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## CHESWICK GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 7pm Cheswick Green Village Hall

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

Clerk: Marie Zizzi

4 members of the public

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

109.1 There were none - all Councillors present.

### **110. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations.**

110.1 There were none.

### **111. Public Participation (15 Minutes).**

111.1 A resident who regularly litter picked was present; he spoke about Nitrous Oxide cylinders/canisters, he said these were no longer just the small silver ones lying around, there were now large cannisters, he had one with him which he showed to everyone. He had found these in the hedge opposite the doctors and by the Village Hall. He had several of these now, he was unsure how to dispose of them.

#### **Action item: Clerk to enquire about this via SMBC.**

111.1.1 The resident said recently there had been six MacDonald's cartons, including Happy Meal boxes, a soiled nappy and condoms, as well as 4 of the Nitrous Oxide cylinders.

111.1.2 It was queried whether the police patrolled the area. Cllr. Coles said there was a police officer who did this, as well as members of the Street Watch group – he added it was difficult to get regular volunteers for this. He referred to several anti-social issues that had been identified.

111.1.3 It was stated the pub was responsible for a large part of the car park, it was suggested, it possibly turned a blind eye, to some behaviours. It was pointed out the cannisters had not been found at the pub end, but underneath trees.

111.1.4 It was noted these cannisters were not illegal, they could be purchased relatively easily such as via the internet.

111.1.5 There were comments about having more lighting on the car park and possibly barriers, to restrict access. It was also suggested the people living above the shops could have permits to park; it was pointed out that restrictions could only be put in place, if all three owners (the brewery, the owners of the shops and the Parish Council), agreed.

111.1.6 It was felt that solving one problem could create other problems. It was suggested the car park could be closed, for residents only, however, it was stated the pub had a vested interest.

111.1.7 There were comments about the Covenant on the car park and having a 'right of way'. It was stated the trees were overgrown and that lights could be put on the Village Hall for the car park, as well as more cameras, however this would require electricity and who would pay for this?

111.1.8 The resident was thanked for what he did, he was offered litter picking equipment.

111.2 It was pointed out that a Parish Council notice board needed cleaning, as it had mildew on it. It was felt there were a couple of notice boards where the plastic needed replacing.

**112. To discuss co-option.**

112.1 Further to the elections in May 2023, there had been two vacancies on the Parish Council. Cllr. Heslington had been co-opted, leaving one place. Two people had applied to be co-opted, then Cllr. Moloney had resigned, resulting in a casual vacancy needing to be advertised. A third person had applied to be co-opted.

112.1.1 The period for the casual vacancy and the opportunity for residents to request an election had gone. The three applicants had met with members of the Parish Council. Councillors had then been asked to email the Clerk with their preferred choices. On this occasion Gaynor Willmott and Amy Brotherton had been selected. Having completed the necessary paperwork, they were invited to join members at the table.

**113. To resolve to accept the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023** *(circulated to Parish Cllrs. with the agenda).*

**Resolved;** proposed Cllr. Coles, seconded Cllr. Gosling – these were accepted as a true and accurate record.

**114. 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).*

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Total</b>
Countrywide GM	Grounds maintenance September 2023	£786.89
M. Zizzi	Reimbursement for Instant ink 25/07-25/08 2023	£16.49
Zurich	Annual insurance premium	£1225.74
Moore	Annual external audit	£378.00
Colin Mander	DJ for Christmas party	£190.00
M. Zizzi	Top up petty cash	£50.00
Vision ICT	Webinar on Accessibility	£30.00

More in confidential section.

Petty cash £48.87

**Resolved;** proposed Cllr. Swain, seconded Cllr. Gosling; that all payments were approved.

114.1 It was agreed the exercise class steps/risers and bands could be given away, to clear the cupboard. It was agreed the cupboard could be used by the Brownies.

114.2 It was agreed to open a savings account with Unity Trust Bank, to transfer some of the Parish Council funds, to obtain some interest.

