

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Much Hadham Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 3 November 2015
at 7.30pm in Much Hadham Village Hall

*Cllr Mrs S Bannerman (Vice Chairman)

*Cllr A Baxter (Chairman)

*Cllr I Hunt

*Cllr M P Keogh

*Cllr R D Key

*Cllr Mrs J Liversage

*Cllr Mrs P Taylor

*Cllr A J Young

* denotes present

Present: District Cllr Ian Devonshire and approximately 45 members of the public
Clerk: Colin Marks (CM), locum clerk

ACTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.30pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman announced that, with regret, he had just received a letter of resignation from Cllr J Godfrey who would not therefore be attending the meeting. EHC to be informed. Apology received from County Cllr Graham McAndrew – attending County meeting

AB/JI

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs Bannerman: On Pavilion matters, being a member of the Pavilion Committee.
Cllr A Baxter: A DPI on Agenda item 20, being a resident of Millers View, which is adjacent to the proposed Station Yard development.

Before going further, the Chairman took the opportunity to introduce Colin Marks as the Locum Clerk standing in for John Ingham, and Carina Helmn, the County Officer of the Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils. The Chairman also said he was sorry to have received Cllr Godfrey's resignation, on personal grounds, and that he wished to record his thanks to Cllr Godfrey for the excellent work done during his time in office, especially on the challenging footpaths brief. The Clerk will be informed upon his return after the weekend and the vacancy process will be put in motion.

AB/JI

3 MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2015

Page 1: 1. APOLOGIES. It was noted that County Cllr McAndrew had sent his apologies.

The following changes to the draft Minutes were discussed and agreed.

Page 3: 2nd para (under (i) Pavilion, beginning "Cllr Mrs Bannerman...":

There was a discussion on the wording of this paragraph. It was noted that some residents understood the Buy a Brick campaign was to pay down the loan, which is what they wanted. Minutes of this paragraph not amended.

Page 3: 6. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS, (iv) Yewtree:

First line change "five houses" to "seven houses"

Page 4: 7. MUCH HADHAM PAROCHIAL CHARITIES:

1st para change "Ms M Hodge" to "Mrs Margaret Brent"

2nd para change "Ms Hodge" to Mrs Brent"

Page 6: 10. STREET NAMING...

2nd para: add a final sentence "Luxford is also the name of a sister company of the developer."

Page 6: 11. PARKING...

1st para, penultimate line change "would form" to "could form"

Page 8, 2nd para: (Under section (ii) Pavilion Committee, which begins on page 7)

Delete 3rd sentence beginning "Unfortunately..." to the end of the paragraph (ending "...Committee")

Page 8, 4th para, 1st line: delete "Hunt's..." to "...their" and replace with "Hunt raised concerns about"

Page 8, 6th para, 3rd line: delete "...and there had" to the end of the sentence "...Cllr Hunt."

Page 9: 15. PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

1st para, 3rd line: change "...could be hired for £190 per annum to manage..." to "...could be purchased for £190 to manage..."

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** *that after making these amendments, the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 6 October 2015 were a true and accurate record.*

The Chairman signed the amended Minutes.

AB/Clerk

A councillor asked the locum clerk to define what he thought Parish Council Minutes should be. He replied that they should essentially be a record of the business transacted at a meeting, that is, the decisions made by a resolution of the Council. They should not normally contain councillor's speeches or conversations unless they are relevant to an understanding of how a decision was reached.

4 MATTERS ARISING: Not discussed

5 MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2015

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** *to approve the Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting on 29 October 2015*

The Chairman signed the Minutes.

AB/Clerk

6 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A poppy wreath will be laid at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

Thanks were offered to Cllr Mrs Penny Taylor and Cllr Mrs Selina Bannerman for organising the tea, cakes and biscuits before the meeting, and also to Canon McAdam. This had been a resounding success.

7 RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

A request was made to consider having Residents' Comments later in the meeting so their comments could be more relevant to the business discussed.

In response, the Chairman made a number of points. He said that this was a Parish Council meeting which the public could attend, but it was not a public meeting. Referring to the Council's Standing Orders, he noted that a response to a question from the floor was not required to be given at the meeting. However, the Chairman said he welcomed and wanted to encourage orderly public participation.

He observed that the Council's Code of Conduct was based on the over-riding tenet of respect towards and by councillors in their dealings with each other and members of the public.

He noted that the Clerk is a paid employee of the Council and should be treated

accordingly. Clerks are not perfect, but neither is anyone else.

