

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 2nd November 2021, in the Green Tye Mission Hall, at 7:30 pm.

*Cllr Mrs K Hamilton
*Cllr I Hunt (Vice Chair)
*Cllr Mrs J Liversage
Cllr Mrs H Maduhu
*Cllr D McDonald

*Cllr B O'Neill
*Cllr S Smith
Cllr Mrs P Taylor (Chair)
*Cllr K Twort

* denotes present

In attendance: F Forth, Clerk and 5 members of the public.

21/179. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr Mrs H Maduhu and Cllr Mrs P Taylor. In the absence of Cllr Mrs P Taylor, Cllr I Hunt chaired the meeting. Apologies were also received from the District Council representative, Cllr I Devonshire (EHC), and the County Council representative, Cllr G McAndrew.

21/180. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None.

21/181. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

21/182. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed those present to the first meeting in the Green Tye Mission Hall following the disruption caused by COVID. In addition, it was the first meeting in this location for Cllr Mrs K Hamilton.

The Chair also highlighted that the Remembrance Service would be taking place at the War Memorial on Sunday 14th November at 10:50 am at which the Parish Council would be laying a wreath. The Chair thanked the local resident who supplied the wreath.

21/183. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 5th October 2021 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair after the meeting.

21/184. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

The Clerk stated that no report had been circulated but that most outstanding items will be covered by the remaining agenda items.

21/185. MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) Community

Recreation Ground

Cllr D McDonald reported that co-ordinating a meeting to discuss the possible installation of CCTV and security lighting at the Recreation Ground is in progress.

Cllr K Twort reported that a Sports Association meeting had been held recently. The topic of the CCTV and security lighting had been raised, along with concerns regarding the future financial security of the Sports Association given that no fete is likely to take place in the near future. The Sports Association are currently using the COVID-support funds received from the Government. It was also noted that the Saturday football team had recently won a cup.

Cllr K Twort also reported that the remedial work at the Pavilion was nearing completion. The Clerk outlined that some additional items were being addressed: rather than instal shower curtains, towel hooks and a wooden bath mat were considered more appropriate; a cemented in boot scraper outside the entrance door and an investigation of the damp patch in the ceiling in the main room.

Cllr Mrs J Liversage noted that example signs needed to be mocked up for discussion with the Sports Association.

It was noted that it was difficult to consult with everyone which was causing problems with moving the projects forward. It was identified that proper project management techniques needed to be used, particularly the allocation of responsibilities. The Clerk stated that it was important to get the Sports Association involved as they're responsible for the Recreation Ground and not the Parish Council.

Village Hall

Cllr Mrs K Hamilton provided an update from the recent Village Hall Management Committee meeting. The salient points from this were:

- the financial position was healthy, mainly due to the COVID grants received;
- COVID guidance would be updated;
- a five year repairs and maintenance plan had been developed and the current three priorities are:

- re-decoration in the Main Hall;
- replacement curtains for Main Hall; and
- a replacement water heater in the Green Room Kitchen which will be powered by solar panels with backup electrical heating;
- moving the rubbish bin from next to 4 Vine Cottages to the bus stop is not possible as the only way to remove the bin is to cut its post. The Parish Council will need to consider if it does want to install a new bin by the bus stop;
- options for fund raising were considered; and
- parking in the Village Hall car park is still an issue and when the Drama Production is on in November, notices will be put on the windscreens asking people not to park in the car park on those evenings. In future, a chain may be put across periodically.

Cllr B O'Neill suggested that the rubbish bin was not replaced but signs put up to direct people to use the bins available in the car park. This was agreed.

Cllr Mrs K Hamilton also reported that there continued to be issues on the Recreation Ground with young people accessing the tennis courts and the bowling green. It was noted that this type of access had been the catalyst for investigating the use of CCTV at the Recreation Ground.

The Clerk was reminded that the Village Hall Management Committee accounts had been requested.

