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**CHESWICK GREEN STATUTORY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 7:30pm in Cheswick Green Village Hall**

**Present:**

16 local residents

Cheswick Green Parish Councillors; Margaret Gosling (*Chairman*), Sam Sedgley, Peter Townsend and Mick Swain.

CGPC Clerk: Mrs. Marie Zizzi

**1. Welcome and introduction.**

1.1 Cllr. Gosling welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. She explained that;

*'The Statutory Annual Parish Meeting is not a Parish Council meeting. It is a meeting of the electors of the Parish that must take place between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> June. Electors have the opportunity to learn of the activities that have been undertaken by the Parish Council during the past twelve months. The meeting is chaired by the Parish Council.*

*Electors can debate current issues and put forward resolutions for consideration by the Parish Council. Such resolutions will not bind the Parish Council.*

*The Parish Council is not obliged to pursue these resolutions, except in the case of the provision of Allotments. Following the resolution in 2010 the Parish Council despite trying, by contacting several land owners, has unfortunately, so far, been unable to find land that could provide allotments.*

Cllr. Gosling said she was aware that the majority of people here wished to discuss the issue of the party in the park and she was happy to deal with this matter first, if that is what people wanted, they did.

**2. Issues of particular local importance.**

2.1 Cllr. Gosling said there needed to be a sensible, controlled debate, with no one shouting out, it was important everyone knew the facts.

2.2 Cllr. Gosling said it had never been the wish of the Parish Council (PC) for the party in the park not to go ahead. They lived in a litigious society, lots of people hated paperwork, she hated it but there was a need for this, she referred to risk assessments and having to do these when she worked. This was for the safety of everyone, the event was held on public land and the form the Parish Council had produced, was based on the form SMBC used to hold events in the parks it was responsible for.

2.3 Cllr. Gosling said the RA cleared up after the party in the park and there was no damage, but there were complaints of incidents.

2.4 Cllr. Gosling said she hoped members of the RA had been made familiar with every email between the PC and the RA, copies were available.

2.5 Cllr. Sedgley said she had attended the last RA meeting, due to comments that had been made to allay any fears and to offer to help with the paperwork. She referred to occasions when Hall hirers had spilled out their event on to the Recreation Ground, therefore they had needed to sort something out.

2.6 It was stated that the RA did sterling work putting the event on, the RA had queried how many Marshalls/Stewards were needed, it was stated 'how long is a piece of string'. It was pointed out that if people that wanted the party in the park, they needed to pitch in and help.

2.7 Greg Allport (Vice Chair RA), referred to Facebook and comments about the Parish Council wanting a meeting with the RA, he said he found this very strange, the PC had a Clerk and members knew their email addresses. He said the party in the park was run by the RA Committee members and helpers, he said declarations were sent well in advance and always had been, the event brought the community together. He was aware certain Parish Councillors were against the party in the park, he read an email from an ex-Councillor.

2.8 Cllr. Gosling said she was aware of who the author of the email was, that there were also residents that didn't want the party in the park.

2.9 Greg Allport said there was hostility from the Parish Council, the PC and Neighbourhood Watch had already discussed the party in the park at meetings. He asked where on earth did they get the information to make new demands. If they had to meet all the criteria and the deadlines for the form, it would kill off the event. He said one Parish Councillor had attended the RA meeting, but had not offered to help – this was disputed by Cllr. Sedgley who pointed out that Greg Allport was not at the relevant RA meeting.

2.10 There were comments about 2 Marshalls per 10 attendees and this equating to about 50 people. It was queried what level of First Aid was required.

2.11 It was stated that the RA had been left with no alternative but to cancel the event, the Parish Council was accused of using bureaucracy to cancel the event.

2.12 Someone asked those present if they wanted the party in the park.

2.13 Cllr. Swain referred to Mr. Allport's comment about the RA always submitting paperwork on time, he said the PC had needed to chase this and received it 2 weeks before the event.

2.14 Cllr. Sedgley referred to the number of Marshalls, she said the RA had been asked how many people they expected to attend. There were comments about a lot of people from outside Cheswick Green coming to the event.