The Chairman invited residents to make comments at this juncture. He asked participants to stand and state their name.

A resident said it was important for the Minutes to be published as quickly as possible after the meeting. He further stated that the Standing Orders should also be on the Parish Council's website. It was suggested there should be a page on the website for draft unapproved Minutes.

JI/SB

Canon McAdam said he was very appreciative of the opportunity to meet and speak with councillors before the meeting.

There was a request for the Council give an assurance that where money was donated under the buy a brick scheme for the express purpose of paying off the Pavilion loan, it will be ring-fenced for that purpose and spent accordingly.

ALL

A member of the Sports Association made the following points in reference to the preamble of the Pavilion Committee's Constitution and its Terms of Reference: 1) That the Sports Association was not involved in the formation of the Pavilion Committee. 2) The Association does not have members on the Pavilion Committee.

At 8.20pm the Chairman called the meeting back to order.

8 MINUTES OF THE PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE, 6 OCTOBER 2015

The Minutes were received.

9 MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) Highways – general

Cllr Young presented a report.

Malting Lane and Stansted Hill

As previously advised, these roads will be closed from 29 Oct to 4 Nov. Cllr Hunt was partially successful in challenging the diversion plans. While Church Lane will still be used as a diversion route for Malting Lane, Danebridge Road will be signed as "Road Ahead Closed" at the B1004 junction, so traffic will be encouraged to stay on the B1004 rather than attempt to cut through to Malting Lane.

Black Bridge Lane

In co-operation with Richard Munday, we are pressing HCC contractors to confirm the action they are taking to make good faults in the drainage of lane.

Kettle Green Lane

Chaldean Estates have undertaken to do what they can to clear away any large deposits of mud that their tractors may leave on the lane. They recognise the hazard.

Kevin Gregory of Foxley Developments has stated that he will check the state of the hedges on his boundaries and will arrange for them to be trimmed where necessary.

The drains along the bottom of the lane leading down to Hadham Cross are blocked. Rainwater simply floods down the lane and into Walnut Close. We are asking HCC to address this problem.

Church Lane

A complaint that the recent kerb installation was not properly authorised has been referred to HCC.

Broadfield Close

Circle Housing has acknowledged residents' concerns about parking and the upkeep of pavements. The police have been made aware and the situation is under review.

Parking

Illegal parking around Hadham Cross and elsewhere has been reported to the police and tickets for obstruction have been and will be issued. Going forward, parking will be considered within the Neighbourhood Plan. Traffic-surveys will be conducted to establish objectively the scale of the problem. Parking within the Village Hall is a matter for VH committee.

Malting Lane

New signage for the top of Malting Lane and at the ford is still awaited. We have been assured by HCC that it will be in place by the end of the financial year, i.e. 31 March 2016.

Winter Salt

The order has been placed and Cllr Jan Liversage has kindly agreed to provide temporary storage pending its distribution around the village.

JL

Perry Green / Green Tye Verges

Cllr Hunt met Paul Patmore (HCC) and Cllr McAndrew in Perry Green on 9th October. Cllr Hunt reiterated the need for a "safe and durable" solution and pointed out that soft options such as soil and turf will not last. This was accepted, but they explained that this had to be balanced against "feasibility and cost". Proposals to kerb both sides of the road around Joyce's Cottage are not deemed to be practical because two vehicles would no longer be able to pass each other at that point, creating a bottleneck and consequent traffic-jams. In many places where there is a measure to prevent vehicles mounting the verge, the opposite verge takes the strain. It is an escapable result of the size of modern vehicles. From the tyre tracks, it is clear that tractors are creating the present damage. The verges affected can never be replaced sustainably, given present usage by heavy vehicles.

Paul Patmore agreed that he would search for costed options, such as road widening, so that permanent surfacing replaces the potholes, or filling and levelling the potholes with a medium compound that will take vehicle weight, if necessary, but be distinct from the road surface so as not to represent a widening. One consideration is that if the work is deferred to April, HMF's contribution could be supplemented by a contribution from the highways locality budget. They also have a good understanding of the options for Snell's Corner and the need to restore the verges at Perry Green is recognised and accepted

(ii) Highways Together

The Letter of Enablement is now in place. A copy was received. This means that on minor roads around the parish (not the High Street / B1004) we can ourselves undertake work including:

- Sign-cleaning
- Hedge cutting
- Weed control
- Highway tree maintenance
- Sign-post and guardrail maintenance.