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

General

Cllr S Smith commented that with the current focus on the environment, and with it COP26, Herts County Council's (HCC) approach to appoint an Active Travel Officer (ATC) was highlighted as positive action. The ATC would be responsible for encouraging walking or cycling as a preference to using motorised transport wherever possible, and be looking to upgrade footpaths to bridleways to allow cyclists to use them and generally improving the quality of all paths to promote their usage.

This action is part of HCC's proactive stance regarding climate change which also includes various initiatives such as planting of wild flowers, trees etc.

Public Rights of Way

Cllr S Smith provided the following update:

Footpath 11 Diversion Order

Consultation responses are still being addressed in respect of this order. An outstanding point relates to a request by the Planning Inspectorate to approve a small change to the end

of Footpath 10 on the Definitive Map which is at the heart of the Diversion Order. The background to this change was provided, highlighting that the amendment would change the route of Footpath 10 slightly to follow the centre of the hard surface track.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to support this amendment and to include an additional request that the gradient of FP11 be improved where it meets Kettle Green Lane (south side).

Other PRow matters

- Bridleway 28 - a tree partially blocking the bridleway had been removed by the landowners at their own initiative, which is good to see;
- Footpaths 13 and 39 – farmer/landowner whose land is crossed by these footpaths will be asked to redefine the path after recent ploughing activity;
- Bridleway 52 - bridleway is also a farm track and has become difficult to use due to deep ruts etc. from farm vehicle usage. The farmer will be asked to rectify the surface to make it passable for walkers and horse riders;
- Footpath 24 and 37 - these footpaths still require further clearance and trimming which will happen soon. The landowner whose garden is crossed by Footpath 37, according to the 'definitive' map, will be requested to seek a diversion order to route the path further along Danebridge Lane and then left past Maple Cottage, where people currently walk. Several way marker posts, which have somehow disappeared will be reinstated on this path;
- bridge repairs – progress on the key two bridges which have 6 month closure orders:
 - Footpath 44 (& High Wych Footpath 16): the decking has collapsed and the bridge is shut off. Repairs expected soon;
 - Footpath 20: now completely boarded off to prevent access. Extensive work required here as the situation is complicated with many parties involved; and
- Footpath 22 – the large hole in the footpath has been filled in where some animal has made an entrance into the adjacent land. HCC are optimistic that the long standing diversion of this path from it's route through the school area can be accomplished by possibly utilising a route through the developer's property.

(iii) Highways (inc street lighting)

Cllr S Smith reported that a meeting had taken place involving Cllr B O'Neill, Cllr Mrs P Taylor, Cllr G McAndrew (HCC), Highways and himself to discuss highways matters.

It was noted that a number of matters remain outstanding, but the following actions had been confirmed:

- work in Kettle Green Lane has been commissioned for delivery in 2021/22 financial year; and
- double yellow lines at Hadham Cross will be in place in early 2022.

Highways will be regularly reminded of the outstanding items.

Streetlights

Cllr B O'Neill reported that all the new lights had been installed and a final survey needs to be undertaken. Most of the streetlights that had been removed have been sold and two will be donated: one to the Green Tye Mission Hall and one to The Forge Museum. It was noted that there were more posts than lanterns as the lanterns had disintegrated.

(iv) Media

None.

(v) Neighbourhood Plan

The Chair highlighted that there was nothing to report as there had been no contact from the Examiner. East Herts Council have approached the Examiner for an update.

(vi) Security

On behalf of Cllr Mrs H Maduhu, the Clerk reported that PCSO Leon de Bruyn had provided the following update:

- 3 specific crimes had been reported:
 - criminal damage by a vehicle to an arable field in Kettle Green Road, suspected to be linked to hare coursing;
 - theft of a motor vehicle from a residential driveway at Hadham Cross; and
 - criminal damage and theft at a large residential property in Bourne Lane;
- recent increase in thefts from motor vehicles seen as the festive season is approached. Everyone is reminded to ensure cars are locked, even on driveways, all valuable items are removed from within and any 'keyless entry' keys are out of range; and
- there had been an increased police presence around Halloween.

