

Chinley, Buxworth and Brownside Parish Council

Parish Room, 3 Lower Lane, Chinley, High Peak, Derbyshire, SK23 6BE

Parish Clerk: Mrs Georgina Cooper
Tel: 01663 750139

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Minutes of the 129th Annual Parish Meeting
held in the Parish Room, 3 Lower Lane, Chinley, SK23 6BE
on Wednesday 15 May 2024 at 7:30pm

Present – Cllr Martin Walton, Cllr Patrick Wilson, Cllr Alastair Knox, Cllr Richard Drabble, Derbyshire County Councillor Ruth George, High Peak Borough Councillor Angela Benham, Georgina Cooper (Parish Clerk) and two members of the public.

Welcome – The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Martin Walton, welcomed all present to the meeting.

1. Appointment of Clerk to the meeting

Georgina Cooper was appointed as Clerk to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Caroline Rofer.

3. Minutes of the 128th Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 24 May 2023

The minutes of the 128th Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 24 May 2023 were approved for signature by the Chairman of the meeting, Cllr Martin Walton, as a true and correct record.

4. Precept & Budget 2024/25

The meeting noted that the 2024/25 precept had been set at £64,133.00, which was equivalent to a 3.0% increase on a Band D charge compared to 2023/24. This corresponded to a Band D property being charged £59.71 for the year. The precept, together with a Council Tax Support Grant of £901.00 and a Parish Support Grant of £6,098 (both from High Peak Borough Council) contribute towards a total budget for the Parish Council for 2024/25 of £72,000.00.

It was further noted that the Council Tax Support Grant was being phased out with this payment for 2024/25 being the last.

5. Member attendances at Parish Council meetings

The meeting received details of the attendance of members at Parish Council meetings. In 2023/24 the average attendance per meeting had been 6.9 out of a possible 10. It was noted that this reduced number was due in part to there still being one vacancy on the Parish Council since the election in May 2023.

6. Annual Report by Chairman of Parish Council

Councillor Martin Walton, Chairman of the Parish Council, presented his annual report which is attached to the minutes.

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7. Reports from Elected Representatives (MP/County/Borough)

High Peak Borough Councillor Angela Benham presented a report which is attached to the minutes.

Derbyshire County Councillor Ruth George presented a report which is attached to the minutes.

8. Reports from Community Groups

Representatives from local groups were invited to present a report to the meeting.

- a. Representatives on behalf of Chinley, Buxworth & Brownside Community Association thanked the county and borough councillors for their funding support that has allowed them to run certain activities and initiatives in the last year. They also noted their thanks for the people working hard behind the scenes to move the Community Centre project forwards thus far.

9. Any other matters of interest affecting the parish

No matters affecting the parish were raised by those present at the meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:57pm.

Signed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Signed.....

Date.....

Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 15th May 2024

On looking at last year's report my first comment was to express the hope that the 2024 parish meeting would not take place in the community centre.

By the skin of our teeth, we have fulfilled that goal with the centre closing a few weeks ago in preparation for its demolition hopefully by the end of the month.

This achievement does tend to overwhelm many of the other things the parish council has done this year, and I must admit I had no idea back then of the complex path we would have to tread to get to this wonderful position where building work is starting in the next few days.

Our clerk Georgina has had to learn how to be a solicitor, a builder, an accountant, and a diplomat in order to get us to the stage where our new building should be a reality early in 2025.

Of course, thanks go to the whole team who have been involved in this project. This includes representatives from both the Community Association and parish council as well as from the wider community. We are very fortunate to have such a strong skills base between us.

The Community Association has done a fantastic job of emptying the building in preparation and ensuring village activity continues during the construction phase. Special mention I believe should be given to Sam Green who has been instrumental in relocating all the functions from the building to other temporary homes so that they will all be able to return to their home in the New Year in what hopefully will be a modern, clean and energy efficient new building.

And a final thank you to the community as a whole, who together helped raise over £50,000 from the Community Association's crowdfunding campaign last summer.

This time last year we had just said a sad goodbye to Councillor Bill Smith. I'm pleased to report that Councillor Penny Took returned to us early in the new council year and our new councillor John Mulryan is already proving invaluable with his extensive knowledge of project management.

It's slightly disappointing we have not been able to fill the final seat on the council particularly with a councillor based in Buxworth and I hope perhaps the prospect of meeting in a shiny new building next year might tempt someone to come forward.

We have as usual made modest donations to a number of local bodies including things as diverse as painting railings outside Brierley Green Church in Buxworth to the Chinley Parent and Toddler Group, Buxworth Preschool, Chinley Primary School PTA, the Guides, the Brownies as well as Buxworth Cricket Club and Buxworth Football Club.