5 days' notice of any works has to be given HCC and a risk assessment has to be completed for each task, countersigned by the Parish Clerk. This is well within our capabilities.

(iii) Parish Paths Partnership (PPP)

Cllr Mrs Taylor presented a report.

FP11, Dell Cottage: Nicholas Maddex (Rights of Way Officer) is in negotiations with the

developer. We must continue to use the existing as near as possible to avoid losing them. The developer's application map was attached to the report.

FP26: A complaint has been made to Ringway about the uneven tarmac. They will inspect and report back. The process is slow and nothing has been heard yet. Will continue to chase. **PT**

FP26 gate: The latch is making a hole in the fence. The wood swells in the winter and then will not close properly. A carpenter will be employed to make the necessary adjustments. **PT**

Complaint concerning Ash Meadow: Written to the complainant and it is probably fair to assume that the hedge belongs to the householder. EHC say the hedge is too short in length to be covered by hedgerow regulations, therefore the occupier cannot be required to reinstate it.

The issue of leaving the bins on the edge of the road is a Highways matter if it is considered they are causing an obstruction. However the obstruction may be adjudged to be too small to warrant action in law. The occupier will be asked to consider moving the bins back to Ash Meadow. **PT**

- Cllr Mrs Taylor made reference to the Clean For The Queen campaign that is being launched in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy to clear up Britain in time for The Queen's 90th birthday in 2016. This might provide a possible stimulus to keeping the village tidy. **PT**

(iv) Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

The draft Minutes of the 13 October NP meeting were received.

Cllr Hunt gave a brief overview: The Chaldean meeting would form part of the evidence base. All parishioners' comments would be gathered to form the basis of the Plan. Cost effective ways to produce the Plan are being sought. Costs to date come to £628. There was a general invitation for everyone to attend the next NP meeting on Tuesday 10 November in the Village Hall. **IH**

(v) No other matters were discussed.

10 PARKING IN MUCH HADHAM

Parking is a perennial problem for the village. There is a complaint that people visiting the dental surgery are causing an obstruction by parking in front of neighbouring properties. The Parish Council is asked if it can do anything to help. Whilst the Parish Council has no powers of enforcement, this will be looked into and District Cllr Devonshire said he would follow it up to see what might be done. **ID/SB**

11 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Dist Cllr Ian Devonshire said he was pleased to see that the Section 106 payment for the Moor Place development has finally been approved at £12,807.

In reference to tidying the village, Cllr Devonshire referred to the TUBS scheme operated in Bishop's Stortford. A practical suggestion might be a number of parishioners volunteering for, say, two hours on one Sunday a month. He suggested the Parish magazine as a possible way to invite interest and that Cllr Mrs Taylor might help facilitate this. **PT**

Cllr Devonshire said that County Cllr McAndrew was a member of EHC Executive Committee who's meetings invariably coincide with those of MHPC. He requested whether it would be acceptable for DC Devonshire to present a report in his absence. This was agreed. **ID/GM**

- Under the Highways Together Letter of Enablement it should be possible to organise volunteers to clean signs etc as long as the defined limitations and rules are observed. **AY**
ID
- In reference to the parking problems discussed earlier, DC Devonshire said he would seek to set up a meeting with EHC parking enforcement.
- 12 PAVILION UPDATE AND RECREATION GROUND ACTIVITIES**
- (i) Building and recreation ground
Report from John Carey: Nothing further has been done since the last meeting.
- (ii) Pavilion Committee – Constitution and Terms of Reference
The first draft of the Constitution and Terms of Reference were received. It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED that John Carey, Cllr Baxter and Cllr Mrs Taylor go through the drafts and report their comments.** **JC/AB/PT**
- (iii) Pavilion Committee Minutes and financial report
The Pavilion Committee Minutes of meeting held on 27 May, 11 June, 2 July, 21 October, and a statement of the Pavilion accounts as at 28 October 2015, were received.
- (iv) Section 106 agreement – Moor Place development
It was unanimously agreed to record thanks to D Cllr Ian Devonshire for his efforts in pursuing and helping to secure the S106 agreement payment.
- 13 PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE**
Cllr Mrs Bannerman reported that the website is up and running again thanks to a webmaster being paid to sort out the issues. She said she would now be adding pages and updating the site, including the archive. **SB**
- 14 VILLAGE HALL**
- (i) General report on repairs and maintenance
The proposed plan to replace gutters and soffits has been put on hold for the time being. Efforts will be focussed on refurbishing the Green Room
- (ii) Green Room floor grant application
A Community Capital Grant from EHC for replacement flooring has been awarded for up to £5,075 of the estimated total cost of £10,000 for oak flooring and room redecoration. The Council proposes to work with the VH Committee. The intention to apply for a grant to complete the Pavilion will now be postponed until next financial year and all efforts this year channelled towards the Village Hall. **SB**
- 15 MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL**
A draft Member/Officer Protocol was received and its adoption was deferred until the next meeting. **JJ/AB**
- The document to be scrutinised to ensure there is no overlap or conflict with the Standing Orders or the Financial Regulations. **JJ/AB**
- 16 STAFFING COMMITTEE**
Draft Terms of Reference for a Staffing Committee were received. It was agreed that Councillors Young, Liversage and Baxter study the draft and that its adoption, and who might comprise the Committee’s members, be considered at the next meeting. **AY/JL/AB**

