

## MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018, in the Much Hadham Village Hall, Green Room, at 7:30 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 13 members of the public.

### 18/32. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

### 18/33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

### 18/34. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Notification of urgent business received from Cllr B Morris which will be taken at agenda item 18/44.

### 18/35. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- a meeting is to be convened with Cllr G McAndrew (HCC), representatives of the hamlets and Highways, to discuss the ongoing condition of the roads through the hamlets, and the options available, with a report back to the Parish Council in due course;
- the Annual Village/Parish Meeting will be on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May at 7:30 pm with refreshments beforehand;
- Herts County Council's Road Safety Officer has sought the Parish Council's help in advertising a vacancy for a school crossing patrol at St Andrew's School. She has done a leaflet drop and flyers will be put up on the noticeboards and the website; and
- those present were reminded that 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.

#### 18/36. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

#### 18/37. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

Report on outstanding matters and resolutions noted. Any items requiring comment are included elsewhere on the agenda although the Chairman has made some updates which will be circulated next month.

The Clerk highlighted that she'd discussed the Pavilion insurance cover with the Treasurer of Much Hadham Sports Association, and a robust process is in place to ensure that appropriate insurance cover is held. Cllr B Morris then queried whether it had been put out to tender with the response being no.

Note – further comments made as part of agenda item 18/40

#### 18/38. MEMBERS' REPORTS

##### (i) Community

##### Village Hall

Cllr W O'Neill reported that he'd not been able to make the last Village Hall Management Committee meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February. However, the project relating to car parking at the front and back of the Village Hall is still progressing.

##### Sports Association/Pavilion

Cllr K Twort reported that the bad weather in the prior week had impacted on the Pavilion. A pipe had burst in relation to the outside toilet which had been repaired. There had been more tree damage, in addition to the two trees reported previously by a resident, for which quotes are being sought.

In addition, the maintenance work on the playground equipment had been completed.

##### (ii) Environment (inc Public Rights of Way (PRoW))

##### Public Rights of Way

Cllr B Morris read out his report (Appendix A).

In relation to the PRoW Improvement Plan, the Chairman reported that she'd been informed that Herts County had deliberately used Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils (HAPTC) to ensure that the Plan reached all parishes.

In addition, the Chairman asked for ideas that could be costed for a P3 application, bearing in mind that the limit is £1,000.

(iii) Highways

Cllr W O'Neill reported on the following matters:

- Tower Hill is due to be closed to enable the road to be repaired on 10<sup>th</sup> March – the proposed closure on 3<sup>rd</sup> March was prevented by bad weather;
- work on the Church Lane and Old School House lights is due to start on 14<sup>th</sup> March;
- state of the roads in the hamlets continues to be a concern. Suggested that a sustained campaign of highways fault reporting by residents would be the most effective way of putting pressure on Herts County Council to carry out sustainable repairs; and
- lighting column outside the Almshouses was knocked over by an unknown driver. This was promptly made safe by Ringway and the column has to be replaced, the cost of which may fall to the Parish Council. It was highlighted that the column was not struck hard but due to corrosion, it broke away from the main column and there is a risk that problems exist with similar aged columns.

In addition, Cllr W O'Neill provided the following update from Cllr G McAndrew (HCC):

- 4 missing timber bollards have been replaced:
  - outside Morris Cottage, High Street;
  - outside St Andrew's Primary School;
  - south side of junction at Tower Hill/Ash Meadow;
  - outside The Old Bakery, High Street;
- decrepit railings have been replaced outside Green Shutters, High Street;
- official authorisation received to investigate and correct the issues with the existing Malting Lane Traffic Regulation Order;
- consultation soon on proposed double yellow lines on each side of the High Street, between 1 Park Terrace and the entrance to Vineyard Manor; and
- work is being undertaken on HCC's behalf to confirm ownerships and obtain permissions with regard to the passing places in Kettle Green Lane.

The Chairman agreed to contact Cllr G McAndrew (HCC) with reference to the bollard still missing on the corner of the pavement at the bottom of Kettle Green Lane, which might have been due to the recent road works in Kettle Green Lane.

(iv) Media

None.

(v) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr I Hunt reported on the following two matters:

Grant funding

The position regarding the funding of the Neighbourhood Plan was explained, including referring to the intention to submit a grant application which was reported in December. This application was not made as it became evident that the pace of the project was slowing, making it a risk that allocated funds would not be spent within the grant period. The grant application will now be made in early April for the next financial year.

The delay in completing the Neighbourhood Plan is due to continuing work required on two sites to reach a stage where the Steering Group and the landowners are in agreement as to the intended numbers and size of housing on their sites.