2.15 Cllr. Gosling read the first email the PC had sent to the RA and the reply.

2.16 It was stated that there had been incidents and these had been recorded in the RA Minutes in July 2017 there was reference to a damaged car; In the September 2018 Minutes it stated that Greg had discussed issues with the police, due to an incident that had happened later that night.

2.17 Mr. Greg Allport said there was a report about a damaged car, was it people from the party in the park, they did not know.

2.18 There were comments about asking the PCSO to show their face last year, but this not being possible due to something in Solihull.

2.19 There were comments about youths congregating outside the shops; Greg and Debbie had been over to talk to them, they were not hostile, there was no bad language. Someone had called the police and 2 squad cars came out, there were no charges or cautions, the police had felt it was wrong for them to be called as there were no problems. It was just youths being youths and people were making a big issue.

2.20 There were comments about reports on Facebook about fighting and First Aid needing to be administered.

2.21 Debbie Taylor from the RA said you could count the number of incidents on one hand, this was nit picking, by asking for Wardens, this could cause more bad than good.

2.22 Rebecca Cash from the RA commented about where they meant to Marshall, she named a number of roads, she said their questions had not been answered, she said they could Marshall the event, there were no issues at the event.

2.23 Cllr. Sedgley said a Temporary Events Notice (TENs) was required because alcohol was being served.

2.24 Rebecca Cash said they had no problem competing forms, last year the RA had been required to pay a deposit, what would happen next year. She said there was no formal invitation to attend a meeting. It was pointed out that the deposit

was not asked for last year only in 2017. No invitation is needed for a PC meeting - it is always open to the public.

2.25 It was stated that there was a need for dialogue and to work together. It was stated that the number of people attending had to be capped at 499.

2.26 Rebecca Cash said she did not know how 6 of them could do this.

2.27 Jayne Brown said that last year the party in the park had been very busy, there was possibly 300 people. She added that she thought the Marshalling would be on the boundaries of the park, quite a few from the community came and did help, that she Marshallled around the shops and talked with youths as she knew them. She commented that last year there were virtually no youths from outside of Cheswick Green present, the youths had not wanted them to come. She said that about three years ago there were bus loads from outside Cheswick Green from Chelmsley Wood, there were girls with prams.

2.28 There were comments about under age drinking and where the alcohol was obtained being common knowledge.

2.29 Cllr. Gosling read an email from the PC to the RA regarding offering to help.

2.30 Debbie from the RA said that Cllr. Sedgley had not been able to tell them how many Marshalls they needed, she had offered to help.

2.31 Cllr. Swain said it was best to be safe, the PC had got the correspondence to the RA early and offered to arrange assistance. He said someone had already completed the form for another event. He said the PC adjudicated, they could not tell the RA what to submit.

2.32 Greg Allport said it was too late, they had already booked bands etc.

2.33 Jayne Brown said regarding the number of Marshalls, common sense prevailed, Cllr. Sedgley agreed, she added that the RA could ask the Street Watch team to help.

2.34 Jayne Brown pointed out that all children would be accompanied by parents/grandparents.

2.35 It was suggested to possibly look for 10 Marshalls and they could do shifts.

2.36 Debbie commented about a government pack, stating there was no need for Marshalls for community events.

2.37 Chris Burrows referred to an email dated 13<sup>th</sup> February from the RA to the PC which stated that 'certain commitments needed to be made without delay, asking the PC to get back to the RA before the end of February'.

2.38 Rebecca Cash said they were worried that if anything happened, it would land on the RA shoulders.

2.39 It was stated the idea was to protect the RA, to show it had done everything possible to make the event safe and shown due care and attention.

2.40 Greg Allport referred to First Aid and what level was needed, a bandage?

2.41 Cllr. Sedgley said the RA could ask St. John's Ambulance to have a tent. It was stated that this would cost £200.

2.42 Greg Allport said the Parish Council was making statements, it was clear a number of the Councillors did not want the party in the park to go ahead.

