

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 7th November 2017, in the Much Hadham Village Hall, Green Room, following the close of the Much Hadham Parish Council Planning Committee meeting, at 8:39 pm.

*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 17 members of the public.

17/167. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

17/168. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

17/169. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Appointment of new Trustees to the Parochial Charities – the Almshouses.

On behalf of the Parish Council, thanks were given to Alison Silley and Marigold Hodge, who are stepping down as Trustees, for their many years of committed service.

17/170. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman apologised for starting later than had anticipated. In addition, those present were reminded that:

- The next meeting in December will be on Monday the 4th and going forward, each December meeting will be on the first Monday on the month; and
- If a resident wishes to speak on an item prior to the 'residents' comments' agenda item, raise a hand to alert the Chairman or the Clerk.

17/171. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Cllr B Morris requested the following amendments to the minutes:

- Page 3 3rd paragraph down to change from : “.....could look into this.” To “....”could chase Cllr G McAndrew (HCC)”;
- 157/(iv) 2nd bullet to change “highlighted that” to “queried why”.

Subject to the amendments above, RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 3rd October 2017 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

17/172. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

Report on outstanding matters and resolutions noted. Any items requiring comment are included elsewhere on the agenda.

17/173. MEMBERS’ REPORTS

(i) Community

Pavilion

Cllr K Twort reported that the Saturday football team is struggling to find players.

RESOLVED to approve the quote from Broadmead Leisure Limited of £385 + VAT to repair play equipment following the September 2017 inspection.

Village Hall

As Cllr W O’Neill had given his apologies, there was no report.

(ii) Environment (inc Public Rights of Way (PROW))

Public Rights of Way

Cllr B Morris reported as follows:

- Bridleway 35 – has been mown by someone else, presumably the farmer, after harvest;
- Footpaths 37 – did not look like properly mown after the second cut and now re-cut properly;
- Footpaths 54 – collapsed waymark post will be replaced by contractor;
- Footpath 44 – stile is overgrown and discussion with farmer highlighted he did not install it and is happy for it to be removed. Farmer thought it was installed by St Elizabeth’s School but prevents access by wheelchairs etc. Cllr B Morris stated he’d seek confirmation of this and, if possible, get it removed;
- Footpath 56 – farmer also pointed out waymark post at the far side of the barn conversion had collapsed and Cllr B Morris will get it replaced. In addition, it was

noticed that a fence across the path had been put up by a resident and they will be requested to remove it;

- Bridleway 38 – report received that motor vehicles are illegally using this route but investigations have not confirmed this. Note – really a police matter;
- Footpath 13 – report received that path blocked by crops on the cross field section and long grass on the headland. Inspection of the route (6th November 2017) found the crop had been cut again and the headland is not too badly overgrown as yet. No further action to take; and
- Bridleway 57 – as requested many times by Cllr B Morris, landowners intend to repair the vehicle-damaged surface of this path early next week.

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow Mr M Dillon to speak. Mr Dillon referred to his application to the HCC Rights of Way Service (Ref. EH/403/MOD). He referred to points marked on the map produced by HCC as part of their report. He explained the landowner may be prepared to dedicate as a public footpath, the track between the points 4 and 3 and in addition, extend this public footpath northwards, along the new farm track leading from point 3 to join Track 5. The creation of this footpath would then negate the necessity of furthering the application for a section of the footpath between points 1, 2 and 3, to be added to the Definitive Map. Mr Dillon requested the Parish Council's support to this endeavour. RESOLVED that the Chairman would draft a letter of support.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

(iii) Highways

In Cllr W O'Neill's absence, Cllr I Hunt reported on a number of matters.

Malting Lane

A meeting between residents of Malting Lane, the police and Highways had taken place, attended by Cllr I Hunt, at which a number of actions were agreed by the police and Highways. The full report is detailed in Appendix A and thanks given to Mrs Wetherall for organising the meeting.

Other highways matters

Cllr I Hunt reported on the following matters:

- HCC annual traffic and casualties report – provides a link to results of the annual road traffic count on Winding Hill which now suggest a permanent reduction in traffic levels has taken place;
- Road closures notices – B1004 being closed for resurfacing work between Danebridge Lane and Snells Corner;
- Church Lane – remedial works have been completed;
- Watery Lane and Danebridge Lane – remedial works in progress; and
- Bus shelter opposite the Red Lion – shelter is deteriorating and consideration should be given to including remedial work in next year's budget.

Street lighting

Cllrs W O'Neill and I Hunt had accompanied Mark Burrows from lighting suppliers Ducreux on an inspection of the entire estate of street lights in the village. The details of the lights owned by the Parish Council were agreed and, for each column and lantern, the most suitable option for upgrade or replacement to convert to LED was identified.

