section 106 money and having 30 years to carry out any works needed, if developers did not pay for work to be done, they would have to pay SMBC significant amounts of money to get work done. It was noted this could roll on and on before sites were adopted.

86.1.15 Mr. Ward said things could be out of SMBCs hands in technical terms, this could result in logger heads between each parties' legal teams. He added that developers were reluctant to do things as their margins were cut so fine.

86.1.16 Cllr. Swain referred to the increase in SMBCs charge to install the Christmas tree lights; he said something had gone wrong here, he commented that previously it was possible the Parish Council had been grossly undercharged. Mr. Ward said SMBC was purely charging for the salaries of the staff involved and the electricity costs.

86.1.17 Cllr. Swain said Earlswood Village Hall currently paid £2200 for electricity, from November this was going to increase to £11,800; he said Cheswick Green Village Hall had a 4-year cap on its electricity. Cllr. Smith said a lot of businesses were going to be affected by the increase in energy costs. Mr. Ward said SMBC was having 100% price increase on its kilo watt charge.

At 19:40 Mr. Ward was thanked for attending; he said he was happy to come to another meeting to talk and/or give a presentation. Mr. Ward left the meeting.

87. Public Participation (15 Minutes).

87.1 There were comments about parking restrictions outside the school, parking on Foxland Close and Coppice Walk; as well as about the speed people drove out of Cheswick Place, it was stated people ended up on the wrong side of the road, due to parked cars. It was suggested Mr. Ward was informed about these issues, as they needed addressing.

87.2 Cllr. Swain explained that SMBC had introduced a new method for reporting issues, with the Clerk he had met with Mr. Ward online and invited him to attend this meeting, he added that since their initial meeting, Mr. Ward had already done a few things.

87.3 There were comments about surveying work being carried out by the shops, car park and the Saxon. It was suggested to ask Mr. Ward if this had been arranged by SMBC.

87.4 A resident said in relation to the Christmas tree lights, the only options available to use the tree which was used, would be to run a cable from the Village Hall, or to purchase a generator.

88. To resolve to accept the Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 14th July 2022 (*circulated to Parish Cllrs. with the agenda*).

88.1 One error was pointed out.

Resolved: proposed Cllr. Swain, seconded Cllr. Gosling – the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

89. To receive a report on the finances of the Council and to approve any payments made since last meeting and any payments to be made (*circulated to Parish Cllrs. with the agenda*).

Payee	Reason	Total
M D Harmer	Maintenance of Village Green June/July	£ 155.00
M. Zizzi	Reimbursement for Instant ink 25/6-25/7	£ 16.49
Countrywide GM	Grounds maintenance July	£ 786.89
Hollywood Covers	Deposit for marquee etc. for Christmas event	£ 200.00
Children's party bus	Deposit for party bus for Christmas event	£ 40.00
SMBC	Rotation of speed sign – May/June/July 2022	£ 603.88
Countrywide GM	Grounds maintenance August	£ 786.89
M. Zizzi	Reimbursement for Instant ink 25/7-25/8	£ 16.49
SMBC	2022 Christmas lights installation/removal	£2790.00

More in confidential section.

Petty cash £79.90

Resolved: proposed Cllr. Swain, seconded Cllr. Coles; that all payments were approved.

90. To discuss the Youth Shelter and vandalism to benches.

90.1 Cllr. Swain said this had been discussed at the RA meeting last night, there appeared to be two thoughts on what should or should not be done.

90.2 Cllr. Coles said from the last RoSPA inspection, it had been reported that parts of the Youth Shelter were rotten, including the roof and side panels. The Parish Council had decided not to do anything and to wait until the next inspection. However, during July an act of vandalism took place, during which part of the shelters roof was damaged, barriers for the Commonwealth Games baton relay had been dumped in the Recreation Ground. It had been deemed that the shelter was not safe, therefore it had been closed off. The Parish Council did not meet in August, this was the first opportunity they had to discuss this. He said since then, two of the new benches had been ripped from their concrete bases and up ended.

90.3 It was stated there was some CCTV footage of what had taken place, this showed a group of youths, but not everything that took place could be seen. A resident enquired why, it was stated due to it getting dark outside and a spider blocking the camera. However, it was clear the next day that vandalism had taken place, the police had been informed, the Parish Council had been advised to keep the shelter closed. It was stated the question was what to do now.

90.3 Cllr. Coles said the shelter had been installed by the former Hockley Heath Parish Council. It was included in Cheswick Green Parish Councils asset register for £2855, as this was how much it had cost to more or less replace it in 2011. A further cost of £770 had also been spent on it in 2012; when it had been set on fire by vandals.

90.4 A member of the public said, it had not been a malicious act of vandalism, some lads that had been drinking were in the park and someone threw a shoe/trainer, which landed on the roof of the shelter. One of them had then climbed up to retrieve it and their foot had gone through the roof. It was stated no names had been given to anyone; they had been seen in the shelter and there were comments about the aftermath of panels and barriers that were thrown around the Recreation Ground and into the river.