2.43 It was reiterated that the Parish Council had offered to help, to arrange a meeting with representatives from SMBC etc. It was pointed out that the Parish Council had not been given a date for the party in the park and there had been no reply to the last email the PC had sent about this.

2.44 It was stated that the PC had tried, it had bent over backwards to try to help in any way. The PC owned the land, it had a duty to take care of it, photographs were taken before the event, especially in the year £10,000 had been spent on the Recreation Ground and that was the reason for asking for a deposit, which had been returned. It was pointed out that the PC had provided the RA with funding for 8 years, but funding had not been requested for the last 2 years.

2.45 It was stated the PC just wanted a safe event. Cllr. Sedgley said when she had taken photographs, people had asked her if the event could be earlier.

2.46 It was stated it took about 6 hours to set up the gazebos, lighting and B-B-Q etc. this was why it was not possible to start any earlier. There were comments

about the number of comments on social media, but that these people never came to help, it was stated that a lot of work was involved.

2.47 Michelle referred to First Aid, she said a lot of people that worked had probably done a First Aid course. It was pointed out that people did not want to take on the responsibility. The government advice stated that 'if possible' to have someone with medical knowledge, therefore it was probably best to spend £200 to cover this.

2.48 Rebecca Cash said getting bands booked for June was very difficult and she referred to members of the RA going on holiday. She said they started organizing the party in the park when the previous one finished.

2.49 It was stated that the PC and the RA needed to work together and not against each other.

2.50 Cllr. Townsend said he had only joined the PC 6-7 months ago and at every meeting the PC was supportive of the party in the park, but things needed to be a bit more formal, in relation to how it was run, they could work together if people wanted it to go ahead, he wanted to see the groups working together and to move forward, he commented about not bringing up old Parish Councillors.

2.51 A resident said he was relatively new, he spoke about attending a bonfire in a park and hurting himself, he said he would not expect someone to help him, however if he were inside a venue then he would. He said there was no way to control people in a park, he referred to if someone went on the slide and they were not attending the party in the park, he commented about expecting to have Marshalls and not paying any entrance fee, he said it was a free event, when he told other people about this, they did not have anything like it, he said it was awesome.

2.52 Cllr. Gosling said if a parent took a child to the play area and the child used the swings, the parent was responsible. It was different for an organization.

2.53 There were comments about what was classed as an organized event and about things put on Facebook being vile, that 99% of comments were vile and only 1% were okay.

2.54 Greg Allport said to wind this up, he asked if people wanted the party in the park, with a show of hands, about half of the room raised their hands. He said they would agree to work together. It was stated that the party in the park would probably not happen this year.

2.55 Cllr. Gosling said the PC would appreciate it if the RA would try to work with the PC generally.

2.56 A resident said she had a disabled son and she was a carer, she liked to bring her son to the party in the park, she did not know they started setting up at 11am and that there were only 6 of them, she said she was unable to help, but they needed to put it out there that more help was needed for next time.

2.57 Rebecca Cash said they did try to recruit people.

2.58 Jayne Brown said it was also difficult for her to help, she queried whether the RA could set something up on social media, for people that could not attend meetings but would like to help.

2.59 Cllr. Sedgley suggested the PC and the RA put together a joint statement, with the comments turned off and to advise people the party in the park possibly would not go ahead with year.

2.60 Cllr. Swain suggested the RA could do something smaller. Rebecca Cash did not think they could do something smaller.

2.61 Cllr. Sedgley spoke about ticketing the event by using raffle tickets, these could be handed out for free.

2.62 Ian Sill said he was concerned about not allowing people from outside Cheswick Green to the event, he referred to relatives and friends.

2.63 Cllr. Swain said if people wanted the party in the park next year, the RA needed to say residents their help was required.

2.64 There were comments about not having it this year and the reason why, about the new form and not being able to get the good band the RA wanted.

2.65 Cllr. Swain referred to being positive and looking at what could be done.

2.66 There were comments about whether a band was needed, it was stated that the event had a band and a disco, cups and sauces ride and candy floss. That the suggested date had been 13<sup>th</sup> July, due to when people would be on holiday and when schools broke up. It was not possible to hold it mid-July to the end of August due to people being on holiday.

