

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD

THURSDAY 30TH MARCH, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

at ASTLE COURT COMMUNITY CENTRE, ELMSTEAD ROAD, CHELFORD.

PRESENT - Councillors: D. Wilson (Chairman), J. Leach, B. Brindley, K. Chaudhuri.
Members of Public (0).
Dr. E. M. Maddock - Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Councillor E. Michell - Unwell.
Councillor A. Boon - Family emergency.

Decision a) To receive and approve the apologies for absence as listed above.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - None.

3. **PUBLIC FORUM** -

No questions had been received from or were presented by members of the public.

4. **CERTIFICATE OF LAWFULNESS APPLICATION** -

17/1234M - Certificate of Lawful Proposed Use to say that the proposed extension, alterations and various free standing buildings are all permitted development - Gardner's Cottage, Peover Lane, Chelford. SK11 9AN - Members considered the content of the application and noted that the consultation related only to the factual accuracy of the submitted information.

Decision a) No comment.

5. **PROPOSED RELEASE OF LAND FROM GREEN BELT FOR HOUSING** -

Councillor D. Wilson reported that a document had been received from Jones Homes Ltd. setting out proposals for submission to Cheshire East Council under the current Local Plan: Call for Sites consultation. The document identifies a parcel of land, currently used as the overflow car park for Chelford Market, for potential residential development. Use of this land would require its release from the Green Belt which, in principle, was not considered favourable by Members. Members considered the content of the document and noted that it may be more beneficial to consider the position in relation to this particular site once information has been made available from Cheshire East Council setting out all parcels of land that have been put forward as potential development sites within the Parish and any further housing allocation that will be expected to be accommodated within the Parish.

Decision a) To record the general opinion of Members that Green Belt within the Parish should be protected from development.

b) That no action be taken in respect of the above proposal at this time.

6. **FUTURE TOWN & PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPTS** -

Councillor D. Wilson reported that a statement, issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), had been received which indicated that government proposals to cap town and parish council precepts were still being considered for implementation in the future.

Councillor D. Wilson reported that he had received a query from a resident relating to the increase of Chelford Parish Council precept for 2017/18 to which he had responded outlining increased costs and loss of grant income. The resident had also been directed to the Parish Council minutes where the full details of the 2017/18 budget are available.

Decision a) To receive and note the report of Councillor D. Wilson.

7. **FRIENDS OF CHELFORD STATION** -

Councillor D. Wilson reported that he had been made aware of an urgent item of business which required Parish Council consideration. A request had been made, on behalf of the group which is currently going through the process of being formally constituted as 'Friends of Chelford Station', for the Parish Council to act as temporary bankers to allow receipt of a grant from the Community Rail Partnership. Unfortunately, until such time as the group is formally constituted and has banking facilities they are unable to apply for ACoRP funding, therefore, the grant on offer is at the discretion of the Community Rail Officer and only available during the current (2016/17) financial year.

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council does not have the statutory authority to act as bankers for third party organisations, therefore, has strongly advised that the organisation sets up independent banking facilities as soon as possible as it would be unwise for the Parish Council to be involved in the proposed arrangement as it could be perceived as laundering money on behalf of a third party in an uncontrolled manner.

The Clerk reminded Members that the statutory regulations governing the control of financial matters

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for a Parish Council are onerously controlled which included all monies received and payments made, therefore, should the Parish Council be minded to allow the arrangement then conditions would need to be met to provide sufficient documentation to support all transactions including funding application details, confirmation of grant award, payment remittance advice, detailed invoices to support payments are consistent with the grant award. It was also reported that it would not be possible to reclaim VAT in respect of any invoices associated with the arrangement.

Councillor K. Chaudhuri asked why the banking facilities of another community group, which was not subject to the statutory regulations governing Parish Councils, could not be used for this purpose. Councillor J. Leach supported this view suggesting that the Parish Plan Team, which had been set up in order to deliver projects and secure funding that was not available to the Parish Council, would perhaps be able to offer more suitable banking facilities. Councillor D. Wilson was unable to advise whether this possibility had been explored by the Chair of Friends of Chelford Station.

Consideration was given to several alternative options, however, due to the necessity to provide documentation adequate to meet the needs of the Parish Council none were considered viable. The Clerk expressed concern regarding several uncertainties within the information available to the Parish Council which may expose the Parish Council to unnecessary risk and lead to future implications.

24/17	Resolved	<p>a) That the advice and recommendations of the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer be received and duly noted.</p> <p>b) That authorisation be given for Friends of Chelford Station to use the Chelford Parish Council banking facilities to receive a grant from the Community Rail Partnership.</p> <p>c) That the Clerk arrange for the Chelford Parish Council bank details to be supplied direct to the Community Rail Officer with a request for the documentation that would be required to support the grant receipt.</p>
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Proposed Councillor B. Brindley

Seconded Councillor D. Wilson

2 Abstentions

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8:51 p.m.

Signed: _____

Approval Date - 11th May, 2017