

# MINUTES OF THE CHESWICK GREEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## FRIDAY 7th April 2017

**Present** Greg, Becky, Debbie, Barbara, Ian, Lisa, Phil, Helen, Deb and Bob

**Apologies** George and Martin

### **Minutes from March Meeting**

The minutes for March were approved for publication with no issues raised

### **Village Hall**

Greg reported that at the meeting arranged to discuss the working relationship between the parish council and the residents association one of the key issues was the future management of the village hall. Present at the meeting were Martin and Greg for the RA and Steve Hall, Mick Swain and Penny Philips for the PC.

Martin had queried the cost of repairing the village hall roof as it was being viewed by some as excessive and it was agreed that a breakdown of costs would be forwarded to the VH management committee.

In relation to the increase in precept of 41.7% the PC believed this was fair.

Representatives of the parish council said they wanted some of this money to go towards updating the toilets and at a later date, refurbishment of the kitchen was proposed. Members of the PC said they wanted the Management Committee to be "more empowered" in decision making and proposed that quarterly meetings to discuss the management of the village hall be held and that Denise Swain should be in attendance.

Members of the RA thought these suggestions seemed reasonable.

Ian questioned the meaning of the term "more empowered" as he believed the RA Management Committee were already empowered and that the most noticeable thing lacking had been the absence of a parish council representative since Brian had resigned from the RA.

It was also reported that at this meeting the PC said it was no longer looking at the possibility of relocating the village hall at the back of the school, or promoting a new road giving access to the back of the school. This news was welcomed by all present.

### **Increase in Parish Council Precept**

Following the decision made at last month's meeting of the RA Greg produced a questionnaire that was distributed to the majority of residents of the village.

Three choices were given and Greg reported the following results obtained from the returned questionnaires.

1 – Reject the increase in precept and ask for a refund: 108 = 69.7%

2 – Accept the increase but ask that it be reduced by the same amount next year: 38 = 24.5%

3 – Just accept the increase in precept: 9 = 5.4%

A total of 155 returned questionnaires with names and addresses were returned.

In view of the results and the views expressed by residents, George has written to the parish council to ask for the increase in precept to be cancelled. Greg said that some sympathy had been expressed by Caroline Spelman MP who had suggested writing to Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government who she advised is the only person that can apply any pressure to stop such an increase. Greg said that the RA has now written to Sajid Javid expressing our concerns. A letter from a resident was produced thanking the RA for its efforts and for raising this issue.

### **Subscriptions**

A printout was produced that showed the current state of play although envelopes are still being received. 2016 subs received equalled £778 with 284 envelopes returned.

2017 subs received so far £658 with 238 envelopes returned. Members thought the final total will be similar to last year.

### **Mount Dairy Farm**

Further to last month's meeting Martin has drafted a letter to all new residents of the new Bloor

Homes development welcoming them to the village. Members thought it was a very honest and well worded letter and approved its distribution.

### **Planning**

There were two applications one in Willow Drive and one in Tanworth Lane. There were no issues with either of these. There was some discussion regarding work on a tree in Foxland Close and the consensus of opinion was to leave it to SMBC who had asked for a reduction in the amount of work on the tree. Full details of type of tree have not been supplied.

There has been no news to report regarding Mount Dairy Farm or Blythe Valley BUT it was confirmed that Shirley Golf Club have agreed the sale of three plots of land to IM Properties (Blythe Valley) who intend to lobby SMBC to have these taken out of green belt for future development. Members were very concerned that this could lead to even more development with absolutely no thought being given to future schools, doctors or transport provision.

It was reported that smaller homes are outselling larger ones on Mount Dairy farm.

Comments were made about the replacement fencing that has appeared in front of the derelict bungalows in Creynolds Lane. Members thought that this was not an improvement as the properties could be seen to be in such a terrible state from the road.

Greg reported that Hockley Heath and St Patrick's schools were refusing to take children from the new Blythe Valley development and that Cheswick Green school appeared to be the only one being considered for expansion. Members thought this was very unfair and that it would be a tremendous burden on the school and roads at drop off and pickup times.

### **Shops and Car Park**

It was reported that the parish councils arrangement with local shopkeepers for litter picking and grounds maintenance had come to an end after all but one of the shops had refused to contribute towards the cost. Members felt this to be a great shame and aired concerns for the future appearance of the area outside the shops.

As regards to the annual litter pick, Martin to confirm a date for this?

It was reported that there was some concern about the new policy of not allowing children in the Saxon and it becoming a 'Sports Bar'.

### **Website**

Members asked if it was possible to have more links with the Only Way is Cheswick Facebook page which got many more views than the CGRA website. Ian said he would try to post something on Facebook whenever a new item was uploaded to the website. Greg said the RA needed to communicate more with residents not just when an issue arises that calls for a questionnaire to be produced.

### **Local Policing**

There have been some more break-ins and the police had provided tips to residents going on holiday. Phil recommended an item on Amazon that mimics the flickering light of a TV which is better just relying on having lights operated on a timer.

### **Social Events**

Children's Party, do again but Becky suggested a Disco instead of the Entertainer? Becky to get a quote from Mirror Image Disco. Party in the Park, George has booked Mixer and the bouncy castles. Has also written to the parish council asking for permission to use the recreation field again. Beck to write to the parish council to request a donation towards the cost of the band as in previous years. Greg asked if we should buy some cheese slices for burgers as a lot of people asked for it last year. Yes but not the ones in individual cling film as they were too fiddly to open.

### **Any Other Business**

The parish council will be holding a training session on the use of Defibrillators in the village hall on Monday afternoon. It was queried why an afternoon when many people would be at work?

**NEXT MEETING is the AGM on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May. Need to get drinks and nibbles for afterwards.**  
Meeting closed at 9.40PM