2.67 It was stated that this would be raised at the next RA meeting and that they would definitely do this in 2020 by working together.

2.68 Someone suggested inviting residents to a picnic, if it was not very big; there were comments about Cheswick Green being 50 years old and the Parish Council being 10 years old. It was noted that John Pettinger had written about the first 40 years of Cheswick Green.

2.69 Cllr. Gosling said there had been a lot of misunderstanding.

2.70 Rebecca Cash spoke about history between the RA and the PC, she said they were not involved with this festering.

2.71 Cllr. Gosling said the PC membership had changed, since the last elections in 2015 she was the only person still on the PC,

2.72 Rebecca Cash spoke about just wanting nice flowers and litter picking etc. She said they had tried to obtain litter pickers from SMBC but there none. Cllr. Sedgley said there was funding available for this.

2.73 The issue of Creynolds Lane being closed was raised, the lack of consultation, being about to get out but not being able to get in again, about the right turn being taken away years ago and that now it had been put back, that it was dangerous and there were comments about the traffic lights and their sequencing. There were comments about having to wait and wait to turn left now.

2.74 It was stated that the PC constantly tried very hard to work with SMBC on issues.

2.75 There were comments about Site 12 in the Local Development Plan and the number of houses; the volume of traffic from Dickens Heath, that Cheswick Green had been described as an island in a sea of traffic, about land grabbing, losing Green Belt, that Cllr. Sedgley had carried out a traffic survey for the PCs objection to Site 12, that SMBC had not carried out a traffic survey and it had ignored its own flood report.

2.76 Reference was made to the flooding in May 2018.

### **3. To accept apologies for absence.**

3.1 None.

### **4. Minutes of the Statutory Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018.**

**Resolved:** proposed Cllr. Sedgley, seconded Cllr. Swain that these Minutes should be signed as a true and accurate record.

### **5. Report from 2018/19 Parish Council Chairmen, Cllr. Margaret Gosling.**

5.1 Cllr. Gosling gave her report - copy attached.

### **6. Report from Recreation Committee Chairman, Cllr. Mick Swain.**

6.1 Cllr. Swain gave a report - copy attached.

### **7. Any other matters raised by an elector of the parish.**

7.1 It was queried whether there were road sweepers any more.

7.2 There were comments about the bushes that had been removed and the storm about this on Facebook, it was felt people should have been told. It was pointed out that like the RA, there were only 5 members on the PC at present.

7.3 It was stated the bushes had not been removed by the PC, the PC did not own all the land in Cheswick Green, SMBC was responsible for some land.

7.4 There were comments about the pylon at the back of Cllr. Townsend house.

7.5 It was stated that due to various activity on the car park such as drug dealing and dumping, the PC was looking at better lighting and CCTV.

7.6 Rebecca Cash said due to the walkway by the Village Surgery being dark and intimidating the RA had asked the surgery to do something and as a result sensory lighting had now been installed.

7.7 It was stated the surgery was unwilling to contributed to anything.

7.8 Greg Allport point out that if anyone fell, who would be liable, he said he had spoken with SDL (the Managing Agent for the owner of the shops and land outside the shops), their hands were tied.

7.9 Greg Allport spoke about the 2016-17 precept increasing by 10.5%, he referred to the Village Hall roof being a one-off payment and an increase of 42%; Cllr. Swain asked him to explain what this meant in terms of money, it was suggested it was £10; Greg Allport said in his case it was £21-22.

7.9.1 Greg Allport said in 2018-19 the precept had reduced by 2%, then 2019-20 it was reduced by 5%; for four financial years the average was 35%, the official rise of inflation was 8%. He referred to extra houses and more to come.

7.9.2 Cllr. Gosling explained how the precept worked, she said the PC requested a certain amount of money via SMBC; SMBC decided on the Band D rate, that every house would pay the precept throughout a year, any additional housing built during a year, the money did not come to the PC; she said overall the figure had remained the same for the last 3 years, the reason it went down was due to an increase in the number of houses.

