

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 3rd March 2020, in the Green Tye Mission Hall, at 7:30 pm.

*Cllr I Hunt (Vice Chair)

*Cllr Mrs J Liversage

*Cllr Mrs H Maduhu

Cllr D McDonald

Cllr M McPherson-Pottle

*Cllr B O'Neill

*Cllr S Smith

Cllr Mrs P Taylor (Chair)

*Cllr K Twort

* denotes present

In attendance: F Forth, Parish Clerk and 26 members of the public.

Prior to the meeting starting, the Chair thanked the Afternoon Tea Club for the cakes and fellow Cllrs for the refreshments.

20/31. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr D McDonald and Cllr Mrs P Taylor. In her absence, Cllr I Hunt chaired the meeting.

No apologies were received from Cllr M McPherson-Pottle so his absence was not approved.

20/32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

20/33. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

20/34. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair highlighted that the annual village and parish meeting will be on Tuesday, 19th May, in the Much Hadham Village Hall, Main Room. This meeting is hosted by the Parish Council on behalf of residents, any of whom may submit an agenda item on local issues.

The format is being changed this year to make it less formal. Instead of presentations, local organisations will have stalls where representatives will be available to chat to residents about what their organisations do. Cllrs will be on hand too, to hear informally residents' views on parish matters. The formal part of the meeting will briefly follow and refreshments will be available throughout the evening.

20/35. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 4th February 2020 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

20/36. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

The Clerk highlighted that most outstanding matters would be covered by subsequent agenda items.

In addition, she stated that liaison with St Andrew's Church regarding events to celebrate "VE 75" had highlighted that they had nothing planned but if the Parish Council would like to link up with them then something suitable could be arranged. Cllr Mrs H Maduhu had indicated she would be happy to help organise something. Cllr B O'Neill highlighted that he had not yet enquired whether anything was planned by the local pubs or the Preservation Society but did know that the Prince of Wales has its beer festival around that date.

20/37. MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) Community

Recreation Ground

Cllr K Twort reported that he is waiting for the report regarding the boundary trees at the Recreation Ground, as well as the trees at Green Tye, from the arborist. Effectively, the report will cover each tree, indicate the work required for that tree together with the timing for that work.

In addition, he reported that the maintenance work in the Pavilion is nearly finished, highlighting that the replacement wall heater being installed is the last heater available of this style.

The Clerk reported that a full and frank discussion had taken place with the Sunday football team representative and the way forward agreed following the highly unsatisfactory state the Pavilion had been left in recently by them.

Playground

The Clerk reported that the zip wire structure was due to have been repaired on Saturday 22nd February. This will be checked and, if completed, Broadmead Leisure will be notified that the seat can be reattached. It is expected that the 6-monthly maintenance check will be undertaken soon.

Village Hall

Cllr B O'Neill stated that the Village Hall AGM was being held on the 31st March and everyone welcome to attend, particularly if a user of the Hall.

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

Public Rights of Way

Cllr S Smith provided an update on the following matters:

Diversion of FP11/10 – Kettle Green Lane: two areas of concern highlighted by Herts County Council's (HCC) Road Safety Team – sight lines and stopping distances – and minor amendments should be carried out to improve safety. The diversion order has been amended to exclude any aspect relating to Footpath 10 and is with HCC's legal team for approval. Once approved, formal consultation will take place.

Bridleway 28: fallen trees blocking this route have been cleared. Remedial work on the gates that shut too quickly for horse riders has been undertaken but, as not entirely successful, further action is required.

Footpaths and Restricted By-ways crossing fields (FP41/FP13): still not re-instated by farmers and landowners due to the recent bad weather. HCC are expecting action once drier conditions return.

General: annual cycle of Footpath and Bridle Path maintenance will begin in mid-May.

(iii) Highways

Cllr B O'Neill reported that the streetlight outside Londis has been damaged but does still work. It has been inspected by Ringway and a replacement column and lantern are required. A quote has been requested and is expected to be around £2,500.

Cllr S Smith reported that the recent bout of storms had resulted in debris from fallen trees or branches blocking several roads in the parish. All had been successfully dealt with and those present were reminded that debris can be reported to HCC via its hotline or to the police via 101 by any person on the scene.

The Chair highlighted that road safety improvements at Tower Hill had been completed with the installation of 20mph speed limit signs outside the school. In addition, the trees in Church Lane have been pollarded.

(iv) Media

Cllr H Maduhu stated that work was in progress to revamp the website.

