

CHOLESBURY-CUM-ST LEONARDS PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish Council and the Parish Council Meeting took place at St Leonards Village Hall on Tuesday, 12th May 2026 at 6.30pm

In Attendance: Cllrs Ingram, Wellenreiter and Hoare.
Present: Mrs H Farrelly (Clerk) and Cllr Kneller

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

- 5836) To receive apologies for absence
Apologies had been received from Cllr Baddon and Cllr Morris. Apologies also received from County Cllrs Fayaz and Fulford.
- 5837) Election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman
The Chairman asked for nominations for Chairman. Cllr Wellenreiter proposed Cllr Ingram; Cllr Hoare seconded the nomination. Cllr Bill Ingram was duly elected as Chairman for one year.
The Chairman asked for nominations for Vice Chairman. Cllr Ingram proposed Cllr Baddon, Cllr Wellenreiter seconded the nomination. Cllr Baddon was duly elected as Vice-Chairman for one year.
- 5838) To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Office, countersigned by the Proper Officer or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received
Signed
- 5839) To appoint representatives for Turpin Charity, St Leonards Parish Hall, allotment and The Green
- Turpin Charity – Helen Neighbour
 - St Leonards Parish Hall – Anton Wellenreiter
 - Allotment – Anton Wellenreiter
 - The Green – Helen Neighbour

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

- 5840) To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 31st March 2026 and deal with any Matters Arising
Approved and signed
- 5841) To receive declarations of interest
None
- 5842) Reports from Buckinghamshire Councillors

Highways Management and Maintenance

Councillors received an update regarding changes to highways management and maintenance arrangements within the area. The Local Area Technician (LAT), Wayne Fabian, has now moved to Buckingham, resulting in a restructuring of responsibilities. The area is now supported by three safety inspectors who will oversee highway safety matters. This will include one officer has responsibility for signage and pathways.

Councillors noted that the "Fix My Street" reporting system remains in operation, although concerns were raised regarding the volume of outstanding issues and response times.

It was further reported that, in the coming weeks, the Council expects to receive the Road Plan for 2026–2030. This document will provide the schedule and priorities for planned roadworks across the area.

Waste Contracts Review

Councillors were informed that the Buckinghamshire Council is currently reviewing its waste management contracts. The review is focused primarily on how services are managed and operated internally. At present, there are not expected to be significant changes to the service experienced by residents.

Council Annual General Meetings

It was noted that most councils will shortly be holding their Annual General Meetings (AGMs).

Health and Adult Social Care

An update was provided from the Health and Adult Social Care Team. Work is ongoing to review urgent Accident & Emergency care services, with the aim of improving patient experience and reducing pressures on emergency departments.

Congratulations

The Parish Council recorded its congratulations to Cllr Kneller on being appointed Deputy Mayor of Chesham.

5843) To suspend standing orders and invite questions from Councillors of the public

Three members of the public were in attendance.

The members of the public asked Councillors on how matters were progressing with regard to the use of plastic weed-suppressing membrane on parish council allotment land, particularly around long-term maintenance, environmental considerations, and legal responsibilities connected with tenancy management.

Cllr Ingram and Baddon had visited the allotment site to assess the unused plots and take measurements for potential covering works. It was confirmed that there are currently four full plots and three half plots that have not been cultivated or actively used.

Discussion took place regarding whether all unused plots would need to be covered with plastic membrane at the same time. Cllr Wellenreiter queried whether the work could be phased depending on cost and practicalities and also asked what the longer-term plan would be once the plastic covering is eventually removed.

An allotment tenant explained that the primary objective is to suppress and kill off invasive weeds and overgrowth before plots can realistically be re-let. It was noted that plots which are already tidied and covered are likely to appear more manageable and attractive to prospective tenants, potentially helping improve occupancy levels.

Cllr Wellenreiter confirmed that the purchase of plastic membrane would be at the cost of the council. Councillors discussed practical methods for securing the sheets, including the possible use of ground pegs to prevent lifting in poor weather conditions.

There was further discussion around the possible use of a mini digger. One allotment holder is intending to use machinery on his own plot and there was discussion about whether this could potentially assist with clearing or levelling other unused plots at the same time. The Clerk highlighted that bringing machinery onto parish council land raises insurance and liability considerations that would need to be clarified before any wider use is permitted, especially if operated by volunteers and using machinery that was not maintained by the parish council.

The Clerk also raised concerns regarding the use of volunteers on parish council land. Councillors discussed that volunteers carrying out works on allotment sites may expose the council to insurance and health and safety liabilities unless proper arrangements, permissions, and risk assessments are in place. It was noted that the council cannot simply permit informal volunteer working parties without appropriate insurance cover and oversight.

Cllr Wellenreiter and Hoare agreed to identify exactly which plots are not being properly utilised and to furnish the information to the Clerk who will make contact with the relevant tenants where appropriate before further action is taken.

The meeting agreed in principle that plastic membrane should be obtained for three unrented full plots currently in order to bring the site under better control and improve its overall appearance.

