

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council virtual meeting held on Tuesday, 7th April 2020, at 7:30 pm.

Note – whilst recognising that a virtual meeting does not constitute a legal meeting of the Parish Council until the enabling powers under the Coronavirus Act 2020 are enacted, it is a practical way of obtaining members’ views on current matters and ensuring payments are made in the existing extraordinary circumstances. Any decisions made are subject to ratification at the next official Parish Council meeting.

*Cllr I Hunt (Vice Chair)

*Cllr B O’Neill

*Cllr Mrs J Liversage

*Cllr S Smith

Cllr Mrs H Maduhu

Cllr Mrs P Taylor (Chair)

*Cllr D McDonald

*Cllr K Twort

Cllr M McPherson-Pottle

* denotes present

In attendance: F Forth, Parish Clerk and no members of the public for the reason outlined above.

20/48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr Mrs H Maduhu and Cllr Mrs P Taylor. In Cllr Mrs P Taylor’s absence, Cllr I Hunt chaired the meeting.

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

20/49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

20/50. MEMBERS’ REPORTS

(i) Community

Recreation Ground

Cllr K Twort reported that the Pavilion guttering had been repaired recently and the building is now locked and not being used.

Village Hall

Cllr B O’Neill stated that the Village Hall, as a public building, was now closed and therefore losing rental income.

He also highlighted that the Recreation Trust was also meeting tonight to consider whether the Fete can still happen, or a smaller version of it, or some other funding raising activity. It was noted that the Village Hall used to hold Christmas parties etc to raise funds.

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

Cllr S Smith provided an update on the following matters:

Oil spillage: a ruptured oil pipeline in Green Tye had resulted in an oil spillage affecting the tiny streams that run downhill into the main stream running parallel with Danebridge Road. The property owner and waste water engineers endeavoured to contain the spillage by pumping as much as possible into a tanker with the residue being mopped up with absorbent materials. The Environment Agency had been informed.

Fly tipping: several items have been deposited into the stream running alongside Danebridge Road. The Environment Agency have been informed but no action taken as yet and this will be pursued.

Public Rights of Way: the fallen tree on Footpath 32 has been cleared and that on Footpath 38 has been trimmed and the farmer notified to remove it completely.

(iii) Highways

Cllr B O'Neill reported that the Friends of St Andrew's would like the support of the Parish Council to close Church Lane on the 19th September for a street party in relation to the celebration of the church's 800th anniversary. The Chair clarified that the Parish Council does not authorise these matters and it would be publicised by Herts County Council in the usual way. It was agreed to support this closure and the Parochial Church Council Treasurer would be notified.

Cllr B O'Neill also reported that the inflated costings for the street lighting project had not been discussed with the contractor as yet. It was agreed to pursue the quote for the replacement of the street light outside the Londis as well as the disconnection of those street lights identified as no longer being needed.

As an aside, it was noted that potentially the Parish Council could be asked for financial support from parties adversely affected by the current circumstances and therefore delaying this project could be beneficial in preserving its funds.

(iv) Media

None.

(v) Neighbourhood Plan

The Chair reported that the Scoping Report for the Strategic Environmental Assessment is now being subjected to a 5 week consultation period for statutory consultees to comment on the work proposed in it.

He also highlighted that material had been supplied to AECOM to demonstrate how the site assessment process was undertaken, with discussions on how sites had been filtered for assessment. AECOM are likely to take a closer look at the Barn School site (not currently available) and the land behind Windmill Way (rejected primarily due to lack of access) to satisfy themselves that the approach was reasonable. They will also look at whether improvements to Plan policies could be suggested to mitigate any harmful impacts.

Finally, on the matter of unapproved changes to the Policies Map, a response from East Herts Council is still awaited. In addition, further unapproved changes have been identified in relation to the mapping of common land ("Open Space") at Perry Green and Green Tye, and this will be followed up with East Herts Council.

(vi) Security

None.

(vii) Other

On behalf of Cllr S Smith, the Clerk read his update on the Stansted Airport Airspace Review. The deadline for the first element of the consultation has been extended from the 13th April to the 27th May and a response will be developed in conjunction with a local resident.

Note – Cllr S Smith had temporarily left the meeting prior to this item and re-joined during the next item.

20/51. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

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

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - APRIL 2020

Chq etc	Payable to	For	Amount
997	EMC Contracts Ltd	Pavilion repairs (guttering)	168.00
998	Pesteco	Rodent control at Pavilion	50.00
999	HATPC	Subscription 2020/21	805.08
1000	Business Services at CAS Ltd	Insurance Parish Council 2020/21	756.00
1001	MH Village Hall	D Billson - Pavilion cleaning	80.00
SO	M Windmill	Litter Agency (April)	334.00
Total payments			£2,193.08

Cheques will be signed and despatched following the meeting.

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statements for both the Parish Council and the Burial Authority for 2019/20 were received. The Clerk highlighted that this information would effectively form the basis of the Parish Council's financial accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020. The summary financial position is detailed below and comparison to the annual budget is attached at Appendix A for both the Parish Council and the Burial Authority.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION - FINAL - 31 MARCH 2020

	Parish Council £	Burial Authority £	Total £
Opening balance - 1 April 2019	47,134.88	17,037.46	64,172.34
Income	61,583.23	5,000.00	66,583.23
Expenditure	- 65,660.57	- 3,294.70	- 68,955.27
Closing balance	<u><u>43,057.54</u></u>	<u><u>18,742.76</u></u>	<u><u>61,800.30</u></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>

The Clerk also highlighted that the financial accounts and the annual governance and accountability return would normally be presented to the May meeting. Given the current situation, it was unlikely that this would happen as the guidance has been delayed and the timetable for the Internal Audit review needed to be revised as it is now being done remotely.