7.9.3 It was pointed out that this was the same for all Parish/Town Councils.

7.9.4 It was stated that it was lucky the PC had sufficient reserves for the work needed on the roof and there was a need to rebuild the reserves, hence the need to increase the precept.

7.10 It was stated that the PC had needed to appoint a planning consultant to write a robust objection to Site 12 and the Amber sites; he had done a very good job and the objection included photographs; he had included environmental issues and flooding, this was available on the PC website.

7.11 It was stated that residents wanted the village to remain as it was, that previously it had been much more rural, residents passionately wanted to it to remain rural.

7.12 There were comments about the Cheswick Place development being put off for 30 years and that it should not have happened until 2023.

7.13 Greg Allport said when he had attended a Planning Committee meeting, people may as well have spoken to the wall.

7.14 Cllr. Swain commented about one Borough Councillor stating there was a need to build houses, so Cheswick Place may as well go ahead.

7.15 There were comments about the housing not being affordable and that surely enough percentage had been built in Cheswick Green with Cheswick Place and Blythe Valley, the infrastructure could not cope.

7.16 It was stated that crime had doubled.

7.17 It was stated that the village had gone from having 836 houses 3 years ago to about 2300; plus, the planned 200 roomed hotel and 250 roomed care home; there was nothing included for the infrastructure.

7.18 Cllr. Sedgley asked if dog walkers could look out for any pollution in the river/brook. It had been suggested this could possibly be coming from the car showrooms.

7.19 Rebecca Cash commented about having her drains/washing machine checked.

7.20 A resident held up a newsletter that he had received from Andy Street with the strap line 'Taking Pressure off Green Spaces in Solihull' he said it was an insult.

7.21 There were comments that only some residents had received this, there was no longer a Solihull News and only some residents received the Observer.

### **Meeting closed at 9:10pm**

Signed ..... Position ..... Date .....

### **Chairman's Report March 2019**

Firstly, I would like to make it known that Cheswick Green Parish Council is ten years old this year.

The Parish Council has had another busy year and I would like to thank all those who have helped with our work, present and past Council members, those who have helped (and are helping) to complete our Neighbourhood Plan and Marie our clerk who keeps us all in order and ensures that we cover all essential business. I would also like to thank residents who have supported us over the past year.

During the year Ian Bruce and Brian Brown resigned as members. Ian put in many hours working on the Neighbourhood Plan and his contribution to the Council has been invaluable. Brian had served for many years and we would like to thank him for his work. Peter Davidson was on the Council for a few months and put in some good work in moving the Neighbourhood Plan forwards and also bringing in extra helpers for this project. Chris Burrows and Dave Lechmere are working hard for us here in addition to Piers Cockroft who has been involved from the start. We have also welcomed Pete Townsend onto the Council and very recently Jacqueline Sowsbery-Moore. Pete has already been involved with the work of the Recreation Committee. Finally, I would like to thank Sam Sedgley and Mick Swain for all their hard work in various capacities during the year.

The highlight of the year for both the Parish Council and for residents was the dedication of the war memorial which is now sited just off Coppice Walk. This event brought many members of the community together and it was good to have representatives of the regiments who fought in the Boer Wars present to lay wreaths on the day. The Parish Council would like to thank Bloor Homes for the restoration and siting of the memorial and also for input to the opening event. Thanks, are also due to John Pettinger who spent many hours researching the history of the memorial and was also instrumental in its preservation after it was discovered in the garden of the bungalow on Creynolds Lane. Thanks also go to Jonathan Leese who cut the ribbon on the day - he grew up with the stones in his parents' garden and still lives in the Village.

Over the past year a lot of time has been spent trying to move the Neighbourhood Plan towards a completed first draft in the correct format and thanks are due to all those residents who completed our long and quite complex survey as this has formed an important part of this work. Hopefully the Plan will be ready to go to SMBC before too much longer. I would like to thank all of those who have been working hard to move this important and complex document forward.

