

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Annual Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 2nd May 2017, at 7:30 pm in the Much Hadham Village Hall Green Room.

*Cllr W Compton

*Cllr I Hunt (Vice Chairman)

*Cllr B Morris

Cllr Mrs M O'Neill

*Cllr W O'Neill

*Cllr C Thompson

*Cllr K Twort

*Cllr Mrs P Taylor (Chairman)

*Cllr Mrs J Liversage

* denotes present.

In attendance: F Forth, Parish Clerk and 15 members of the public.

17/65. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Cllr Mrs P Taylor be duly elected to the office of Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing civic year.

17/66. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Mrs P Taylor duly signed her declaration of office.

17/67. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Cllr I Hunt be duly elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing civic year.

17/68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr Mrs M O'Neill.

17/69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

17/70. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr B Morris raised the following item as urgent business:

- Clarification sought as to whether Cllr C Thompson is seeking to purchase the Jolly Waggoner site.

In response to the question raised, Cllr C Thompson denied he was seeking to purchase the site. The Chairman reminded those present that this was the notification of urgent business

and not for such business to be addressed and highlighted that the Jolly Waggoners was agenda item 17/79.

17/71. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked fellow Cllrs for their vote and for voting Cllr I Hunt as Vice Chairman.

The Annual Accounts are later on the agenda and the Chairman highlighted that the Internal Audit review had not identified any issues and thanks were expressed to the Clerk.

The Chairman reminded those present that the Annual Parish Meeting is on the 16th May and invitations have been sent to speakers.

17/72. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 4th April 2017 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

17/73. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS

Report on outstanding matters noted.

17/74. ALLOCATION OF PORTFOLIOS

The Chairman proposed that the existing portfolios remain as they are to enable continuity and this was agreed.

17/75. MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) Community

Cllr K Twort reported that the installation of a separate water meter at the Pavilion had been considered but was too costly to pursue.

Cllr K Twort then outlined the position in relation to the Pavilion. Firstly, stating that the Parish Council has responsibility to deal with the position it currently faces with the issues at the Pavilion. From looking back through the paperwork that has been made available to him, he considered that there were three basic problems that lead to the cost of the refurbishment:

- It went against advice from the surveyors to knock the existing Pavilion down and start afresh;
- No grants were sought or obtained before the work commenced; and
- There was no supervision when the work was carried out. This point was made evident from builders with no knowledge of the situation when they looked at the building.

Currently, it costs around £3,000 to run the Pavilion per year with the additional cost of the debt repayments of around £5,000 per year. There is very little income, mainly from the 1 football club each year.

A specification for the works required has been prepared. A surveyor was not used as this would have incurred more cost and the specification is therefore not guaranteed to have all issues included, effectively it is a snagging list. Whilst further work to be done, three quotes against this specification have been obtained. These are:

- £7,670 + VAT;
- £6,440 + VAT; and
- £7,400 + VAT.

The further work to be done is to obtain additional quotes and seek a comment from John Clarke, architect for this project, on the specification that has been produced. Once the improvement works have been completed, there will be a need to generate more income although it is acknowledged that it is too small for many functions.

Upon request, Cllr K Twort outlined the major items on the list:

- Plumbing work in respect of the showers and attempt to stop the flooding;
- Ducting in the building is not working;
- Electrical items, for example, a PIR light, a light for the outside toilet and the installation of frost stats; and
- To deal with the structural movement.

The subsequent discussion confirmed that there were no grants, the value of loan currently and the remaining term, whether there was additional paperwork available to review and whether an insurance claim could be made. The Clerk is to investigate the penalties associated with paying the loan off faster.

Cllr K Twort stated he will circulate the specification and the quotes received before the next meeting to enable a decision to be made. Cllr B Morris raised that the s106 monies could be used to fund the repair work.

Cllr W O'Neill reported that he had attended the Village Hall Management Committee AGM. The main points arising were:

- Neil Clarke is undertaking a sponsored bike ride to raise funds for the new chairs needed in the main hall. 100 chairs are needed, costing around £30 each, regular users of the hall will be invited to consider raising funds for chairs; and
- Main focus for the coming year will be to improve the village hall car park through limiting use, improving the surface and possibly marking out parking spaces to maximise efficiency.