Once again, we must give thanks to the Friends of Chinley Park who appear to be going from strength to strength and the Transport Group who are tenaciously still pursuing the goal of step free access at Chinley Station as well as keeping us informed of the changes and tribulations of the Hope Valley line.

As well as dealing with the big project for the new building we have fulfilled all the normal parish duties, covering such diverse things as maintaining parish land including at Chinley Playing Fields, Squirrel Green, Chinley Park and Buxworth Rec, emptying bins, looking after planters, repairing benches, and making sure our grit bins are ready for any snowfall.

We also had to organise the Christmas lights switch on where closing the road seemed to improve the event which was very well attended last Christmas.

We also organised the Remembrance Day parade.

The annual litter picks were well attended, particularly in Chinley, but it was quite heartening to see that in many areas of our parish local residents do pick litter on a regular basis which meant some parts of the parish were largely litter free.

It was encouraging to see several new residents of the parish attend the Chinley litter pick in particular and I can only hope that with the focus of our new building in 2025 the excellent community spirit we have in this village will be enhanced even further.

I would like to thank our two borough councillors Angela and Dan for their support during this year in particular Angela's concise reports to the Council on a regular basis.

I would also like to thank Ruth George who has attended most of our meetings and kept us informed of the matters relevant to Chinley from the county council.

Whereas last year I was hopeful that next year's parish meeting would not be in the community hall I am now reasonably certain that next year's meeting will be in our new building.

During the last year Chinley has appeared on television and we've had a visit from a junior government minister. Next year I hope we will be listening to this report in our new building which will hopefully further develop the fabulous spirit of this local community.

It has been a pleasure and an honour to chair this council for another year and I would like to finish by thanking all my fellow councillors for their hard work and support.

Report for Annual Meeting of Chinley, Buxworth and Brownside Parish Council
Wednesday 15 May 2024

My first year as a Borough Councillor for Blackbrook Ward has been very busy and interesting with lots to do, learn and absorb.

First of all, I'd like to thank everyone who's given me help and support since I was elected last year.

We are very fortunate to have such a hard-working and diligent Parish Council and Clerk. Many thanks to them for all the support they've given me and for their magnificent achievement in organising the realisation of a dream – a new Chinley, Buxworth and Brownside Community Centre. Thanks, too, must go to the inspiring team at the Community Association. It's been a pleasure joining them each month at the Wednesday Coffee morning so I'm available if someone wants to discuss a particular issue. County Councillor, Ruth George, joins me there and at Bugsworth Memorial Club on Wednesday evenings each month. I've benefitted greatly from working alongside Ruth. Thanks to her and to fellow Borough Councillor Dan Capper.

So what does a Borough Councillor do?

When I stood for election I stated that I would work hard representing and helping the community. That's what I've aimed to do this last year.

I've continued my association with the Friends of Chinley Park Nature Reserve but also become actively involved in other community groups such as the Chinley Buxworth Transport Group and Buxworth Toad Patrol. I've yet to volunteer to work in Chinley Co-op but I do enjoy buying their produce.

With other volunteers I have helped establish the Chinley Buxworth Speedwatch Team, which works to encourage drivers to travel at safe speeds.

The roads in our Ward have become busier and more congested. I've been in touch with the local police and Highways Hub at County Hall a number of times trying to address thoughtless parking, highway and signage issues that residents have raised with me.

Unfortunately, high hopes that a footpath from the Forge Manor Estate to Buxton Road would quickly be established after the May 2023 election were shattered when discussions revealed that the road/footbridge on the Estate was not owned by Derbyshire County Council. This fact creates problems regarding liability which are awaiting resolution. Ruth George is currently seeking an update from Wain Homes.

It's good to be able to help Chinley and Buxworth Schools in one small way. I've been assisting Ruth selling second hand school uniforms at their summer fairs. She's done the lion's share of the work, mind you – washing and labelling the garments!

The health and safety of our schoolchildren, all residents, on our roads and in our local environment, is immensely important. One of the issues I wanted to address when I became a Councillor was dog-fouling on pavements and verges.

It's unpleasant, a danger to health and completely unnecessary. With the help of parents and others, campaigns against dog mess have been organised in Chinley and Buxworth during the year.

I wish it could be said dog mess is never seen in Blackbrook Ward. Alas, that's not the case. Another 'Say No to dog fouling' campaign will be launched soon.

So that is a brief resume of some of the practical work I do in the community.

Another activity for the Borough Councillor is taking part in meetings associated with the role. There are several Full Council meetings each year. In February, for example, Council Tax is approved. Councillors belong to different committees. I am on the Audit and Regulatory Committee which considers the Council's Finances alongside the Council Officers. I also attend the Climate Change Working Group and Local Plan Steering Group meetings and occasional relevant online sessions on subjects such as Electric Vehicles and EV Charging.

