



Cheswick Green Parish Council

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**CHESWICK GREEN PARISH COUNCIL  
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 7pm Cheswick Green Village Hall**

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

Clerk: Marie Zizzi

3 members of the public

**1. To Elect a Chairman.**

**Resolved:** Cllr. Gosling proposed Cllr. Swain as CGPC Chairman, Cllr. Coles seconded this, there were no objections. Cllr. Swain accepted.

**2. To Receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

2.1 This was signed and dated by Cllr. Swain and the Clerk.

**3. To Elect a Vice Chairman.**

**Resolved:** Cllr. Coles proposed Cllr. Gosling, Cllr. Heslington seconded this, there were no objections. Cllr. Gosling accepted.

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

4.1 An apology was received from Cllr. Willmott, this was accepted.

**5. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations.**

5.1 There were none.

**6. To resolve to delegate authority to the Clerk to grant any necessary**

**Dispensations.** Note:- *Dispensation forms in relation to setting the precept and commenting on SMBCs Local Plan/planning applications, have been completed by all members and are approved until 2027 elections.*

**Resolved:** Cllr. Swain proposed, seconded Cllr. Gosling.

**7. Public Participation (15 Minutes).**

7.1 A member of the public commented about the amount of litter on the Recreation Ground, behind the goal posts, they said it was ridiculous. It was stated people did not use the bins.

7.2 There were comments about the amount of dog muck everywhere, it was stated people put it in bags, then threw the bags into trees/bushes. It was suggested a reminder was posted on social media and on noticeboards. It was pointed out people complained about litter and dog poo on social media.

7.3 It was stated some residents close to a house on Coppice Walk having works carried out, were not pleased about the number of vans/cars parked by this property, these vehicles were parking on verges, there was hardly anywhere to move in the area.

7.3.1 It was queried whether Solihull MBC should be contacted about this. Cllr. Swain said this had been going on since about October.

7.3.2 It was thought the property was going to be used to house 'troubled teenagers'. Cllr. Swain spoke a property on Creynolds Lane, which had been for mentally challenged people; he said a meeting had been held looking to create several more of these types of houses, however, this could not be progressed due to a Covenant, that the properties were for family use only. He added that it was a mental health place for adults previously.

7.3.3 It was stated the property on Coppice Walk had been empty for 8-9 years. A Councillor queried whether the Parish Council could approach Solihull MBC, to find out what the property was going to be used for. They added shouldn't the Parish Council be voicing its

opinion, as they did not want any trouble, if there were problems, who would the Parish Council approach about this – who was responsible?

7.3.4 There were further comments including was it definitely going to be used to house troubled teenagers and what was the definition of troubled teenager? There were concerns about drug related incidents and/or violence. It was pointed out there was already an issue with drugs on the car park, however, it had been stated this had decreased recently.

7.3.5 It was stated it was possible there had been an influx of services working on the property at the same time. It was queried how much money was being spent on this, it was reiterated work had been going on since September/October last year. It was pointed out a Supervisor had just sat in their car, while work was going on.

7.3.6 It was thought there may have been an asbestos problem at first. There were comments about parents not watching what their kids were doing.

**Action item: Cllr. Swain to make enquiries and find out more information.**

**8. To resolve to accept the Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024** (*circulated to Parish Cllrs. with the agenda*).

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

**9. To approve in principle the draft Minutes from the 2024 Annual Statutory Parish meeting** (*draft sent to Parish Cllrs 01/05/2024*).

9.1 Further to a few minor amendments, there were no comments about these.

**10. To fix the date/time of the next meeting, if thought appropriate to fix dates and times for subsequent meetings, or a regular cycle** (*circulated to Parish Cllrs. with the agenda*).

10.1 It was noted the meetings were the second Thursday of each month, except for August, when there was no meeting.

**11. To agree date and time for 2025 Annual Statutory Parish Assembly.**

11.1 It was agreed to hold this meeting on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 at 7pm.

**12. To resolve that CGPC meets the criteria to use the General Power of Competence** (*details of criteria sent to Cllrs. by email 01/05/2024*).

12.1 As the Parish Council met the criteria after the 2023 elections, the power remains adopted until 2027 elections.

**13. To appoint members to the Staffing Panel; to agree who will carry out monthly site audits, on which CGPC owned land; to agree who will be responsible for which notice boards; to establish any other Committees/Working Parties the Parish Council wants.**

13.1 Cllr. Coles and Cllr. Swain will be the Staffing Panel.

13.1 Site Audits will continue as Cllr. Coles - the Village Green, Cllr. Gosling land on Saxon Wood Road. Cllr. Gosling queried who would do the piece of land opposite the post box on Saxon Wood Road and the noticeboard on Saxon Wood Road. Cllr. Heslington agreed to do this.