**115. To receive second quarter finance update - actual expenditure compared to budget set and bank reconciliation** *(issued to Cllrs with the agenda).*

115.1 Noted.

**116. To agree date/time to discuss 2024-5 budget prior to setting the precept.**

116.1 It was agreed to hold this at 18:30 prior to the next Parish Council meeting.

**117. To consider planning applications and local development including Cheswick Place and Blythe Valley.**

117.1 There had not been any planning applications since the last meeting. It was noted a planning application for a property on Tanworth Lane, which the Parish Council had objected to had been refused, the applicant had Appealed the decision, which had then been refused at the Appeal.

117.1.1 In relation to an application for 12 Glenwood Drive; it was stated the officer dealing with this had left SMBC and it had been passed to someone else.

117.1.2 A construction taking place on Saxon Wood Road was referred to; it was stated the pavement had been broken/damaged and there was a lot of mud. It was suggested the Clerk contacted SMBC planners/highways, to ask for this area to be inspected.

**118. To discuss progress with Cheswick Green School expansion.**

118.1 It was stated it was not possible to see what was happening now, as everything was taking place at the back. It was stated the children seemed happy.

118.2 In relation to a fence which had been installed alongside of the classrooms, it was stated there was only one play area and this was for the safety of younger children, from older/bigger children.

118.3 It was stated there were big holes on Creynolds Lane from the construction traffic.

118.4 There were comments about some stones/kerbs; it was stated these were for scooter parking.

118.5 It was pointed out there were issues in relation to the playground flooding; more drainage was needed; it was noted there were lots of leaves from the trees.

118.6 It was stated there were still places available in Reception, the class numbers were small, which was beneficial for the children. It was stated new Teachers had been employed for Reception, the ratio was a Teacher and two Teaching Assistants in each class.

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

119.1 Cllr. Smith said a CCTV camera had been sprayed, this needed to be dealt with, she would arrange for this.

119.2 It was noted a chain on the double swing was broken; it was stated this should be stronger than it was. It was pointed out people had been seen smoking weed in the Youth Shelter and the swings had been wrapped round and round the structure they were on. It was suggested there was a weakness in the welding; the chains were not strong enough; the link was not substantial; there could have been a bad batch.

119.2.1 There were more comments about the chain/link; it was stated someone from the company that had installed it needed to come out and meet with members of the Parish Council; Cllr. Smith said the chains should be certified and tested for strength, to ensure they could take the weight of two people.

**120. Update/report from Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC), including to discuss Community Café/Warm Hub.**

120.1 Cllr. Swain said the VHMC had met last night; for now, the PCs grounds maintenance company had been asked to remove a bin bag from the Village Hall.

120.2 Cllr. Swain said there was a hirers meeting on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

120.3 It was noted SMBC had sent an email, stating no license was required for a Warm Hub/Community Café; Cllr. Swain had researched this and taken advice; he said this could be wrong, it depended on the time of day and what/how things were being provided, it was determined by what the local health team required, which could be that a Level 2 Hygiene Certificate was required.

120.3.1 There were comments about the Community Café being held on a trial basis for 6 weeks, it possibly only being held during autumn/winter. It was stated the Parish Council did not need to be involved and pointed out the VHMC would apply for funding.

**121. To discuss Remembrance Service and Christmas events.**

121.1 It was stated the poppy waterfall could not be installed until week commencing Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November; the Boys Brigade and the Brownies were lined up for the Remembrance Service – which had not been advertised yet. It would take place at 10:45 for an 11am silence, followed by refreshments in the Village Hall. Cllr. Gosling to read the epitaph, the last post to be played – but louder than last year.

121.2 The Christmas disco/switching on of the lights had been advertised; the DJ was booked, SMBC was sorted, Father Christmas had now been confirmed. It was stated the VHMC were putting the Christmas decorations up on the morning of the day everything was taking place.

121.3 It was stated the path by the Boer War Memorial was substandard, weed killer had been used, the weeds were all brown now, the path was not fit for purpose. It was noted an email had been sent to Bloor Homes, requesting the path was cleared/cleaned prior to the Remembrance Service, no reply had been received.

121.3.1 It was stated all the paths in the Bloor Homes development were terrible. There were comments about dog faeces bags being used, but left in various places, around the village.