The financial statement for 2020/21 to date was received. There were no matters that the Clerk wished to highlight. The summary financial position is detailed below and comparison to the annual budget is attached at Appendix B.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 7 APRIL 2020

	Parish Council £	Burial Authority £	Total £
Opening balance - 1 April 2020	43,057.54	18,742.76	61,800.30
Income	-	-	-
Expenditure	- 2,196.41	- 16.62	- 2,213.03
Closing balance	<u><u>40,861.13</u></u>	<u><u>18,726.14</u></u>	<u><u>59,587.27</u></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>

Cllr B O'Neill highlighted that a Halo Group had been established to support vulnerable people, with the Green Tye & Perry Green Preservation Society doing something similar in the hamlets. In addition, the owner of the Londis was providing assistance.

20/52. CLERK'S INFORMATION

The Clerk highlighted that the Regulations were now in place to allow virtual meetings but had been released after the agenda for this meeting had been published. In summary, the key points were:

- requirement to hold an annual meeting in May 2020 removed and existing appointments for Chair, Vice Chair and Committee membership continues;
- uncertainty still exists regarding whether the annual parish meeting can be held virtually or postponed; and
- there is no requirement to amend Standing Orders to allow for virtual meetings and all other requirements remain the same, for example the meeting summons.

A detailed guide on holding remote meetings has been issued by NALC and a protocol will be developed, based on this guide, so that the May meeting can be formally held remotely.

Finally, as a result of the changes, the previously planned Planning Committee meeting on the 28th April is no longer required as this can now follow the May Parish Council meeting as normal.

20/53. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Virtual meeting on Tuesday, 5th May 2020.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:15 pm.

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON - FINAL

(Parish Council only)	FULL YEAR	YEAR TO DATE	COMMENT
	2020 BUDGET £	2020 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	971.00	
Grant	6,500.00	1,562.25	Less Neighbourhood Plan grant applied for than expected
Other	95.00	2,373.47	Insurance claim for the Almshouse light of £2,147.32 received
VAT reclaimed	5,000.00	-	2018/19 claim re-submitted in new format with claim for 2019/20
TOTAL INCOME	63,673.00	61,583.23	
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs	6,973.64	6,973.20	
PWLB loan repayment	5,387.46	5,387.46	
Administration costs	2,400.00	2,804.40	£299 spent on planning magazine subscription not included in budget
Insurance	3,400.00	3,764.27	Insurance relating to the Pavilion etc higher than estimated
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	4,368.80	Primarily unspent estimates for tree work (£2,100), playground repairs (£1,000), street furniture (£550) and servicing mower (£500). Recommend set aside as a reserve
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	2,444.95	Cost increase more than estimated
Street lighting (replacement programme)	5,000.00	-	Recommend this sum is set aside as a reserve for spending in the next financial year
Pavilion	2,900.00	4,191.46	Electricity costs almost double estimate (estimate £565) and more repairs than expected (£724 over estimate)
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	11,422.49	
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	6,214.17	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	65,639.10	65,660.57	

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL - BURIAL AUTHORITY

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON - FINAL

(Excludes VAT)	FULL YEAR	YEAR TO	COMMENT
	2020	DATE	
	BUDGET	2020	
	£	ACTUAL	£
INCOME			
Burial	2,200.00	4,130.00	Hard to predict burials. This year have had one interment of ashes from out of the parish.
Memorial	440.00	870.00	Hard to predict memorials. As above, have had one memorial from out of the parish.
TOTAL INCOME	<u>2,640.00</u>	<u>5,000.00</u>	
EXPENDITURE			
Water	100.00	89.70	Due to timing of bills, March 2020 water for St Andrew's in next financial year (£19.95)
Church yard maintenance	1,800.00	1,800.00	
Other maintenance	500.00	1,175.00	Repair of fence at Perry Green (£480) + tree work/soil spoil removal (£695)
Other	100.00	230.00	Membership of ICCM £95 + training course £135
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>2,500.00</u>	<u>3,294.70</u>	
ANNUAL RECONCILIATION			
Opening balance - 1 April 2019	17,037.46	17,037.46	
Income	2,640.00	5,000.00	
Expenditure	- 2,500.00	- 3,294.70	
Closing balance	<u>17,177.46</u>	<u>18,742.76</u>	

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON AS AT 7 APRIL 2020

(Parish Council only)	FULL YEAR	YEAR TO DATE	COMMENT
	2021 BUDGET £	2021 ACTUAL £	
INCOME			
Precept	43,000.00	-	
Litter Agency	4,235.00	-	
New Homes Bonus	10,000.00	-	
Pavilion income	1,000.00	-	
Grant	300.00	-	
Other	60.00	-	
VAT reclaimed	5,000.00	-	
TOTAL INCOME	63,595.00	-	
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs	7,000.00	-	
PWLB loan repayment	5,387.46	-	
Administration costs	3,300.00	805.08	
Insurance	3,900.00	756.00	
Audit fees	730.00	-	
General Data Protection Regulation compliance	35.00	-	
Election expenses	-	-	
Maintenance of open spaces	21,800.00	-	
Litter Agency	4,008.00	334.00	
War memorial (lighting and maintenance)	1,100.00	-	
Street lighting (energy and maintenance)	2,000.00	-	
Street lighting (replacement programme)	6,100.00	-	
Pavilion	3,400.00	270.00	
Grants and donations (Section 137 expenditure)	1,000.00	-	
Sport and recreation grants (Section 106 funded)	1,500.00	-	
Neighbourhood Plan	2,000.00	-	
Capital - Roller shutter at Pavilion	2,000.00	-	
Capital - Bollards at Moor Place Gate	800.00	-	
VAT	5,000.00	31.33	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	71,060.46	2,196.41	