(vii) Other (Stansted Airport)

Stansted Airport

Cllr D McDonald reported that it had been noted at the last meeting that Manchester Airport Group (MAG) had applied to lift all restrictions on night flights from Stansted. He had since been in touch with "Stansted Airport Watch" (SAW), the organisation that had replaced "Stop Stansted Expansion", to identify what action SAW were proposing and how the Parish Council could support this. This had identified that a "SAW Parish and Town Council's Liaison Group" had been established to co-ordinate action by parish and town

councils to oppose MAG's application and the Parish Council would be invited to the next meeting.

In addition, Cllr D McDonald highlighted that two further options could be pursued to resist MAG's application, namely through the local MP and the East Herts Association of Local Councils (EHALC).

As background, Cllr D McDonald highlighted that MAG's application is to determine the Night Flights Regulations for Stansted from October 2025. A further Department for Transport (DfT) consultation on the issue is expected in 2022 or 2023, which will include consideration of MAG's more detailed proposals. That consultation will present local parish councils with an opportunity independently to register their views. In the meantime, SAW will continue to provide the focus for presenting the case against MAG's application both to Uttlesford District Council and the DfT.

Finally, Cllr D McDonald highlighted that whatever action the Parish Council decides to take, this should be discussed with SAW so that the campaign is, so far as possible, co-ordinated.

It was agreed that next steps of approaching the local MP and engaging with EHAC would be consider formally at the next meeting. In addition, consideration will be given to donating to SAW to support its campaign.

Quote for post and re-installation of village sign

The Chair highlighted that a quote had been circulated for a new oak post for the village sign, together with the re-installation of the sign once the refurbished sign was received back from Sign of the Times.

Cllr K Twort confirmed that stainless steel bolts would be used as this would address the issue previously found and that the contractor would be able to fit this work in. In addition, it was noted that the contractor would be able to co-ordinate the work with Sign of the Times.

RESOLVED to accept the quote from Gooch Carpentry for the oak post and re-installation of the refurbished village sign of £945 + VAT.

21/186. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Both Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) and Cllr G McAndrew (HCC) had given their apologies for this meeting and there were no reports.

However, the Chair noted that the new Grange Paddocks Leisure facility was quite impressive.

21/187. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

(i) The Bull Inn planning application

A resident noted that a planning application had been submitted for housing development behind The Bull Inn and was aware that this was being considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 7th December. Whilst recognising that this site was in the Neighbourhood Plan as a development site, the resident was concerned that the pub would be adversely affected by this development, particularly as access to the development was through the pub carpark. The resident considered that there was a risk that the pub would be rundown and closed.

It was highlighted by those present that those living in Much Hadham needed to support the pub.

(ii) Danebridge Road

It was highlighted by a resident that Danebridge Lane was essentially a lake most of the time and it was noted that there are issues with the ditch in that area. Work had been undertaken to pipe the excess water through a culvert to the River Ash but the culvert was higher than the surface water.

(iii) Kettle Green Lane

In response to a resident's question, it was noted that the work commissioned for Kettle Green Lane related to the passing bays.

(iv) Streetlights

A resident queried whether the new streetlights being installed would remain grey or whether they would be painted. Cllr B O'Neill responded that they would be painted silver as opposed to black, highlighting that if the silver peels off, the galvanised steel below wouldn't look out of place.

(v) Highways

It was noted by a resident that work is undertaken by Highways in some areas of the village but not necessarily in the areas the resident believes should be. For example, work at the bottom of Bourne Lane but no action taken to repair the damage caused by agricultural vehicles in the hamlets.

Cllr B O'Neill highlighted that issues relevant to Much Hadham are regularly raised with Highways. The Chair added that the Parish Council is not always consulted on Highway's priorities, using the resurfacing of the High Street as an example in recent years when the Parish Council had not been made aware of this prior to the work being undertaken.

(vi) Jolly Waggoners

In response to a question, the Chair highlighted that 3 Cllrs had met with the owner of the Jolly Waggoners site in the last few months and this had been reported back to the Planning Committee. The discussion had revolved around the state of the site and the options for its potential development. It was noted that there was still a possibility under planning policy of a new pub being developed at that site.

(vii) Grandey's Place

As a resident, Cllr B O'Neill, highlighted that Grandey's Place was having an open week, between the 20th and 27th November, and further information could be found in the November Parish Magazine.