**122. To discuss issues with monthly site audits of Parish Council owned land, including what to do in relation to the trees cut at the Mount and other work needed at the Mount.**

122.1 Cllr. Smith spoke about the Mount; she said she was appalled at what had been done, someone had gone in and chopped down trees, it was a mess, she was furious.

122.1.1 Cllr. Gosling referred to an email she had received from a resident, who lived near to the Mount.

122.1.2 It was noted there had been no company name on the truck that had been there. The trees had been 'hacked', right next to the house that was for sale.

122.1.3 It was agreed to write to the owners of this property, to give them 14 days to clear what had been felled; for a professional contractor to carry out any work properly; failure to do so would result in the Parish Council getting the work done and to then invoice the residents for the costs; which if not paid promptly, would mean the Parish Council would pursue this via the small claims courts.

122.1.4 Cllr. Smith said it was possible the people who had hacked the trees, had also wrecked the steps.

### **123. To discuss issues raised with SMBC.**

123.1 Cllr. Swain said for the benefit of their two new co-opted members, when issues were raised/reported to SMBC, you could trace/track what had taken place to a point, however cases were often closed once they had been passed on, this meant things needed to be reported again. He said about a year ago SMBC had set up a new system, if you were not happy, you could go to someone about this.

123.1.1 Cllr. Swain spoke about going to certain officers at SMBC directly; he said quite a few things had been sent; he referred to the resurfacing of Vicarage Road – he read an email he had received from SMBC regarding flooding issues; he said he wanted to go back to SMBC about this, as he was very dissatisfied. He said SMBC constantly referred to working with its contractors.

123.1.2 Cllr. Swain spoke about overgrown areas in Cheswick Green, he said they had asked for an inspection to be carried out with an officer from SMBC. Nothing was being done, weeds were being killed here and there. A letter from a local resident regarding overgrowth was noted; it was stated the Parish Council was continually trying to get things done.

123.1.3 Cllr. Swain referred to the fence on Watery Lane, he said some parts had been repaired and others had not, it had been 3 years now.

123.1.4 There were comments about the Annual Parish Assembly meeting with residents, when it had been thought the main topic would have been the doctor's surgery, however people had been more concerned about Coppice Walk – traffic and parking issues. The Parish Council had raised this with SMBC and been told it was already included in part of a package; they had been promised progress would be made and they would be told what SMBC intended to do; but they had heard nothing.

### **124. To discuss CGPCs Action Plan.**

124.1 Noted.

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

125.1 Cllr. Gosling referred to an email she had circulated, about some wooden planters a resident had offered to the Parish Council; Cllr. Smith said they would need treating; there were comments about getting people to look after these being the problem. It was queried where they would go and who would look after them. It was agreed to accept the 5 planters, as this was a nice jester, to find homes for them and deal with the other logistics later.

125.2 An email in relation to 80<sup>th</sup> year of D-Day (6<sup>th</sup> June 2024) was noted, it was suggested a traditional tea dance/party could be held in the Village Hall with music; it was reiterated the problem was getting people to volunteer to help.

125.3 An email in relation to 'Connect your community to the Slow Ways national walking network', which had been circulated, was noted.

125.4 An email from Zero Hour, requesting the Parish Council supports the Climate and Ecology Bill, which had been circulated, was noted.

125.5 An email from SMBC about its consultation on its Local List selection criteria and nomination form, which had been circulated was noted. The Clerk had checked this, she had not seen anything about the Mount. It was stated the Mount and the Boer War Memorial both needed to be included.

125.6 An email from Marrons requesting a meeting with members of the Parish Council was noted; it was agreed to offer Monday 6<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> November at 6:45pm.

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

126.1 It was noted the next Solihull Area Meeting (SAM) was on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October; Cllr. Smith said she would attend, if someone else was going.

**127. Agenda items for next meeting.**

127.1 None were given.

**128. 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.**

128.1 There was nothing further to discuss. Cllr. Swain closed the meeting at 20:55

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

129.1 There was nothing further to discuss.

**130. PAYE, payroll and Pension Scheme.**

**Meeting closed 20:55**

130.1 Details in confidential section.

Signed .....

Dated .....