Reference was made to contacting the owners of Two Bridges for a contribution to the cost of repairing the car park. Contact by the Village Hall Management Committee in the past was not successful and the Parish Council has now sent a letter.

(ii) Environment (inc Public Rights of Way)

Public Rights of Way

Cllr B Morris reported that the owner had been notified to clear up the fallen tree on Footpath 28. In terms of Footpath 40, there is a quote for the new wooden bridge but there may be a delay whilst approval is obtained. The Parish Council website needs updating to reflect this and information will be provided to the Chairman to achieve this.

In terms of the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme, it was reported that the money had been pooled and would be used to reinstate Cox's Highway. Following a question, Cllr B Morris stated that the money does not come to the Parish Council but the Parish Council are able to influence where it is spent and as the remit holder, he made that decision.

(iii) Highways

Cllr W O'Neill stated that there were no additional issues to report. The problems reported previously are ongoing and will be reported on when there has been progress.

In addition, the new LED street light lamp has been installed although there is currently an issue with the power supply.

(iv) Media

The Chairman outlined the proposal to re-introduce the use of Twitter, essentially as a tool to provide pertinent information about the Parish Council to residents for example, meetings and emergency road closures. Use of the account will be controlled and any information that a Cllr would like posted onto the Twitter account should be emailed to the Clerk, or the Chairman in her absence.

It was agreed to trial this for 6 months.

(v) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr I Hunt provided a brief update. Although no public meeting in April, work behind the scenes progresses. The housing group continue to liaise with landowners to identify areas that might be suitable for development but this is taking longer than expected.

The environment group continues to identify land potentially suitable for designation as local green space.

(vi) Security

Cllr Mrs J Liversage reported on the latest crime statistics. A few incidents have occurred recently.

(vii) Other

RESOLVED to accept the quote from Richard Kidger for £480.00 to repair the wooden bench at the War Memorial.

Cllr W O'Neill raised that there was a slat missing at the Red Lion bus shelter. However, it first needs to be identified if that bus shelter belongs to the Parish Council.

17/76. PLACEMENT OF DEFIBRILLATOR

Cllr B Morris outlined the rationale for placing a defibrillator in the telephone box at Tower Hill, in situ or on the recreation ground. The merits of various locations for a further defibrillator and the costs associated with it (£2,000 + maintenance) were discussed. It was suggested that contact is made with the doctors and dentists as they have defibrillators. It may be possible for theirs to be put on the outside of their buildings to make more accessible out of working hours.

In addition, it was highlighted that it is important to dial 999 to obtain the nearest location of a defibrillator, undertake CPR and fetch the defibrillator in that order.

RESOLVED to consider, in the future, placing a defibrillator in the telephone box at Tower Hill, in situ or on the recreation ground.

17/77. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr I Devonshire reported on the following matters:

- District Plan has been submitted and the Inspector has been appointed;
- Planning application for 8 houses on the Old Station Yard site has been refused; and
- For transparency, following questions that had been raised at the previous meeting, whenever he has a client within Much Hadham that submits a planning application, he will formally notify the Planning Department at East Herts Council that his company is involved.

17/78. ANNUAL RETURN AND ACCOUNTS

(i) Annual Governance Statement

The Clerk highlighted that the Annual Governance Statement reflects that the Parish Council has a system of internal control in place. RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17, Section 1 in the Annual Return.

(ii) Annual Accounts

The Clerk highlighted that there are two versions of the annual accounts. A very summarised version is documented in the Annual Return, Section 2, which is supported by the detailed Financial Accounts. It was also highlighted that the prior year accounts had been prepared

on a mixed basis of cash and accrual accounting. The correct basis of accounting for the Parish Council is cash and the prior year accounts have been restated to reflect this. In addition, the Clerk referred to the year on year comparison which had been circulated with the accounts information.

RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statements in the Annual Return and the detailed Financial Accounts for 2016/17.

(iii) Internal Audit

The Clerk reported that there were two versions of the Internal Audit report to note. Internal Audit completed page 5 of the Annual Return and provided a detailed report. Both reports reflect that the Parish Council has the expected controls in place and no recommendations have been made.