Affordable housing

Since the last PC meeting, a half day event dedicated to Community-Led Housing has been attended where the theme was how rural communities in Hertfordshire could address the housing affordability gap. A case study of how this has been achieved in a parish was a highlight of the event, and it is hoped that a route map to achieving affordable housing in Much Hadham, based on the experience of the presenters at this event, can be prepared.

(vi) Security

Cllr Mrs J Liversage stated that there was nothing to report other than that she had thanked PCSO Leon de Bruyn for attending the last meeting and will be keeping in touch with him.

(vii) Other

None.

18/39. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The update from Cllr G McAndrew (HCC) had been included as part of 18/38(iii).

Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) had also given his apologies and stated that he had nothing specific to report.

18/40. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

(i) Cllr G McAndrew (HCC)

Two residents suggested that the Herts County Council Cllr should attend these meetings to enable residents to discuss their suggestions directly with him. The Chairman agreed to pass this message on.

(ii) Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

With regard to suggestions for possible works to footpaths under the P3 scheme, it was mentioned that there is a regular walker of all the paths who reports back to East Herts Council. Cllr B Morris acknowledged that he liaises with him and would ask him for any recommendations.

(iii) Roads in the hamlets

A resident acknowledged what had been stated earlier regarding a sustained campaign, using the fault reporting line, in terms of the roads in the hamlets. The Parish Council were assured that this is happening. However, the automatic response received via the fault reporting line is often that it's not an immediate safety concern and the fault is then closed. This continued response becomes disheartening.

It was suggested that a Freedom of Information request is made to Herts County Council to ask what reports it has received over the last 12 months for the road in question and what action has been taken as a result. The results of such requests are published.

(iv) Dog bins

In response to a resident's question, it was confirmed that there had been a delay in the delivery of the dog bins but that these were expected in early April, including for two locations in the hamlets.

(v) Green Tye green

The Parish Council were thanked by a resident for the action taken regarding the damage being done to the green at Green Tye.  
Note – see agenda item 18/45 for further information.

(vi) Verges

Cllr B Morris commented that verges were damaged in a number of places. He had learnt that the ditch that runs along side the road is the responsibility of the landowner. Clearing the detritus from the ditch can be used to rebuild verges and, making the ditches clearer, can make drivers more wary of getting close to the verges. Now is a good time to be clearing out the ditches.

It was also confirmed that the funding from Henry Moore to reinstate verges is still available but Herts County Council will not match fund this. A further meeting with Herts County Council is to be organised, as mentioned earlier.

(vii) Pavilion insurance

In response to a point made earlier, the Treasurer of Much Hadham Sports Association stated that there is no requirement to get quotes. The recent insurance renewal premium is actually less than the prior year. Cllr B Morris insisted that best possible quotes should be obtained nevertheless.

To address a follow up point raised by the Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee, about whether quotes or tender should be obtained, the Clerk stated that each organisation operates to different rules but that she would identify which organisation's rules should take precedence.

18/41. PARISH COUNCIL 3 YEAR PLAN

The Chairman reported that since the last update in December, a Traffic Working Party is being created. Members of the Working Party to include:

- Cllrs W O'Neill and C Thompson;
- Neil Clarke – Village Hall Management Committee Chair;
- parent from the school;
- governor from the school; and
- another member of the public.

If anyone is interested in joining the Working Party, to contact the Clerk. Following a suggestion from Cllr B Morris, this will be publicised on the website.

18/42. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

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

RESOLVED to renew the monthly standing order of £544.44 for the Clerk's salary for the financial year 2018/19.

RESOLVED to authorise the Litter Agency payment to M Windmill for the financial year 2018/19 by monthly standing order of £334.00.

RESOLVED to authorise the insurance renewal of £1,398.92 on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2108.

The Clerk highlighted that the street lighting payment to Herts County Council was not to be approved as amount likely to be invoiced is higher than £1,800.00 + VAT. In response to a question, the Clerk stated it is likely to be around £2,100.00 +VAT, with the increase linked to an increase in the energy price. It was confirmed that there is no choice in provider for the street lighting and that the payment would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

## PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - MARCH 2018

Chq	Payable to	For	Amount
838	Miss RL Sharp	Pavilion cleaning and materials	220.00
839	Broadmead Leisure Ltd	Playground equipment repair	822.00
840	EMC Contracts	Pavilion repairs	462.00
841	GovResources Ltd	NP support (NP)	1,800.00
842	MH Sports Assoc	Pavilion electricity	246.75
843	East Herts District Council	Annual dog bin contract	968.64
844	FM Forth	Clerks expenses Inv 8 (Stationery)	265.69
<b>Total payments</b>			<b>4,785.08</b>

Cheques will be signed and despatched following the meeting.