Conversion benefits are reduced electricity consumption and maintenance costs, and better illumination of streets and footways. However, there is a capital cost to be met over the coming years, depending on the speed of rollout. The next steps are for the approved work on 3 lights in Church Lane and Tower Hill to be completed (for which a reduction in cost of £1,100 has been agreed with the suppliers after Cllr W O'Neill reviewed the specification with them), assess reaction to that work and move on with costing the remaining work.

(iv) Media

The Chairman reported that the technical glitch preventing the website from being updated had been resolved. Work was in progress to make the website current.

(v) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr I Hunt reported that a public meeting of the Steering Group took place on the 17th October, at which, the results of September's consultation event were reported. The environmental proposals for priority views, local green spaces etc received considerable support. For housing, the level of support and comments for each of the sites were provided. As a result of this work, the site at the rear of Windmill Way has been dropped from further consideration - it had particularly poor access arrangements – and the landowner has been advised. In response to a question from Cllr B Morris, the exact location of this site was clarified.

The next level of technical work has commenced on the other sites to firm up what development policies we would wish to see implemented, including a better understanding of the numbers of houses we would support on each site.

Work on drafting the Neighbourhood Plan document is underway, in parallel with the continuing technical work, and the next grant funding application, to cover to the end of the financial year, is being submitted shortly.

(vi) Security

Cllr Mrs J Liversage stated that there are no crime statistics to report this month but highlighted that Mrs S McAdam uses the OWL reports to alert people of issues to be aware of.

Cllr B Morris highlighted that there are only a small number of uniformed police officers on duty – only 3 for Bishop's Stortford, Much Hadham and other villages.

(vii) Other

The Chairman reported that she had attended a course recently on 'Successful Working Relationships'. The course was interesting and useful, not only due to the course itself but also from the other attendees. A summary of the day will be circulated in due course.

Reference was also made to the level of dog mess evident in Ash Meadow's open areas. Actions might be to include notices, including requiring dogs to be on leads, and awareness in the Parish Magazine. Any other suggestions on how to deal with this welcomed. Cllr B Morris suggested purchasing stickers to post in the area stating "pick up your dog mess".

17/174. ST ANDREW'S CHURCH BELLS

The Chairman highlighted that a grant application had been received in respect of repair work on St Andrew's Church bells. The application was discussed and points raised related to:

- Church is an iconic building within the village;
- Consider splitting any contribution between financial years of 2017/18 and 2018/19;
- Identify whether any future section 106 monies/new homes bonus could be earmarked for this project;
- Whether the Parish Council could contribute to a specific element of the project, e.g. the bells; and
- The size of any contribution, with suggestions ranging from £1,000 to £10,000.
Note – request made for £2,500.

Following discussion, RESOLVED to contribute to the project but the specific level of funding to be determined at a subsequent meeting.

17/175. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) reported on the following matters:

- Dolan's Field – planning application will be considered at the Development Management Committee on the 6th December;
- Community Social Prescriber – person appointed is Catherine Foy;
- Community transport – will be discussing sustainable transport ideas in the near future with the relevant EHC officer;
- Golf Club – the position regarding the mobile homes will be revisited with the Enforcement Team; and
- Cost cutting – EHC are currently working to address a £1 million deficit in the budget for the next financial year due to further cuts in the Government grant. There is a potential risk that the New Homes Bonus will be used, in part, to cover this.

There was no report from Cllr G McAndrew (HCC) as he was not present but he had given his apologies.

17/176. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

(i) Village Hall

The Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee expressed concern at the potential for the Parish Council to contribute significantly to a village asset not owned by it, the church bells, when no contribution is made for the maintenance of the Village Hall which it does own. There are a number of upcoming projects which need funding, including the car park which is at the request of the Parish Council. Request was made that a reasonable sum be included in the Parish Council's budget for Village Hall maintenance and this was noted.

(ii) Role in planning matters

Concern was raised by a resident regarding the Parish Council's role in respect of planning matters when there had been an expectation of an objection to a planning application at the preceding Planning Committee. Instead, the Planning Committee voted to 'leave it to the Planners'. In response, it was explained that the Parish Council can only object on technical grounds and the Committee had not felt in a position to comment on the technical aspects of the application. In addition, consideration to be given to putting in place a set of principles to guide discussions on planning applications in future.

(iii) Contribution to the church bells

A resident supported the point made earlier regarding the contributing to the maintenance work at the Village Hall as opposed to the church bells. The bells are valued but suggested possible general fundraising for the bells be in Charlie Jordan's memory. This was considered an excellent idea and to be passed on to the project lead for the bells.