Members of the Parish Council have also worked to encourage SMBC to carry out work to improve road safety in a number of places within the Parish. Following a meeting with a representative of its Highways department, stop signs have now been placed at the bottom of both Creynolds Lane and Vicarage Road, further signage has been added and vegetation cut back to improve visibility. It is hoped that this will make this junction safer providing drivers obey the stop signs. Members have also been concerned about the way the junction between Creynolds Lane and the Stratford Road has been altered and have asked SMBC to look at ways this can be improved in the light of the extra delays and the accidents that have already occurred here.

More recently, members have spent time with the help of a planning consultant to lodge a major objection to the housing proposed on Site 12 of the Solihull Local Plan review as this development would have a major impact on our community in a number of ways should it go ahead. Members have also objected to the "Amber Sites" on Tanworth Lane. The details of these can be found on our website by

following the links from the news item. Members are also monitoring the building on Cheswick Place and reporting any concerns and have also tried to influence the developments about to commence on Blythe Valley Park. All planning applications submitted within the Parish are scrutinised by the Parish Council and comments made where it is felt that they are not appropriate.

The Parish Council also worked hard to influence decisions made regarding the new bus routes and operator so that residents could have a bus service that was reliable and served the areas needed most. Originally the proposed route was not going to serve Solihull town center. This was met with strong opposition as this is the place which most users wish to reach most often. Members were glad that the new route now serves the Tanworth Lane surgery for those who don't drive and also goes into Solihull. The new operator has also provided much better vehicles and the service seems to be reliable. More people seem to be using the bus already - the previous service was something that received major complaints in the survey for the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Parish Council also provided the funds to replace the Village Hall doors which are a big improvement. Further work on the Hall will be taking place shortly.

Members are also hoping to work with Openreach to bring a greater choice of fast broadband to those living within the original village. I would like to thank those who gave their addresses for the survey on this last summer. We still await a quotation from Openreach to provide "fibre to the cabinet".

Many residents are concerned about the amount of litter around the shops and car park. Members of the Parish Council have met with all the parties involved in the ownership of this land and hope eventually to get a scheme put in place to have litter cleared on a regular basis.

The Parish Council was pleased to receive a further grant from the Tesco "Bags of Help" scheme. Some of this has already been spent on improvements in the Recreation Ground. Councillor Swain will now provide more details on this and on other work carried out by the Recreation Committee.

### **Recreation Committee Report 2018/19 – Cllr. Mick Swain**

Almost 2 years have passed of the 3-year Grounds Maintenance Contract being undertaken by Meadowfields Grounds Maintenance Ltd. The 7 areas of Parish Council land have been well cared for and have not had any significant issues. However, there have been a number of concerns regarding litter and debris around the shops, Village Hall and car park. Discussions with representatives of the owners of land are progressing and hopefully a satisfactory outcome will ensue.

Mr Matthew Gardner is the SMBC Neighbourhood Co-ordinator for Blythe and attends our Recreation meetings. He offers advice on a range of matters from emptying bins to current SMBC policies.

The condition of parts of the verges in Creynolds Lane, Vicarage Road, Watery Lane and Tanworth Lane required the removal of a substantial amount of overhanging growth and vegetation that reduced the width of pathways. We arranged via Matthew for all of these areas to be cleared and during the course of doing so ascertained that many areas had never been contracted out by Solihull MBC. These areas may have received attention in the past but only as a result of complaint. Thanks for your help Matt.

The Christmas lights were switched on to coincide with the arrival of Father Christmas. A large gathering enjoyed the sight of Santa, the carols, mince



pies and steaming hot drinks in the Village Hall. Thanks to Darren from the electrical section of Solihull MBC and Shirley Round Table.

We received a £2,000 grant from Tesco under their “bags for help scheme”. Part of the grant has been spent on repairs to the swings in the play area that were recommended by ROSPA during the annual inspection. You may have noticed that the parts of the safety surface in the children’s play area needs to be replaced. This work will be undertaken shortly.

It is clear from some of the messages we have received that the removal of the bushes behind the bus stop was not popular with a minority of residents. This area attracted vermin, was unsightly, harboured differing types of debris and removal was not harmful to bird or wildlife. The removal of the bushes and turfing thereafter was undertaken by Solihull MBC at no cost to the Parish Council.