CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD

THURSDAY 20TH AUGUST, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

at CHELFORD VILLAGE HALL, KNUTSFORD ROAD, CHELFORD.

PRESENT - Councillors: D. Wilson (Chairman), J. Leach (Vice Chairman), B. Brindley, K. Chaudhuri, A. Boon, E. Michell.

Members of Public (0).

Cheshire East Borough Councillor G. Walton.

Mr. J. Owens & Miss R. Monaghan - Cheshire East Council Neighbourhood Planning Team.

Dr. E. M. Maddock - Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - No apologies were received from Councillor S. Hampson who was absent from the meeting.

2. JEREMY OWENS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING MANAGER CHESHIRE EAST -

i) Mr. Owens presented an overview of Neighbourhood Planning including the status of such a document, the process of preparing the plan and the financial implications. A Neighbourhood Plan, which forms part of the statutory development plan for a given area, provides the community with an opportunity to influence the future growth of that area. Significant community engagement and commitment is required in order to create a plan which will meet the needs and aspirations of the residents along with complementing the Local Development Plan being produced by Cheshire East Council. The submitted plan is scrutinised by an independent examiner and, if successful, is subject to referendum by the Neighbourhood Area electors prior to adoption by Cheshire East Council. The average cost of producing a Neighbourhood Plan is in the region of £13,750, however, grants are available to assist with any costs incurred.

3. **QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION -**

- i) Members asked Mr. Owens a number of questions as outlined below:
 - a) Are there any restrictions on the funds available from 'Locality' and Cheshire East Council? Mr. Owens advised that these funds are to support the production of a Neighbourhood Plan, however, the total amount available can be obtained through several applications as the project progresses. It should be noted that some of the funds are subject to a time limit for use.
 - b) Are Parish Councils expected to contribute towards producing a Neighbourhood Plan using funds obtained by way of precept? Mr. Owens advised that Parish Councils are not expected to use precept monies for the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. There is also no requirement for match funding for the two grants available from National Government and Cheshire East Council.
 - c) How does the Neighbourhood Plan fit in with current Green Belt policy? Mr. Owens advised that development on Green Belt is not supported by the Government, however, a Neighbourhood Plan gives communities an opportunity to provide additional support to this position.
 - d) Is it usual for Neighbourhood Areas to engage the services of consultants to assist in the production of a Neighbourhood Plan? Mr. Owens advised that several Parishes have engaged consultants to assist with the project. The support obtained from consultant services can vary in remit, however, it is a matter for the Neighbourhood Area to consider which aspects of expertise and support are required in addition to that available from volunteers within the Neighbourhood Area.

4. IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN NEEDED IN CHELFORD? -

i) What would be our motivation for wanting/not wanting a plan?

Members considered a range of issues including the outcome of the Annual Parish Meeting held in May, 2015. It was noted that to undertake this project would be a huge commitment and would require the involvement of volunteers within the community, however, the use of consultant services may reduce some of the demands on residents. The successful completion of a Neighbourhood Plan would provide an opportunity for the Parish to influence future development within the Neighbourhood Area, however, it would need to be reviewed as and when circumstances change and to ensure alignment with Cheshire East Council Local Development Plans.

5. WHAT CAN IT DO/NOT DO? -

i) Mr. Owens advised that, in addition to the issues already discussed, a Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to stop development. The underlying theme of a Neighbourhood Plan must be the overall growth and development of the Neighbourhood Area.

6. WHAT SPECIFIC BENEFITS WOULD SUCH A PLAN BRING TO CHELFORD -

i) The benefits of proceeding with a Neighbourhood Plan had already been discussed.

Chairnan's initials

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

7. KEY FACTORS IN MAKING OUR DECISION - STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? -

i) Following a discussion it was noted that the primary limitation to proceeding with a Neighbourhood Plan appears to be current apathy towards community led development within the Parish as demonstrated by the recent survey in the Parish. It was noted, however, that there are many enthusiastic volunteers within the community who may be able to use this opportunity to promote community engagement. It was considered that it may be helpful to engage the services of a consultant to provide technical support to the volunteers in delivering the project.

8. WHAT IS OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD? -

It was considered that the Parish boundary would be most suitable as the limit of the Neighbourhood Area.
 Mr. Owens advised that once the Neighbourhood Area had been designated it was not currently possible to change the boundary.

9. WHAT FURTHER INFORMATION/INVESTIGATION IS NEEDED? -

- i) It was considered that further information was required regarding the initial stages of embarking upon creating a Neighbourhood Plan. It was suggested that a meeting with Mr. Owens may be useful in identifying the initial actions required.
- 49/15 Resolved a) That Chelford Parish Council support the notion of producing a Neighbourhood Plan.
 - b) That the Neighbourhood Area be defined as the Chelford Parish boundary.
 - c) That the Neighbourhood Plan be produced by a group, comprising Parish Councillors and resident volunteers supported, where deemed necessary and approved by the Parish Council, by consultant services.
 - d) That Councillor D. Wilson be authorised to meet with Mr. Owens to establish the initial actions required to initiate the Neighbourhood Planning Process.

Proposed Councillor E. Michell

Seconded Councillor J. Leach

All in favour

9:20p.m. - Following a vote of thanks to Mr. Owens and Miss Monaghan for attending the meeting and providing a very informative presentation Borough Councillor G. Walton, Mr. Owens and Miss Monaghan excused themselves and left the meeting.

10. TABLE TENNIS -

i) Councillor D. Wilson advised that the Table Tennis project was progressing and that authorisation was required from the Parish Council to proceed. It was noted that the costs of the table tennis table and concrete base were in the region of £2,500, however, the estimate for the tarmac playing surface was not yet available. Councillor D. Wilson reported that the Clerk had advised that the decision to proceed with the table tennis project should not be made until all details of the project are available for Members to consider. It was noted that the project was likely to incur costs to the Parish Council in respect of Annual RoSPA inspection, insurance premium and ongoing maintenance.

[Councillor J. Leach declared an interest during this item as a Member of the Parish Plan Team who would be funding the equipment and installation for this project.]

Resolved a) That the decision whether to proceed with the Table Tennis project be deferred to allow the costs of the annual RoSPA inspection, insurance premiums and ongoing maintenance to be established.

Proposed Councillor E. Michell

Seconded Councillor A. Boon

All in favour

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9:35p.m.

Signed: ..

Approval Date - 10th September, 2015

Chairman's initials