A Borough Councillor serves a four year term, which is just as well. There is a great deal to get to grips with. Over the year I have been asked to get involved with a number of planning applications. This involves careful reading of various reports, such as, flood risk assessments, consultation responses from archaeologists, the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, Environmental Health and others. It is interesting and complex material. And, of course, the outcomes affect individuals and the community.

For the oncoming year, I intend to continue to work for the welfare and well-being of our Blackbrook community and every individual living here, as best I can.

Angela Benham – Councillor for Blackbrook Ward – 15 May 2024

Local Issues:

1. **Roads:** the summer surface dressing programme is due to commence with works on the A624 between New Smithy and Chapel roundabout this month.
Potholes continue to be reported and temporary repairs done.

Yellow lines have been painted (finally) on Station Road. I have requested that other faded areas are done including the entrance to Belle Vue where vehicles sometimes park as the double yellow line isn't visible.

2. **Footpaths:**

Chinley Parish Footpath 1, from Station Road Furness Vale to Waterside on the B6062: a small section collapsed into the river in November 2021 and the whole footpath has been closed ever since. After considerable chasing as repairs would be very expensive, DCC are pursuing a course of action and have agreed to open up the fields adjacent to Station Road to walkers.

Footpath from Forge Road estate to Buxton Road: Wain Homes have promised an update on progress with DCC on the adoption of the bridge. They say they have also programmed the repairs to the flood wall.

3. **Long Hill Safer Roads Funding:** vegetation has been cut back, work has started on surfacing Old Road behind White Hall, up to a cycle route standard. They are around 4 weeks in to an 8 week schedule. An order has been placed for the Average Speed Cameras which should be installed over the summer.
4. **Speedwatch:** I have been supporting Cllr Angela Benham to set up a new speedwatch group for Chinley and have supplied equipment. There is now interest in Whaley Bridge so I will be seeking volunteers and arranging further training.

5. **School Uniform Stalls**

I held a second-hand uniform sale at the summer fair at Buxworth School on 11th May and will hold another this Saturday at Chinley School's fair.

I work with Little Cherubs to collect uniforms from all the schools in the Whaley Bridge/Chinley/Chapel areas and distribute them to families in need or sell them for £1 to raise funds for PTAs and Cherubs.

6. **Surgeries:** I do joint monthly surgeries with Cllr Angela Benham in Chinley and Buxworth.

My regular surgeries are:

Whaley Bridge: Footsteps Community Café, 1st Saturday of the month, 11am – 12pm

Furness Vale: Furness Vale Social Club, 2nd Thursday of the month, 2pm – 3pm

Chinley: WI Hall, 1st Wednesday of the month, 10.30 – 11.30am (at Chinley Friends Coffee Morning)

Buxworth: Buxworth Memorial Club, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6.30 – 7.30pm

Derbyshire County Council Cuts

There will be a public meeting regarding the cuts on Wednesday 29th May at 7pm at Chapel Town Hall.

The proposed drastic cuts to services were set out at the Derbyshire Cabinet meeting on 29th April:

- 1. Early Help and Children's Centres:** Cabinet decided to close 10 Children's Centres, including Gamesley and Hadfield in High Peak, and to reduce the Early Help family support staff from 221 full-time staff to just 103 in spite of the acknowledged risk that this will lead to more families in crisis, more children in need of protection and higher costs to the County Council. Previous cuts to Early Help by the Conservatives in 2018-19 saw the number of children in care in Derbyshire increasing by almost 50% from 711 in March 2018 to 1,060 in December 2023 with additional residential placement costs of £20m a year.

I have therefore led a formal "call-in" of the decision on behalf of the Labour Group with support from the Liberal Democrats (two party groups are required for a call-in). This will require further scrutiny of the decision by the People Scrutiny committee which will meet on 20th May and will delay the start of the formal consultation on the redundancies with staff and trade unions. The Cabinet paper is here:

<https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/documents/s24934/Early%20Help%20and%20Childrens%20Centres%20in%20Derbyshire.pdf>

- 2. Residential Care Homes and Day Centres for Older People:** Cabinet decided to launch a consultation to save £1.3m by closing 8 DCC Day Centres including Eccles Fold in Chapel, Jubilee Court in New Mills and Queens Court in Buxton, and to save £5.2m by closing either 9 or 11 of their 16 residential care homes, including Whitestones in Chapel. The proposals have caused much alarm in High Peak where around 100 people use the 3 day centres and there is only one other in Hope Valley which is small and almost fully utilised already. Whitestones has been reduced to only 17 residents, but many are very frail and some have already been transferred from Goyt Valley House in New Mills when that was closed in 2022.