(v) Neighbourhood Plan

The Chair reported that the draft Scoping Report for the Strategic Environmental Assessment had been received for comments. Once this has been agreed, the next stage will involve appraising reasonable alternative policy approaches for the Plan, including alternative spatial strategies. The findings of the SEA will be fed back to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for consideration when preparing the submission version of the Plan.

On a different subject, the Chair reported the discovery that East Herts Council (EHC) had changed the village development boundary without any consultation or notification after the fact. The Policies Map has been changed to incorporate within the boundary the start of Footpath 11 behind Windmill Way, the house called Mill Cottages and the recent additional development at Millers View. It happened when the District Plan was adopted in Autumn 2018 but did not form any part of the consultation material, was not listed as a modification after the public examination nor was it put in front of district councillors when they approved the District Plan. The Policies Map is not available online to the public.

The Parish Council's displeasure regarding this change has been made known to Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) and to EHC's Planning Department. The Planning Department are insisting that, as the Policies Map is not strictly a part of the District Plan and was not reviewed by the Examiner, they merely updated it to reflect the current built up form of the village. Other villages were apparently similarly updated.

The Chair highlighted that it means that the map included in the pre-submission Plan consulted on last year was out of date and will need to be updated. The Planning Committee will be considering an application for a further extension to Millers View. Because of the mapping change, the developers are claiming this extension is on the village boundary and therefore more acceptable (potentially for inclusion in the Plan) whereas the site had until now been understood to be encircled by the rural area.

Finally, the Chair highlighted that the change has opened up a greater risk of development in that area in years to come.

(vi) Security

Cllr Mrs H Maduhu reported that the following crimes had taken place in February:

- theft from motor vehicle;
- criminal damage – a motor vehicle had both its wing mirrors damaged;
- criminal damage – reported to a road sign; and
- 2x theft of motor vehicle – from outside residential properties and police enquiries are currently being progressed.

In addition, OWL reports for neighbouring villages have highlighted increased theft from back gardens so a reminder to keep back gates locked.

(vii) Other

CLlr B O'Neill reported that permission to use a field for car park access to the August Bank Holiday fete is currently being refused.

20/38. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR

CLlr I Devonshire (EHC) had given his apologies for tonight but had provided a report covering the following items:

- work on the multi storey car park, for the Old River Lane Scheme in Bishop's Stortford, will be starting in April. This is the initial stage for this town centre development; and
- EHC are in final negotiations with the developer for the new leisure centre at Grange Paddocks to engineer the costs down. Once this process has been satisfactorily concluded, the actual construction will start.

20/39. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

None.

(Note – a comment made in relation to a planning application has been taken to the subsequent Planning Committee Minutes)

20/40. THE ALMSHOUSE CHARITY

The Chair reminded those present that the Trustees of the Parochial Charities, known as the Almshouse Charity, do terrific work in managing and maintaining the almshouses opposite the Recreation Ground on Tower Hill. The majority of Trustees are appointees of the Parish Council and serve a term of 4 years. The term for two of the Trustees is about to end and they have agreed to be re-appointed for another term. On behalf of the Parish Council, thanks were expressed to Margaret Brent and James Steel for their continuing service in support of some of the parish's more vulnerable parishioners.

RESOLVED to appoint the following candidates as Parish Council appointed Trustees to the Almshouse Charity:

- Margaret Brent; and
- James Steel.

20/41 RISK REGISTER

The risk register had been circulated prior to the meeting and the Chair outlined the purpose of the register, including providing examples of the types of information it contains.

The Clerk outlined the wording changes that had been made to the prior year register, highlighting that no changes had been made to the risk level assessments of high, medium and low. It was noted that overall the risk levels are low and that work to create an asset register and to produce a Health and Safety Policy was ongoing.

RESOLVED to approve the Parish Council risk register.

20/42. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

The Clerk highlighted that the insurance payment to the Sports Association for reimbursement of their insurance costs related to the buildings and contents cover for the Pavilion as well as the cost of the public liability insurance. The sum involved is the same as the prior year.

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

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - MARCH 2020

Chq etc	Payable to	For	Amount
DD	BA Affinity for Business	Water bill for Perry Green	21.24
986	MH Sports Association	Insurance costs for Pavilion, Sports Pavilion & Equipment shed + public liability	1,581.16
987	MH Sports Association	Pavilion electricity	365.42
988	FM Forth	Clerks expenses - Oct '19 to 24 Feb '20	345.30
989	MH Village Hall	D Billson - Pavilion cleaning	140.00
SO	M Windmill	Litter Agency (March)	334.00
SO	F Forth	Clerk's salary (March)	581.10
Total payments			<u>3,368.22</u>

Cheques will be signed and despatched following the meeting.