17/177. PLANNING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 3rd October 2017 be received and the decisions taken be ratified.

17/178. STAFFING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Staffing Sub-Committee meeting held on 16th October 2017 be received and the decisions taken be ratified.

17/179. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

Following a question, the Clerk explained which footpaths were being strimmed and cut back by Mr Walker. The Clerk agreed to circulate more detail in respect of the 'open spaces' expenditure area in preparation of a more detailed discussion on next year's budget.

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

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - NOVEMBER 2017

Chq	Payable to	For	Amount
814	MH Village Hall	Main Hall for NP Workshop (NP)	85.50
815	Ruth Fleetwood	Project Manager (NP)	1,140.00
816	EON	Electricity for war memorial	25.84
817	Green Tye Mission Hall	Hall hire 2nd October	27.00
818	Govresources Ltd	NP support (NP)	4,800.00
819	Mr T Walker	Strim and cut back various footpaths	640.00
820	FM Forth	Clerks expenses Inv 7 (Stationery & web costs)	237.83
821	Broadmead Leisure Ltd	Playground inspection Sept'17	60.00
822	Miss RL Sharp	Pavilion cleaning and materials	231.90
Total payments			<u>7,248.07</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 apart from that the grant for the Neighbourhood Plan expenditure had overspent by £500.

The Clerk explained that the purpose of bringing the expected outturn and forward financial plan to this meeting was to initiate discussions prior to the formal budget setting meeting in January 2018, particularly as the forward financial plan includes the budget, at this stage, for 2018/19. A cautious approach had been taken in respect of income and limited inflation adjustments made in respect of expenditure. The Clerk requested that comments on the plan be provided in advance of the December meeting.

17/180. URGENT BUSINESS

Appointment of new Trustees to the Parochial Charities – the Almshouses.

Whilst the Chairman acknowledged that no decision can be made in terms of the actual appointment, it was highlighted that the Charity had proposed 2 excellent candidates for the Parish Council to consider as these people had the skills currently required. No objections, in principle, were made and formal approval will be made at the next meeting.

17/181. CLERK'S INFORMATION

None.

17/182. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 4th December 2017, at 7.30 pm in the Much Hadham Village Hall, Green Room.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:10 pm.

Highways – Malting Lane

On 20 October, I (Cllr I Hunt) attended a meeting of ~15 residents of Malting Lane hosted by Sue Wetherall. In attendance were police Sergeant Duncan Wallace and Martin Wright of HCC Highways (he manages Cllr Graham McAndrew's locality budget). The principle problem is of traffic ignoring the "no turning" signs and treating Malting Lane as a rat run. There were several aspects to the meeting:

Martin Wright advised there is some funding available from the locality budget so he committed to:

- A traffic census (volumes, direction and speed) would be conducted for a week, most likely in January, depending on kit availability;
- Based on its findings, identification of options (a preferred option from the meeting was for two No Entry signs: at the Malting Lane entrance from the ford and at the turn into Danebridge Lane from Watery Lane, although it was also recognised that this would not be popular with everyone in the village based on previous experience when there was one such sign into Malting Lane); and
- Consider whether there were any options for automatic warning lights when the ford is flooding to alert drivers to the dangerous depth.

Subsequent to the meeting, Martin Wright advised he had placed various issues on the HCC Highways Fault Reporting system:

- the faded "Give Way" road markings at the junction of Danebridge Road and the B1004 Winding Hill;
- the faded "Give Way" road markings at the junction of Danebridge Road, Stansted Hill and "Watery Lane"; and
- the leaning lamp column outside 46 Malting Lane.

Separately he used the visit to check (i) the need for replacement wooden posts at Kettle Green Lane and Ash Meadow, (ii) the condition of the railings outside Green Shutters and (iii) whether yellow lines for a short distance south on the opposite side of the road to Morris Cottage were appropriate to eliminate parking at that dangerous point. These issues are now with their contractors for consideration with a view to completing the work before March 2018.

Sgt Wallace's actions were:

- To check the parking on the corner footpath at the Old Crown with a view to identifying obstruction and issuing warnings / penalty notices as appropriate. He reminded the meeting that parking on the pavement itself is not a crime, but obstruction is; and
- Recognising the value of a visible presence but also the lack of budget / officers, consider the possibility of a uniformed officer observing one or other of the Malting Lane junctions as a deterrent to turning at the illegal times, even if infrequently.

Our thanks go to Mrs Wetherall for taking the initiative to organise this meeting, from which we hope for action on a variety of fronts.