A 12-week consultation will be launched in mid-May. We have been told the final decision will come to Cabinet in November, with all closures likely to be completed by April 2025, just before the next County Council elections in May 2025.

I have submitted a motion to Full Council to call for an investigation by the Scrutiny Committee on the consequences of the Council ceasing to be a direct provider of these two services, including assessing the impact on residents and the council. The cabinet paper is here:

<https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/documents/s24956/Proposed%20Redesign%20of%20Residential%20Care%20and%20Day%20Opportunities%20for%20Older%20People.pdf>

The consultation is here: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/consultation-search/consultation-details/proposed-redesign-of-residential-care-and-day-opportunities-for-older-people-adult-care.aspx>

- 3. Voluntary & Community Sector grants:** Cabinet decided to launch 2 consultations on ending £206,000 of infrastructure grants and £722,000 of discretionary grants to the voluntary sector for telephone and befriending activities and social activities to prevent isolation. High Peak CVS, New Mills Volunteer Centre, Connex in Buxton and The Bureau in Glossop would all lose substantial funding. The Labour Group are especially concerned at the cumulative impact of all of the cuts on the services available in each area.

Two 12-week consultations will be launched in mid-May with a final Cabinet decision due at the November or December meetings, with implementation for the 25/26 financial year. Cabinet paper: <https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/documents/s24932/Proposal%20to%20Consult%20on%20the%20Cessation%20of%20Adult%20Social%20Care%20Discretionary%20Grant%20Funding.pdf>

<https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/documents/s24943/Proposal%20to%20consult%20on%20the%20cessation%20of%20Corporate%20Services%20and%20Transformation%20discretionary%20grant%20fu.pdf>

4. **Services for Adults with Learning Disability and/or Autism** - Cabinet meeting on 11th April:

a) **Day Centres:** Cabinet decided to consult on plans to save £1.2m over 3 years by closing either all of the 4 remaining Day Centres or closing 2 of the 4, leaving No Limits in Chesterfield and Outlook in Long Eaton. Both options would see Alderbrook in Chinley closing. Since covid only 9 people of the previous 89 have been permitted to continue to attend Alderbrook for an average of 3 days per week. The alternative proposed is for people to receive direct payments to attend services offered in the voluntary sector, or to hire their own PA to support them to attend activities that they wish.

I am concerned that there is a general lack of provision, suitable activities and PAs for this to be feasible as is already being reported by some former users of Derbyshire day centres.

Alderbrook: Peak School have put together a proposal to use the Alderbrook site to expand SEND school places and extend their provision to training courses for people with SEND up to age 25 to fulfil local need, including reopening the Branching Out Garden Centre, providing a café where adults with learning disability and/or autism could meet, and possibly to include some animals on site to offer animal therapy and courses in animal care. This appears to be an excellent offer and I will be working with Peak School to make sure it is fully considered by DCC.

b) **Respite breaks:** Cabinet decided to consult on plans to save a further £1.2m by closing either 3 or 4 of the council's 5 short break centres which provide opportunities for adults with learning disability and/or autism and respite for their carers. DCC claim there are only 54 people who qualify and want this service, and that all could be accommodated for 6 short breaks of 6 days each at the 10 beds in Morewood in Alfreton, although there is a second option to retain The Bungalow at Newhall, Swadlincote. Both are in the south and east of the county.

I am concerned that the number of people needing high quality breaks has been underestimated and that alternative provision in full-time residential homes for people with Learning Disability would not be so focussed on those accessing short breaks.

The consultation has been launched online and there will be a drop-in session at Chapel Library from 10am – 12pm on 28th May to support people to respond: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/consultation-search/consultation-details/proposed-re-design-of-day-opportunities-and-short-breaks-for-people-with-learning-disabilities-and-or-autism.aspx>

5. **Short Breaks for Children with Disability at Outback and the Getaway:**

The Council proposed closing these provisions for short breaks, held a 2-week consultation and was due to make the closure decision at the Cabinet meeting on 11th April.

However a parent of a child who used the service threatened Judicial Review of the decision as the consultation had been too short and was not clear enough.

The consultation has now been clarified and reissued:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/consultation-search/consultation-details/extended-outback-early-help-service-and-the-getaway-short-break-provision.aspx>

Further Cuts Proposed:

Library & Heritage Services: due to come to Cabinet on 4th July – a proposal to save £156k per year from 25/26 by “modernising, transforming and rationalising” the library service, including Whaley Bridge Library, and heritage service, including Buxton Museum