90.5 It was stated the shelter had been damaged with intent previously, but that was not the case this time.

90.6 Cllr. Coles said he had retrieved pieces of wood from the pond, it had been difficult to do, what had taken place had taken some force, he referred to the additional panels that were around.

90.7 A resident said the person concerned was quite prepared to talk to the Council about it.
90.8 Cllr. Swain said he felt there were different views about this, some felt the person concerned was a good lad and nothing should be done, others thought it should be reported to the police.

90.9 It was stated the issue was regarding reopening and/or repairing the shelter, this was not something for the RA to debate, as the shelter belonged to the Parish Council, which was why it was being discussed tonight.

90.10 Cllr. Coles said the roof is damaged, therefore it is dangerous and the Parish Council is liable, he added this was the first time the matter had been discussed. He said in 2011 the shelter had more or less been replaced, repairs could cost about £3000.

90.11 A resident said the shelter had been there for a long time, they felt there was a different generation now, the shelter was too enclosed, people could hide in it. If it was repaired, it needed to be more open, to be reconfigured or replaced with something more with the times. Adding that if it was more open, maybe grown men would not sit in it and smoke weed, which took place on the car park as well.

90.12 Cllr. Coles said this issue had been reported to the police, by the Brownies and the Boys Brigade, the police came to the area twice a week now. A resident said the police needed to come on a Friday.

90.13 A resident suggested a circle with stone benches could replace the shelter; another resident pointed out that the shelter had a lot of meaning for them and their family, as well as their son's friends; they said they would not want it changed too much. Cllr. Smith said she had spoken and asked lots of people, they were aware of what it meant.

90.14 A resident said they had asked the Youth Club what they would want.

90.15 There were many more comments about this, including that it was hurtful to see the shelter being damaged like it had been; whether it would be better to change it to something that could not be burnt/broken, if it could be altered with some care; Cllr. Smith suggested getting the whole community involved, with things like painting it etc. to put it right and back together again and to possibly make it more open/visible.

90.16 A resident commented that they were worried about it being unrecognisable; another resident said the purpose of the shelter was for people to come and sit in it.

90.17 In relation to the suggestion for concrete seating, Cllr. Smith said she had seen somewhere this had happened and the seating was used by people on skateboards.

90.18 A resident suggested someone could go to the school, explain about the shelter and ask the children to design something, the resident concerned about the shelter could be involved with this, otherwise it would be adults making wrong decisions. It was stated this was a sensitive matter, not to be dismissed.

90.19 Cllr. Swain said it appeared people did want it repaired, renewed, or replaced. He suggested they came up with some ideas as a group.

90.20 A resident said as long as it would not be taken down. It was stated it would not be taken down and that anyone who wanted to be involved could be. A resident said whatever was done it would still get damaged from time to time.

90.21 In relation to the benches, it was stated some form of thin tyred electrical scooter must have been used to rip them out, as the bolts were 10 inches, and some had been sheared off in the holes. It was stated some of the concrete had been damaged too.

90.22 The conversation reverted to the person who had damaged the shelter, there were more comments about what should or should not be done and about the police. There was a lengthy debate and many various comments, including whether to speak to the family of the person concerned, if the parents of the person concerned knew. It was queried whether anyone on the Parish Council would want to approach the family, would they feel comfortable doing this. It was agreed whatever action was taken, it needed to be consistent. It was also pointed out it was hearsay and there was not enough CCTV. It was stated the vandalism had already been reported to the police and to leave it at that.

91. To discuss having an Electric Charging Point.

91.1 Deferred.

92. To consider planning applications (*sent separately by email*) and local development including Cheswick Place and Blythe Valley.

PL/2022/01518/MINFHO - 24 Box Trees Lane Blythe Valley Park Shirley Solihull; Ground floor rear extension.

PL/2022/01719/TPO - 7 Chartwell Drive Cheswick Green Solihull B90 4JZ; Works to reduce 1 No Sycamore tree in back garden. Sun is blocked by foliage thinning branches. Approx 20% reduction (width) whilst preserving crown.

92.1 There were no comments to be submitted. It was queried whether the Box Trees Lane application was actually in Cheswick Green or Hockley Heath; it was pointed out that it stated, 'Blythe Valley Park'.

92.2 Cllr. Gosling said the application to fell an Oak tree, in the garden of 94 Cheswick Way; had been refused by SMBC.

93. To discuss progress with Cheswick Green School expansion.

93.1 It was stated during the 6 weeks school holidays, it had been discovered the road across the field could not be done, as no archaeological check had been carried out; there were now no after school clubs; the car park at the front was meant to be done first, but now it was going to be done last; the Pelican Crossing was in place, about the bus not using the bay and whether this bay was for the Blythe Valley bus; car parking and disabled parking spaces; the playground had been flooded today; the Head Teacher and Assistant Headteacher had both been in the car park together for the first time ever.

93.2 There were further comments about the narrowing of the junction and a vehicle being parked, which had blocked the whole of the pavement, the person inside the vehicle was asleep with the engine running.

