

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cllr W Compton | *Cllr C Thompson |
| Cllr I Hunt (Vice Chairman) | *Cllr K Twort |
| *Cllr B Morris | *Cllr Mrs P Taylor (Chairman) |
| *Cllr Mrs M O'Neill | *Cllr Mrs J Liversage |
| *Cllr W O'Neill | |

* denotes present.

In attendance: F Forth, Parish Clerk and 8 members of the public.

17/29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr W Compton and Cllr I Hunt.

17/30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

17/31. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

17/32. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that there was a significant amount of business to deal with tonight given that there are 3 meetings scheduled and that there would be a presentation from a representative of BT regarding the broadband rollout.

In addition, the Chairman referred to the training offered by HAPTC. Cllr I Hunt and the Clerk had attended training on the 15th February relating to Standing Orders. The Chairman and Clerk were attending training relating to effective council meetings on the 8th March. There is training on the Code of Conduct on the 26th March if any Councillor is interested in attending. It was confirmed that all Councillors were receiving the bulletins from HAPTC where upcoming courses are detailed.

17/33. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 7th February 2017 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

17/34. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS

Report on outstanding matters noted.

17/35. MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) Community

Cllr K Twort reported that the woodworm treatment had been applied to the Pavilion and time will tell if this has been effective. The floor in the Bowls Club had been repaired and the repair work for the play equipment would be undertaken next week. Following a question, it was confirmed that it was not possible to claim from insurance as the work required was due to wear and tear.

Cllr W O'Neill reported that the Village Hall Management Committee had agreed with the location of the proposed dog bin. Additionally, a request for a dog bin on Footpath 29 had been received and agreed to, pending permission from the owner of the land, believed to be Mr Lamkin. Plans to renovate and improve the Village Hall are continuing with new curtains ordered for the Green Room and plans to replace the old black plastic chairs. Neil Clarke is proposing to do a sponsored bike ride from Belgium to Santiago de Compostela in May/June to raise funds for the chairs. Thanks were expressed to the Committee for their hard work and fundraising efforts.

RESOLVED to purchase two dog bins.

(ii) Environment (inc Public Rights of Way)

Public Rights of Way

Cllr B Morris provided an update on the state of PRow in the parish, particularly Footpaths 10, 40 and 25, as per the report at Appendix A. The bridge on Footpath 40 is closed and Footpath 25 will be closing for 10 days starting on the 20th March.

(iii) Highways

Cllr W O'Neill provided the following update:

- Lighting project – sample light is ready for installation which will coincide with the restoration of the power supply to a string of 8 lights in the High Street;
- Snells Corner and B1004 – reasons for the water cascading onto the B1004 from the Golf Course have been identified and the proposed solution, a French drain and possibly a retaining wall, have been sent to Highways by East Herts Environment Engineer;
- Malting Lane – resurfacing of the Lane has resulted in more traffic ignoring the one-way restrictions. Ways to address this are being explored;
- Green Tye and Perry Green – reference made to the traffic chaos resulting from Affinity Water installing a new water main;

- Danebridge Road – a consequence of the previous point is that additional traffic is using this road and causing damage to the verges, leading to mud on the road blocking the drains and causing the road to flood. In one section, the river bank has collapsed and this danger has been reported to Highways;
- Hadham Cross – injury to a resident due to a faulty water stopcock has been addressed by Affinity Water; and
- Station Road – reference made to the damage caused by the construction traffic.

(iv) Media

See presentation after item 17/38.

(v) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr I Hunt was not present at the meeting therefore no report.

The Chairman reported that the Consultation Workshop on the 25th February had been good and members of the Steering Group were working on the feedback received.

(vi) Security

Nothing to report.

(vii) Other

RESOLVED that the quote from Richard Kidger to repair the bus shelter and bench for £265.00 be approved.

Cllr B Morris also outlined that the increase in the recent police presence was as a result of looking for drink drivers.

17/36. PARISH COUNCIL 3 YEAR PLAN

Main update related to the lighting project and the establishment of a working party to take this forward, consisting of Cllr W O'Neill and Cllr K Twort. Cllr W O'Neill highlighted that one of the most difficult decisions will be regarding where lights are not needed.

17/37. HARDSHIP FUND

The Chairman provided background on the establishment of the Hardship Fund whereby £1,000 was given by the Parish Council in 2014 to St Andrews Parochial Church Council to assist residents in need within Much Hadham. Cllr B Morris highlighted that no feedback had been received on how these funds had been spent. It was agreed the PCC will be invited to report back to the Parish Council on this matter, together with providing their financial accounts for the years 2014/15 and 2015/16.

17/38. LOCATION OF TELEPHONE BOX AT GREEN TYE

RESOLVED that the Perry Green and Green Tye Preservation Society could locate a telephone box at Green Tye in the same place where the old one had been.

PRESENTATION

Presentation received from Giles Ellerton, BT in relation to the rollout of fibre broadband received. Key point made being that the infrastructure to be in place by June 2017 enabling residents to buy from providers in July 2017.

17/39. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

(i) Report from District Councillor (Cllr I Devonshire)

Cllr I Devonshire reported that East Herts Council's revenue budget would be cut by £1.6 million or 10%, mainly because Central Government grants are being cut. Council services will not be affected as reducing costs through more effective ways of working and raising new income. Although the amount is reducing, the Parish Council will still receive a 25% share of the New Homes bonus. Council tax will increase by 2% this year and each following year until 2020/21, the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. He also requested that if anyone considered that services have been affected to let him know.