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statement for 2019/20 to date was received. The summary financial position is detailed overleaf and comparison to the annual budget is attached at Appendix A. There were no matters that the Clerk wished to highlight.

The Clerk stated that an extra Parish Council meeting would be held at towards the end of March to enable the remaining expenditure for the financial year to be paid and included in the annual accounts. This makes it easier to demonstrate how the Parish Council delivered the budget it set for the year and would be reported to the April meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that the level of unrepresented items is purely a timing difference as the bank statement being reconciled to was dated 5th February.

In addition, the Clerk confirmed that the street lighting bill is expected for the late March meeting and the VAT refund would be chased.

The Chair noted for the benefit of the residents present the total spend to date on the Neighbourhood Plan.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 3 MARCH 2020

	Parish Council £	Burial Authority £	Total £
Opening balance - 1 April 2019	47,134.88	17,037.46	64,172.34
Income	61,751.26	5,000.00	66,751.26
Expenditure	- 60,136.35	- 2,599.70	- 62,736.05
Closing balance	<u>48,749.79</u>	<u>19,437.76</u>	<u>68,187.55</u>

Note: the following items are included in the Total Fund Balances:

(1) Section 106 receipts for sport or recreation	<u>4,570.00</u>
	<u>4,570.00</u>

20/43. PLANNING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 4th February 2020 be received and the decisions taken be ratified.

20/44. BURIAL AUTHORITY

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Burial Authority meeting held on 4th February 2020 be received and the decisions taken be ratified.

20/45. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

20/46. CLERK'S INFORMATION

The Clerk highlighted the following matters:

- a reminder that the Parish Council website includes the latest A120 bypass project news – as well as a link to the County website with even more information;
- a local business has offered free trees as part of their 30th year in business. Details of this offer have been passed to all Cllrs to consider as well as to the Green Tye & Perry Green Preservation Society; and
- Stansted Airport are starting work on considering the future use of airspace – this is part of the Government's national programme to modernise the way UK airspace is managed.

20/47. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday 24th March 2020, at 7:30 pm in the Pavilion to approve remaining expenditure relating to this financial year. The next full meeting of the Parish Council will be Tuesday 7th April 2020, at 7:30 pm in the Much Hadham Village Hall, Green Room.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:18 pm.

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON AS AT 3 MARCH 2020

(Parish Council only)	FULL YEAR	YEAR TO	COMMENT
	2020	DATE	
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	
	£	£	
INCOME			
Precept	39,000.00	39,000.00	
Litter Agency	4,085.00	4,209.51	
New Homes Bonus	8,243.00	13,467.00	Whilst higher bonus due to more housing, updated information from East Herts Council not provided when budget set.
Pavilion income	750.00	909.00	
Grant	6,500.00	1,812.25	
Other	95.00	2,353.50	Insurance claim for the Almshouse light of £2,147.32 received
VAT reclaimed	5,000.00	-	
TOTAL INCOME	63,673.00	61,751.26	
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs	6,973.64	6,973.20	
PWLB loan repayment	5,387.46	5,387.46	
Administration costs	2,400.00	2,769.40	£299 spent on planning magazine subscription not included in budget.
Insurance	3,400.00	3,764.27	
Audit fees	720.00	730.00	
General Data Protection Regulation compliance	200.00	35.00	
Election expenses	1,500.00	51.15	Election was uncontested
Maintenance of open spaces	8,500.00	4,318.80	
Litter Agency	4,008.00	4,008.00	
War memorial (lighting and maintenance)	650.00	685.60	
Street lighting (energy and maintenance)	2,000.00	-	
Street lighting (replacement programme)	5,000.00	-	
Pavilion	2,900.00	3,459.98	
Grants and donations (Section 137 expenditure)	1,000.00	-	
Sport and recreation grants (Section 106 funded)	3,000.00	1,500.00	
Neighbourhood Plan	11,000.00	10,169.29	
Capital - street lights	-	11,079.62	£2,247.32 Almshouse - majority of this funded by insurance claim - and 3 street lights replaced in 2017-2018 £8,832.30
Capital (to be allocated)	2,000.00	-	
VAT	5,000.00	5,204.58	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	65,639.10	60,136.35	