Cllr I Hunt drew attention to the positive comment regarding the Clerk in the Internal Audit report and the Clerk was thanked for her efforts.

17/79. JOLLY WAGGONERS

Cllr I Hunt reported that a positive meeting had been held with David Cooper, joint owner of the Jolly Waggoner's site. Attendees for the Parish Council were Cllrs C Thompson, W O'Neill and himself. The planning permission for the site expires in 2018. Mr Cooper confirmed that the plan is still for a pub and a restaurant but his focus has been on other development projects.

A number of maintenance issues were raised with him and he acknowledged his liability to deal with these. In addition, he agreed to erect hoardings to protect the site and discourage vandals.

17/80. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

(i) Bus shelter at the Red Lion

A resident pointed out that the condition of the bus shelter roof at the Red Lion had been reported 18 months ago but no action had been taken hence the issues now currently being faced. (see minute 17/75(vii))

(ii) Pavilion

A number of issues were raised in relation to the Pavilion due to the report provided earlier (17/75(i)). These were:

- No grants being obtained, and subsequent implications of the loan, were not fully explained to residents;

- The source of grants available were debated and it was highlighted that if the refurbishment had been delayed a year, a £50,000 grant would have been available through the Football Association;
- It was agreed that the s106 monies had been set aside to pay down the loan but the financial consequences of this were not considered in terms of the breakage terms involved; and
- A view was expressed that there should have been a contract with John Clarke.

The above concerns were noted.

In response to a comment made regarding a builders' guarantee, Cllr K Twort responded that the release of the final retention would have been on the basis of snagging work being completed.

(iii) Defibrillator

In response to the earlier discussion on the placement of an additional defibrillator in the village (minute 17/76), it was suggested that if this is to be progressed, that the Village Hall be considered as a potential site for its installation.

It was also suggested that it could make more sense to be placed at the north end of the village.

(iv) Annual Return and Accounts

In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed that the Annual Return and Accounts would be available on the Parish Council's website at the end of the week.

(v) War Memorial lighting

It was raised by a resident that potentially the light is not working at the War Memorial. This will be investigated.

17/81. PLANNING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 4th April 2017 be received and the decisions taken be ratified.

17/82. STAFFING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 1st April 2017 be received and the decisions taken be ratified, including the establishment of a Staffing Sub-Committee.

Following questions from Cllrs B Morris and W Compton, it was confirmed that the Pavilion cleaning position had been advertised in the local shop and on the notice boards. In

addition, the person obtaining this position will not be an employee of the Parish Council but an independent contractor.

17/83. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(i) Payment of Accounts

In respect of the payment to MH Landscapes Ltd, the Clerk reported that there are two key issues with the invoice currently held: not a VAT invoice and the description of work is insufficient. It had not been possible to obtain a correct invoice prior to the meeting due to unforeseen circumstances at the company. The Clerk, therefore, requested that this payment not be approved.

Following a question from Cllr B Morris, it was confirmed by Cllr I Hunt that the majority of the payments to be made to the Neighbourhood Plan consultants would be covered by the grant being received.

RESOLVED that the accounts, as shown below, be duly authorised for payment, excluding the payment to MH Landscapes Ltd.

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - MAY 2017

Chq	Payable to	For	Amount
762	Braughing PC	Purchase of easels for NP events (NP)	60.00
763	Mrs R Fleetwood	Project Manager (NP)	700.00
764	J Johns	Pavilion cleaning	85.00
765	HAPTC	Annual subscription	792.56
766	Ken Howlett	Banners & stationery (NP)	131.89
767	E.ON	Electricity War Memorial	23.11
768	MH Landscapes Ltd	BA Churchyard maintenance Jul-Dec 2016	1,080.00
Total payments			<u>2,872.56</u>

Cheques will be signed and despatched at the conclusion of the meeting.

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statement for 2017/18 was received. There were no matters to highlight.

17/84. URGENT BUSINESS

The item raised was dealt with earlier in the meeting.

17/85. CLERK'S INFORMATION

None.

17/86. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 6th June 2017, at 7.30 pm in the Green Tye Mission Hall with refreshment beforehand. The Chairman reminded those present that the Annual Village meeting will be on the 16th May and suggestions for speakers welcomed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:05 pm.