- 17 GRANTS POLICY**
A draft grants Policy was received and its contents considered. It was agreed that a Grants Application Form should be created and that it should, together with the Policy, go up on the website. **JI**
- 18 OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENTS**
The Clerk to action these for consideration at the next meeting. **JI**
- 19 PENSIONS REGULATOR – WORKPLACE PENSION SCHEME**
The locum clerk advised that the Parish Council, as an employer, has statutory duties it must meet by having a qualifying pension scheme in place, even if it is highly unlikely the Council will ever be enrolling any employees into it. The Pensions Regulator will have written to the Council to give them information and setting dates for nominating a point of contact and the staging date when the auto-enrolment duties come into effect for this Council. An example of a qualifying scheme is called NEST (National Employment Savings Trust), set up by the government for this specific purpose. It was agreed to ask the Clerk to clarify what information has been received from the Pensions Regulator. **JI**
- 20 STATION YARD DEVELOPMENT – SECTION 52 AGREEMENT**
This issue concerns the former goods yard site on land adjacent to Millers View and which it is proposed to develop (see planning applications). Two residents who bought property in Millers View were assured that a Section 52 Agreement, currently in place on the site, would prevent further development. However, it appears the Agreement can be broken if the three parties who entered into it -in this case East Herts Council, the Norman family and the British Rail Board – determine to do so. The matter is being followed up. **IH**
- 21 2nd ANNUAL VILLAGE HALL AND COMMUNITY BUILDING CONFERENCE**
2 December - this is a diary date for information only.
- 22 MUCH HADHAM PAROCHIAL CHARITIES**
There is a vacancy and a request was made for a volunteer. No one came forward.
- 23 HENRY MOORE FOUNDATION**
There has been a meeting with the Foundation’s new CEO. However, there has been no subsequent report from local residents so the outcome remains to be seen.
- 24 BUDGET /ACTUAL STATEMENT 2015/2016**
The Chairman said a statement had been prepared by the Clerk and submitted to the Council. He also said he had asked the locum clerk to be an independent pair of eyes looking at the whole financial position before the next meeting. **CM**
- 25 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**
This had been compiled and presented by the Clerk and it was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve the list of payments of accounts as presented.** **JI**
- FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ESTIMATED FUND BALANCE**
The Financial Statement as at 19 October 2015, and the Fund Account Balance Sheet provided by the Clerk, were received and noted.

26 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

27 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

As listed on the agenda:

- Amendment to Standing Orders
- Parish Councillor portfolios – to be restructured
- Precept 2016/2017

JI

JI

28 CALENDAR OF MEETING FOR 2016

The proposed Calendar of Meetings provided by the Clerk was received. It was agreed that January to October meetings would be held on the first Tuesday in the month, and that November and December meetings would be held on the first Monday of the month.

JI

29 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 1 December at 7.30pm in Much Hadham Village Hall

30 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman explained that due to the confidential nature of the next agenda item there would be a vote to exclude press and public. Following a vote it was **RESOLVED that under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 that the press and public be excluded during Agenda item 30 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and all members of the public left the room.

31 TO AGREE TERMS FOR THE SERVICES OF THE LOCUM CLERK

An hourly rate was agreed at £11 for the locum clerk’s services for the Extra Ordinary Meeting on 29 October, and for the full Council Meeting and Planning Meetings on 3 November. The locum clerk’s involvement in looking at the financial position was also agreed as a separate role.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm

Signed.....Dated.....
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