**Action item: New site audit form to be produced for this.**

13.1.1 Cllr. Smith – the Mount and Cllr. Swain the Boer War Memorial and the Recreation Ground. It was noted Cllr. Smith was to look at the trees on the Mount with Cllr. Gosling's neighbour, to see what works were needed. It was stated to progress obtaining quotes to get the steps at the Mount repaired/replaced.

13.2 It was stated the noticeboard outside the Village Hall, had deteriorated over time and it was difficult to pin anything on it; it was suggested to get rid of it now there was one on the Recreation Ground. It was stated the cork used to replace the back of the board on Saxon Wood Road was not great. There were comments about not being able to see things on the noticeboards outside the Post Office, due to moss growing on it. It was stated the noticeboard at Cheswick Place was scuffed. It was agreed to review all the Parish Council noticeboards at a future meeting.

13.2.1 Responsibility for noticeboards will continue; outside/inside Village Hall and outside the Post Office – Cllr. Swain; Cheswick Place – Cllr. Gosling, Saxon Wood Road – Cllr. Coles/Gosling; Village Green, Illshaw Heath and Blythe Valley – Cllr. Coles; Recreation Ground – Cllr. Smith.

**14. To delegate authority for the Clerk to deal with any issues on behalf of the Parish Council in relation to planning applications, orders/purchases/payments, as necessary between meetings, provided matters are communicated with the Chair and Vice Chair.**

14.1 This was agreed.

**15. To resolve to accept the 'statement of internal controls and annual review of effectiveness of internal controls' (2 documents sent by email 17/04/2024), the 'risk assessment document' and the 'asset register' for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 (sent by email 01/05/2024).**

15.1 There were no comments or queries in relation to these documents. Cllr. Swain signed the 'statement of internal controls and annual review of effectiveness of internal controls' and the 'asset register'.

**16. To receive (if available before the meeting) and if appropriate accept the Internal Auditors report.**

16.1 Deferred, report not yet received.

**17. To resolve Section 1 – of the Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) Return for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 (sent by email 01/05/2024).**

**Resolved;** proposed Cllr. Swain, seconded Cllr. Gosling.

**18. To resolve Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) Return for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 (sent by email 01/05/2024).**

**Resolved;** proposed Cllr. Swain, seconded Cllr. Gosling.

**19. 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 (issued to Parish Cllrs. with the agenda).**

Payee	Reason	Total
Countrywide GM	Remove fly tipped chair	£72.00
Countrywide GM	Monthly grounds maintenance April 2024	£786.89
M. Zizzi	Instant ink	£11.99
M. Zizzi	Petty cash top up	£50.00
Solihull MBC	New Christmas lights and installing etc. for 2024	£6052.80

To respectively approve payments to SMBC for rotation of the speed sign/visor for May, June, July 2023 £664.25 and August, September, October 2023 £664.25.

Petty cash £44.90

**Resolved;** proposed Cllr. Swain, seconded Cllr. Coles – all payments were approved.

19.1 It was noted £20,000 had been transferred from the CCLA account into the Unity Trust Bank current account. It was agreed to transfer this into the savings account.

**20. To appoint a Councillor to verify/check and sign the bank reconciliation as prepared by the Clerk, at the end of each month of the financial year.**

20.1 It was agreed Cllr. Swain would continue to do this.

**21. To resolve that all members will be authorised signatories on CGPC bank accounts. To agree level of access members will have for the Unity Trust Bank (UTB) account (VA/VSA). To resolve to continue with the system that 3 signatories sign cheque payments and one signatory sets up electronic payments for two other signatories to authorise.**

21.1 It was noted all Parish Councillors were signatories on the CCLA account. Cllr. Gosling, Cllr. Swain and the Clerk could set up, view and authorise payments via internet banking for the UTB account, all other Councillors could view and authorise payments. It was noted whoever set up a payment could not authorise it.

21.2 The Clerk had posted a form to amend signatories on the Co-operative Bank account at the end of April 2024, nothing had been received about this yet.

**22. To discuss BT contract.**

22.1 A recent email from BT with two options for future arrangements had been circulated to all Parish Councillors. It was agreed what had been suggested was designed for a huge organisation, not a small Parish Council.

22.1.1 It was queried whether the landline and Broadband were needed; it was stated some hall users needed Broadband, as well as the Clerk when she was in the Village Hall.

22.1.2 It was felt the Parish Council only needed minimum services for Broadband and a mobile phone. Cllr. Coles agreed to put three options together for the Parish Council to look at and decide on, before the existing BT contract expired in October 2024. Other members offered to help with this.