In addition, a sweeper will be sent along Church Lane very shortly to try to clear up all the mud and the District Planning Executive Panel is looking at the consultation responses to the draft District Plan on Thursday.

(ii) Report from County Councillor (Cllr G McAndrew)

Cllr G McAndrew was not present at the meeting therefore no report.

17/40. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

(i) Old Station Yard

Following a question, it was confirmed that the decision date in relation to the Old Station Yard planning application is unknown. In addition, it is not known whether the environmental report is being redone.

17/41. PLANNING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 7th February 2017 be received and the decisions taken be ratified.

17/42. RISK REGISTER

RESOLVED that the Parish Council Risk Register be approved.

17/43. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(i) Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED that the accounts, as shown below, be duly authorised for payment.

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - MARCH 2017

| Chq | Payable to | For | Amount |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------|
| 738 | HAPTC | Standing Orders & Effective Meetings training | 160.00 |
| 739 | MH Bowling Club | Bowls Pavilion hire NP Steering Group meeting 8/11/16 (NP) | 15.00 |
| 740 | EHDC | Recharge for Parish Council by-elections 2016 | 1,642.09 |
| 741 | Mr C Copper | Remove fallen tree at Causeway, St Andrews Church | 60.00 |
| 742 | BA Affinity Water | Water bill | 19.55 |
| 743 | MH Sports Association | Insurance Pavilion, Bowling Club & Equipment Shed | 1,088.95 |
| 744 | EHDC | Annual charge for dog bin emptying | 940.62 |
| 745 | Broadmead Leisure Ltd | Removal of swing seats (Health & Safety) | 60.00 |
| 746 | Clr I Hunt | Website & surveys (NP) | 206.34 |
| 747 | EG Brett Ltd | Woodworm treatment to Pavilion | 425.00 |
| 748 | HCC | Annual street lighting charge | 1,810.99 |
| 749 | MH Sports Association | Share of water Recreation Ground | 113.68 |
| 750 | FM Forth | Clerk's salary February 2017 | 533.14 |
| 751 | FM Forth | Clerks expenses Invoice 5 (Stationery) | 53.69 |
| Total payments | | | <u>7,129.05</u> |

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

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statement was received. There were no matters to highlight. Following a question from Cllr B Morris, with the Parish Council's permission, Neil Clarke outlined the legal position for the payments relating to the Village Hall and the Sports Association being made by the Parish Council, which can claim back the VAT, essentially as the Parish Council is the owner of the buildings in question.

(iii) Insurance

RESOLVED that the Parish Council's insurance be renewed with Zurich for a 3 year term for, effectively, £1,342.81 per annum.

17/44. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

17/45. CLERK'S INFORMATION

None.

17/46. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 4th April 2017, at 7.30 pm in the Much Hadham Village Hall. The Chairman also highlighted that the meetings in June, August and November would be held at Green Tye.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:03 pm.

Public Rights of Way Report

FP 10 – The path through the garden of Dell Cottage was inspected again. The legal route has been reopened, and the steps removed, which in fact restores it to its earlier route, at a satisfactory width of two metres. Planning permission might be required for the steps. They were installed after the main building and may not have had the benefit of permission where they were, let alone in a new location. The landscapers were still on site and installing services under the path. It was explained to them that the route must remain safely open at all times, which they agreed to do, ensuring that any walkers who wished to use this route could do so while they are on site and leaving it totally clear and safe when they are not on site. It was agreed that the owners were aware that the path was there when they bought the house, and so have to suffer the consequences on this. It is still felt that a new route can be achieved which is better for walkers than the present route, but a substandard route will not be acceptable.

I have been asked and have confirmed that any new path be definitive as a condition of the Diversion Order.

MHPC will need to advise Sworders accordingly of our position.

FP 40 – A local resident alerted the footbridge where this path crosses a ditch is very rotten and collapsing. I'm afraid that the only realistic option is to replace the footbridge completely. The condition and out-of-date style of the present structure make any repairs impossible. The state of the bridge is such that the County Council, as highway authority, cannot take responsibility for any members of the public crossing it. The emergency closure will be replaced by a standard temporary closure at the end of 21 days. If any members of the public, having been alerted to the problem by these tapes and notices, chose to cross the bridge then that is entirely at their own risk.

This stream is recorded as a main watercourse, and so Environment Agency permission will be required for the new structure, which could cause a delay, as will the fact that we are running out of budget for this financial year (to March 31st).

FP 25 – A closure order for part of this path for 10 days starting March 20th 2017 for essential water supply works. I will install site notices late the previous week.

Morrison Farms are now the Contractor for Blakesware. Two PRoW with MH Parish are now in a shocking condition and with the wet weather have become virtually impassable by foot. This has been drawn to the attention of HCM by residents. They advise they will be contacting the owner of the agricultural vehicles which have caused the damage to put matters right. The details are scant at this stage other than me being notified of this issue.

It will have come to the attention of the observant that the roadside verges are being eroded at a very alarming rate and huge gaps are appearing in the roadside hedgerows. It is

sad to see the condition of our environment being damaged so much and so quickly with little if any remedial work being carried out.

Blaise Morris