93.3 It was stated parking enforcement would commence from next Monday, it was thought the fine would possibly be £75 if someone were to park on the lines. It was pointed out that before the lines were painted, cars were parking anywhere.

93.4 There were comments about teachers parking on Saxon Wood Road. There were lots more comments about parking and it was stated that a bus/coach had struggled to get through Creynolds Lane.

93.5 It was felt that a planning application for the school, should not have been submitted until the roads had been sorted out.

93.6 It was stated that originally the plan was to build a road around the perimeter of the field, a Service Road all the way round.

93.7 There were comments about a big mains waterpipe.

94. To receive any reports from Chair, Councillors and/or the Clerk.

94.1 There were none.

95. To discuss Remembrance Sunday and Christmas events.

95.1 It was noted that the Parish Council and the Residents Association planned to hold a Remembrance service this year; with a small procession involving the Brownies and the Boys Brigade; this had been discussed at the RA meeting last night; it would be the first time an event like this had been held here, it would be a joint event and the pub would be on board.

95.1.1 Members of the public were informed that the local Crochet Fairy was making a poppy waterfall, to be located on the Boer War Memorial central column. It was stated a quote had been received for the use of a Cherry Picker to install and remove the poppy waterfall, this was for £225.00; members of the Parish Council accepted this quote.

96. Update/report from Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC).

96.1 Cllr. Swain said the VH accounts had been completed, as well as projected costs, he referred to waiting for the VHMC Chairmans report.

97. To receive a report/update from Cheswick RA.

97.1 Cllr. Coles said the RA meeting held last night was the AGM; they had reviewed the year and finances; which had increased by £600 this year; he was the Chairman, Mr. Greg Allport was the Vice Chairman, Becci Cash was the Treasurer, Helen Watling had moved on now and Audrey Reynolds would take on the role of Secretary.

97.2 Cllr. Coles said the RA had discussed Street Watch, a Co-ordinator was in place and they were looking for volunteers, these could be dog walkers. He said any RA events would be put on Facebook and notice boards.

98. To discuss issues raised with SMBC.

98.1 There was nothing to discuss on this.

99. To discuss CGPCs Action Plan.

99.1 It was felt the Parish Council was on course with this.

100. To consider and resolve any action(s) in relation to items of correspondence received *(circulated to Parish Cllrs. with the agenda).*

100.1 Cllr. Swain apologised for arranging for a particular tree inspection to be undertaken; he said he had taken this action because he felt this needed to be done, as the Parish Council had a duty of care.

100.1.1 There were various views about this; some felt the resident should get their own inspection carried out. A number of Councillors had been to view the site; it was felt it was not clear to see where the shoots were coming from; whether they were from trees on Parish Council owned land or not.

100.1.2 At this point Cllr. Swain presented a HM Land Registry document for land the Parish Council owned, a small triangle of land, where three garages were located, had its own HM Land Registry title reference, it was not part of the land the Parish Council owned. Cllr. Swain said there was one garage facing the opposite direction to the other garages.

100.1.3 Members queried how old the resident’s patio was and who had laid it; It was stated there were trees on the resident’s property, as well as a hedge. It was pointed out there was a 10-foot gap between the trees on Parish Council land and the property.

100.1.4 A member of the Parish Council said, if it were my property, I would want to know where the shoots were coming from, I would get my own inspection report.

100.1.5 It was queried whether this should be a Parish Council cost, rather than a cost to the householder; it was noted a quote for £600 had been received; it was stated another quote could be sought; however, it was pointed out the quote received was from a company the Parish Council was familiar with, who had already carried out an excellent tree survey, so members knew it would be a good quality job.

100.1.6 It was reiterated that this was private property and therefore, it was the resident’s responsibility to obtain an inspection report. There were further comments about this, including that if the resident did this and their report confirmed the shoots were coming from trees on Parish Council owned land; the Parish Council would still need to obtain its own inspection report. It was queried how someone would know which trees the shoots were coming from; it was stated a professional would be able to identify what type of tree the shoots were from. It was stated a solicitors advise in relation to neighbours’ trees, had been the shoots are on your land, therefore, you can remove them, however if this were done, the person that arrange for this, would be responsible for any damage.

100.1.7 Eventually agreed, reluctantly by some members of the Parish Council, to go ahead and have an inspection report carried out; for the Clerk to seek advice about this matter for the future from WALC.

101. To discuss and resolve any actions in relation to the ongoing CGPC action list *(circulated to Parish Cllrs. with the agenda).*

101.1 Noted.

102. Agenda items for next meeting.

102.1 To keep progress with Cheswick Green School expansion as an agenda item.

103. To resolve that due to the special nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

Resolved: Cllr. Swain requested members of the public to withdraw at 21:10.

104. To discuss and resolve any actions regarding any items of correspondence or matters considered confidential.

105. PAYE, payroll and Pension Scheme.

Meeting closed 21:15

Signed

Dated