**23. To resolve that direct debits with BT and the Information Commissioners Office continue.**

23.1 It was agreed to continue with the BT direct debit in the short-term, until alternative arrangements were made. It was noted the payment to the Information Commissioners Officer was an annual payment of £35, in relation to Data Protection.

**24. To note CGPCs insurance policy with Zurich is approved until 2025 on a 5-year agreement (see October/November 2020 minutes).**

24.1 Noted.

**25. To resolve to renew membership to WALC and SLCC.**

25.1 Agreed, no objections.

**26. To resolve that elected members shall, if they wish, receive Members Allowances based on the current rates as set by Solihull MBC.**

26.1 Agreed, no objections. It was noted it was unfair that co-opted members were not able to receive this, it had been a government error when members allowances were introduced in 2007, due to the word 'elected' being used.

**27. To review the Parish Councils Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998, all other procedures and policies including the website links notice (please find these documents on CGPC website under documents, finances and policies).**

27.1 It was noted updated Financial Regulations had been sent by WALC on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024. The Clerk had asked if there was a list of what the alterations were, to prevent having to go through the existing adopted set and the new set.

27.2 A number of policies were due to be reviewed during the year.

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

**PL/2024/00654/MINFHO** - 103 Coppice Walk Cheswick Green Solihull B90 4HZ; First floor side extensions.

28.1. There were no comments to be submitted.

**PL/2024/00732/PPFL** - Cornwall House Blythe Gate Shirley Solihull; Use of office (Use Class E(g)(i)) to extend existing eye clinic (Use Class E(e)) alongside external alterations including splitting the existing bin a bin store & AC plant as well as store to accommodate new SpaMedic two grilles on southeast elevation.

28.1.1 There were no comments to be submitted.

28.2 In relation to the planning application for Dog Kennel Lane; it was noted members had agreed to some information to be posted on social media for residents. Cllr. Swain spoke about the roads and traffic, he said the development would create more traffic, he referred to planning applications being looked at individually, rather than as a whole in relation to areas.

28.2.1 Cllr. Swain said a consultant had been employed, they had pointed out that Solihull MBC had selected this site. He spoke about Highways England, saying SMBC should have insisted on changes to the M42 and other roads. It was stated SMBC had bypassed recommendations and Richborough Estates was relying on SMBC not to object to its planning application.

28.2.2 Cllr. Swain said in the past the Parish Council had spent thousands of pounds on obtaining professional advice, to object to large developments, to no avail. The Parish Council would not be doing this again for this application. He said he would draft something in relation to roads and traffic issues. He asked Cllr. Gosling to draft something in relation to flooding and the other Councillors to put something together as well, using the bullet points they had agreed to for residents. It was agreed to urge people to object.

28.2.3 It was noted a meeting was being held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May, with representatives from Taylor Wimpey and Devcomms; Cllr. Swain referred to comments made about an integrated approach from developers; he commented about the point of exit on Dog Kennel Lane being for buses only, he queried where the egress for housing would be.

28.2.3.1 It was noted Devcomms had asked if members of Dickens Heath Parish Council could be invited to the meeting; there were no objections.

28.2.3.2 It was stated a proposal for 1000 dwellings had been reduced to 700 dwellings, with a 2-form entry school and a care home. It was queried why there was nothing in relation to health services, as care homes needed doctors and health services. It was stated a 300-bed care home would possibly mean less traffic.

28.2.3.3 There were comments about proposals for BL1, BL2, BL3 and the Stratford Road corridor, as well as the issue about the playing fields. Cllr. Swain commented about all the sites Borough wide, but BL1, BL2 and BL3 all being in the first phase, in the first 5-years.

28.3 Cllr. Gosling said in relation to Cheswick Place, the gate was still the same. Cllr. Smith commented about there being a hook over the top, but nothing to secure it into the ground. Cllr. Gosling said the gates were always left open.

### **29. To discuss regular checks on the defibrillator and who should/will do this.**

29.1 Cllr. Brotherton agreed to look after the defibrillator.

### **30. To receive any reports from Councillors and/or the Clerk.**

30.1 Cllr. Swain said he had been told the Plough was going to close, be knocked down and a hotel was to be built on the site. He referred to the Parish Council objecting to two applications for extensions. Some Councillors were not surprised to hear this, it was felt it was no longer viable as a food business, it had a tired concept. Cllr. Brotherton agreed to try to find out more information.

30.2 Cllr. Coles had attended a 2-hour long webinar about CCTV; he said it would cost £9-12k for a fully mobile, self-sufficient unit; it was noted images could be seen when it was dark, even when it was pitch black, it could be used via a mobile phone. Footage was much clearer; video evidence would be available, and it could not be broken.