### (ii) Financial Statement

The financial statement for 2017/18 was received. The Clerk had highlighted, on the paper circulated with the agenda, that the Pavilion overspend was due to the recent additional works required due to the power outage.

### 18/43. PLANNING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018 and the Extraordinary meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018 be received and the decisions taken be ratified.

### 18/44. URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr B Morris raised a matter of urgent business in relation to Much Hadham Golf and Country Club. He referred to two emails that had been written by the owner of the Club which were considered rude and libellous, in particular, that issued on the 19<sup>th</sup> February where references were made regarding Cllr W O'Neill.

The question to be considered was what policies the Parish Council have in place to deal with libellous comments being made against Cllrs.

Following a lengthy discussion where a number of views were expressed, it was agreed that:

- the Clerk would circulate the email to all Cllrs;
- Cllrs to consider whether a response is to be made; and
- should it be agreed that a response be made, any Cllr was free in the meantime, to draft a letter and circulate to all Cllrs for consideration.

#### 18/45. CLERK'S INFORMATION

The Clerk highlighted the following matters:

- Green Tye green – as referred to under agenda item 18/40, it had been highlighted that vehicles were driving over the edges of the green at Green Tye, causing damage. A letter has been sent to all households around the green asking for their co-operation in ensuring that they or their visitors avoid driving on the green; and
- cut-off date for the April agenda – given that Easter was at the end of March, the summons would be issued on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> March. As a consequence of this, the cut-off date for any items to be included on the agenda would be Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

In relation to Green Tye green, it was confirmed that there should be 5 timber bollards up each side – two are therefore missing on the right hand side. Consideration will be given to replacing these. It was further stated that a vehicle is habitually parked on the green at Perry Green and this should be addressed as well.

#### 18/46. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018, at 7.30 pm in the Much Hadham Village Hall, Green Room.

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There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:35 pm.



MHPC Meeting 6 March 2018

Public Rights of Way

FP25 – It was reported by Cllr B O’Neill at MHPC Meeting 6 Feb 18 that there was a fallen tree on FP 25. There were other trees too which had fallen. All of these had been cleared prior to 6 Feb as reported by me. The FP was clear prior to 6 Feb and remains so. It has again recently been inspected. The landowner of the wood is responsible for keeping the Footpath clear and it is perhaps arguable and long overdue the owner paid for the works rather than the taxpayer. It is understood the property and this wood remain on the market for sale.

FP26 – An additional report from Ringway/Highways about the tarmac surface on this path, as follows:

“I have inspected footpath 26 and confirm there is cracking of its surface due to tree roots from private trees. The cracks are not at intervention level and not considered requiring immediate attention, the footpath is subject to an inspection regime by Ringway in accordance with HCC’s [Herts County Council] hierarchy, with defects assessed in accordance with HCC’s Defect Management Approach.”

BR7 – Another claim that the BR was blocked. In fact as reported 6 Feb 18 the tree work had been completed and cleared including branches from within the ditch and grid in the Causeway grill. Incidentally the trees cut down by Hopleys at their expense may have been within the Conservation area and subject to an automatic TPO [Tree Preservation Order].

BR52 – I have raised this matter with the Police. The landowner is claiming that off road vehicles are churning up the BR. The only visible evidence appears to be agricultural vehicle tyre marks. No illegal activity has been noted by anybody from initial enquiries.

Suggestions for PRoW HCC 10 Year Plan dated 1 July 2017. I am still not in receipt of any documentation from HAPTC [Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils] or our Clerk probably because she has never received it either. I reported 6 Feb 18 that HAPTC had allegedly invited every Parish Council to contribute from their email to all Parish Clerks dated 23 March 2017. It appeared then as it does now nobody on MHPC had received this document.

P3 – Scheme. A previously reported this scheme will, after all, continue much as before for the coming financial year, and that invitations to apply for funding are just going out to parish clerks post 6 Feb 2018 when I was originally notified. The Chairman of MHPC had decided this matter should be discussed by Councillors 6 March 2018.

Pumping Station Bridge – I never received 1 Jan 2018 email from our Clerk sent by a resident. However, this email was then resent to me on 8 Feb following last public meeting 6 Feb 18. I have raised this with EHC [East Herts Council] and again on 22 Feb (PT [Cllr Mrs P Taylor] copied in) and I am awaiting a response as to what can be done by their Contractors. Given the bad weather of late nothing has yet been achieved.

Given the severe weather of late there is nothing else to report.