Councillors also discussed installing signage to better identify the allotment site and improve visibility for residents and potential new tenants.

The Clerk reiterated the need for clarity around insurance responsibilities both for volunteers and for any machinery brought onto the site

5844) Reports

(a) Chairman's Report and Questions.

The Chairman reported that the budget had been prepared without including any allocation for devolution funding. The Parish Council is due to receive approximately £1,720.00.

Last year, part of the funding was used towards grass cutting on upper Jenkins Lane. This year, the Chairman suggested that the funding should be allocated towards grass cutting on the same site on Jenkins Lane and extended to verges where there is no place for walkers to get off the carriageway and road sign cleaning throughout the parish.

Cllr Ingram also reported that the noticeboard at the Black Horse Inn is being replaced by the owners of the premises. Cllr Ingram has prepared the specification for the replacement noticeboard.

It was noted that the noticeboard at the Cricket Club can be brought back into service shortly. The replacement glass is already in hand, and Cllr Ingram will organise the repair work.

(b) Clerk's Report including:

(i) To note the review and approval of the following governance/policy documents:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Asset Register
- Publication Scheme
- Data Privacy Policy
- Risk Analysis Schedule
- Internet Bank Procedures
- Accessibility Statement
- IT Policy

Councillors approved the policies.

(c) Internal Audit 2025-2026

(i) To note the 2024/25 Internal Audit and to approve whatever actions as advised by the Clerk relating to governance matters.

Councillors noted the internal audit report, observations and summary and the actions arising from the report.

Councillors approved expenditure for data audit and review of website for ongoing accessibility

(ii) To approve the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statement

Approved and signed by the Chairman and Responsible Officer

(iii) To also set the Notice Period of Public Rights and to publish all documents on the website

The notice period will run from Wednesday, 3rd June 2026 to Tuesday, 14th July 2026

5855) Finance

(a) To note the following regular orders of payments

(i) Clerk's net salary for April and May 2026 - noted

(ii) HMRC – April £140.40/May £140.40 - noted

(c) To approve the following orders for payment and any other arriving after this notice

(i) BMKALC Councillorship - £192.96 - approved

(ii) SLCC Councillorship - £253.00 - approved

(iii) Bridget Knight/Internal Audit - £200.00 - approved

(d) To approve the Certificate of Exemption

Approved and signed by the Chairman and Responsible Officer

(e) To review and approve the insurance for 2025/26 with a premium of £334.05

Approved

(f) To note The Council's regular payments and review Direct Debits

(i) Clerk's salary

(ii) HMRC

(iii) Dog bin collection

(iv) Information Commissioner's Office – Data Protection Registration Fee (Direct Debit)

(v) Water Bill Allotments (Direct Debit)

Councillors noted the regular payments and direct debits.

5856) Planning (see planning schedule)

(a) To note any responses to planning applications since the last meeting

None

(b) To deal with any planning applications, including those received after the date of this notice:

- i. PL/26/00997/HB - The Black Horse Public House The Vale Hawridge Buckinghamshire HP5 3NS – no comments
- ii. PL/26/03485/AGN Land north of Cholesbury Lane Buckland Common – no comments
- (c) To receive decisions from Buckinghamshire Council
 - i. PL/26/00560/FA - 1 Braziers End House Rays Hill Braziers End Bucks HP5 2UJ – Conditional Permission
- (d) To receive notice of appeals
 - i. PL/25/5903/FA - 1 Horseshoe Cottages Parrotts Lane Buckland Common Bucks HP23 6NX
- (e) To receive an update on enforcement matters
None

5857) To consider matters relating to Highways and Rights of Way

The Committee considered matters relating to Highways and Rights of Way, with particular concern expressed regarding recent reorganisation within the Highways Department.

Councillors noted that, previously, Local Area Technician (LAT) contact details had been available, enabling direct communication with officers on local issues. However, following the reorganisation this direct access is no longer available, with the only remaining route for reporting issues being through the “Fix My Street” system.

Cllr Kneller advised that Buckinghamshire Councillors had reportedly been instructed not to approach officers directly and that the department no longer operated in the same way as before. It was further commented that there were now only safety inspectors available locally and that councillors were required to communicate via an undisclosed email address rather than contacting officers directly.

Councillors expressed concern that this change had negatively affected ongoing discussions regarding flooding and dangerous highway issues, which had previously been progressed through direct engagement with LAT officers. It was felt that the revised communication arrangements made it difficult for the parish council to raise and resolve local matters effectively.

Cllr Ingram commented that a similar situation had occurred within the Planning Department, where direct contact with planning and enforcement officers has also been prohibited by a top planning officer.

5858) To consider matters relating to the Green at Buckland Common, Springall Hill Allotments and other maintenance matters

Further to the discussion under minute 5843, Cllr Neighbour will liaise with the grass mowing contractor to determine when to make the first mow the The Green at Common and the selected grass verges after the wild flowers have matured.

5859) To set the dates for the next meetings
23rd June 2026