30.2.1 There were comments about the existing CCTV and the problem with cobwebs; Cllr. Coles said the CCTV was in enclosed domes, with multi-lenses and multi-rotation.

30.2.2 It was noted there would be a one-off cost for the device, then an ongoing cost for the connection/service.

30.2.3 Members felt this sounded like a good idea, it was queried where to locate it, so it covered the Village Hall, the Recreation Ground and the car park.

**Action item: Cllr. Coles to go back to the company and find out more information; see if they will carry out a site visit and provide some recommendations.**

30.2.4 It was thought the company may carry out a survey; it could possibly be mounted on lamppost.

30.3 Cllr Coles said he had 5 large wooden planters, that had been donated to the Parish Council, for possibly 8-months now. They were too big to go under road name signs, they were about the length of the backseat of a car. It was suggested one could be used to replace the existing one on Creynolds Lane and one could go at the bottom of Snowhill Drive.

30.3.1 Cllr. Coles queried whether they should be planted/filled before they were donated to people to look after. It was suggested some could go outside the Village Hall, once the CCTV has been sorted out.

30.4 Cllr. Swain said he had 6 birdboxes for the last 3-years; it was suggested to donate these to the school and/or to put some at the Mount.

### **31. Update/report from Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC).**

31.1 It was stated an issue with the heating/hot water had been resolved now.

31.2 The Village Hall would be closed from 22<sup>nd</sup> July until 2 August for redecoration.

31.3 Cllr. Heslington spoke about the Community Café D-Day event, on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June; she said the donation would be used to buy prizes for the quiz, decorations and food. Cllr. Swain said he was happy to help, it was stated a few people had volunteered. It was agreed the Parish Council would donate £100 to the event. It was queried whether the VHMC was donating towards the event. It was stated this had not been discussed. Cllr. Heslington and Cllr. Smith to sort out the bunting.

**32. To discuss issues raised with SMBC.**

32.1 Cllr. Swain referred to someone who lived on Longleat Drive, their garden backed onto a field, the residents were experiencing water/flooding in their gardens. Cllr. Swain had emailed Borough Cllr. Hawkins twice and not received any reply, he said this was due to purdah. An engineer had been out, legally there was nothing anyone could do about water from the field. He had told the resident to wait for 2-3 days of rain, when there was water and sludge, he would take some photographs. He said it had to come to a point when it was not reasonable, he said they suffered from 8 inches of water.

32.2 There were comments about the ground not absorbing water and metal shutters.

32.3 It was pointed out if there were a Stadium, it would be waterlogged.

Note at 830pm 2 members of the public left the meeting, followed shortly after by the remaining resident.

**33. To discuss CGPCs Action Plan.**

33.1 Cllr. Swain said he had not had time to look at this. He said there were lots of things that could be removed. He asked if they were going to pursue writing a Neighbourhood Plan, it was agreed not to, as it was very difficult to write, it was not a simple process, it could be rejected by the Borough Council and it had to go out to public consultation.

34.2 Cllr. Swain said he would try to look at this for their next meeting.

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

34.1 An email regarding a piece of land the Parish Council owned, that a resident wanted to purchase was noted. It was felt the process would be complicated and cost a fortune, as there would be a valuation cost, legal fees and land registry costs, there were also concerns about if this were to be agreed, it would set a precedent. Therefore, unfortunately the answer was no. It was pointed out other residents had managed to grab land at the edges of their properties by moving fences.

34.2 An email from a former Parish Councillor, about considering installing living Willow Dens was noted. It had been suggested the best time to plant one of these would be December – March. A location needed to be discussed, possibly somewhere on the Recreation Ground. It was stated they came in kit form, to ask the Parish Councils Grounds maintenance contractor if they would be able to do this.

34.3 An email from the Village Surgery regarding repairs to guttering on the building was noted. It was suggested a suitable reply was drafted. It was pointed out that the patients from the surgery parked in the Village Hall car park.

34.3.1 There were comments about the car park, it was suggested to obtain a quote to repair all the Parish Council owned parts of the car park or from the hump - back to the Village Hall the whole strip, the worst parts. It was stated the drain that had been installed was full and it needed lifting for it to act. Members of the Parish Council agreed they were desperate to get the car park done, it was waiting on Stonegate.

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

35.1 Noted.

**36. Agenda items for next meeting.**

36.1 Willow Dens.

36.2 Response to the planning application for Dog Kennel Lane.

**37. 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.**

37.1 There were no members of the public in attendance. There was nothing further to discussed. Meeting closed at 8:40pm.

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

38.1 There was nothing to discuss.

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

39.1 In confidential section of the minutes.

**Meeting closed 8:40pm**

Signed .....

Dated .....