21/188. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

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

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - NOVEMBER 2021

Ref	Payable to	For	Amount
OP92	CDA Herts	Annual membership	36.00
OP93	E.ON	Lighting for war memorial	38.03
OP94	East Herts Council	Additional dog bin charges	66.25
OP95	MH Sports Association	Pavilion electricity	62.68
OP96	T Walker	Mow & strim footpaths	640.00
OP97	EMC Contracts Ltd	Balance repairs (quote 2292)	1,338.00
OP98	MH Village Hall	D Billson - Pavilion cleaning (October)	80.00
SO	M Windmill	Litter Agency (October)	334.00
DD	PWLB	Loan repayment (Pavilion)	2,693.73
OP99	FM Forth	Clerk's salary (November)	597.13
Total payments			<u>£5,885.82</u>

Payments will be authorised online following the meeting by Cllr I Hunt and Cllr K Twort.

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statement for 2021/22 to date was received. The summary financial position is detailed below and comparison to the annual budget is attached at Appendix A. No matters were highlighted by the Clerk.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 2 NOVEMBER 2021

	Parish Council £	Burial Authority £	Total £
Opening balance - 1 April 2021	81,111.38	24,744.29	105,855.67
Income	81,196.94	540.00	81,736.94
Expenditure	- 52,362.71	- 918.71	- 53,281.42
Closing balance	<u>109,945.61</u>	<u>24,365.58</u>	<u>134,311.19</u>

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

(1) Section 106 receipts for sport or recreation	1,570.00
(2) Streetlights	11,100.00
(3) Open spaces	18,650.00
	<u>31,320.00</u>

(iii) Initial 2022/23 Budget and Forward Financial Plan

The Clerk had circulated the initial 2022/23 Budget and Forward Financial Plan prior to the meeting which proposed a reduction in the precept by £2,000. In addition, the Clerk highlighted the following key points:

- the expected outturn for the current financial year shows a significant deficit for the year – nearly £40,000 – which was due to some elements of current year's expenditure being funded from specific set aside sums or the unspent New Homes Bonus from previous years contained within the general balance;
- the parish lighting project was expected to not be more than the quoted cost of £44,000; and
- £10,000 was still allocated annually for revenue/capital projects, with an element of this set aside for new/replacement playground equipment.

In addition, as previously highlighted, the Clerk stated that once the Parish Council had spent all of its New Home Bonus, there was a pot of funds held at East Herts Council which could be applied for in respect of future projects. In addition, there was now £350 available for tree planting as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project.

The Chair highlighted that it would be prudent to not reduce the precept as inflation was predicted to be around 3-4% in the next financial year and this is not fully recognised in the proposed financial plans.

21/189. PLANNING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 5th October 2021 be received and the decisions taken be ratified.

21/190. BURIAL AUTHORITY

The receipt of the minutes of the Burial Authority meeting held on 5th October 2021 was deferred until the next meeting.

21/191. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

21/192. CLERK'S INFORMATION

The Clerk highlighted that a proposal for a memorial bench on the green at Green Tye will potentially be on the agenda for the next meeting.

21/193. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday 7th December 2021 at 7:30 pm at the Much Hadham Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:00 pm.

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON AS AT 2 NOVEMBER 2021

(Parish Council only)

	FULL YEAR	YEAR TO DATE	
	2022	2022	
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	
	£	£	COMMENT
INCOME			
Precept	42,000.00	42,000.00	
PWLB Loan Advance (Parish lights)	-	25,000.00	
Litter Agency	4,275.00	4,272.66	
New Homes Bonus	9,097.00	-	Bonus no longer being paid
Pavilion income	7,020.00	5,544.00	
Grant	300.00	164.00	
Other	60.00	1,375.07	Sale of 6 old streetlights
VAT reclaimed	5,000.00	2,841.21	
TOTAL INCOME	67,752.00	81,196.94	
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs	7,200.00	4,777.04	
PWLB loan repayment - Pavilion	5,387.46	5,387.46	
PWLB loan repayment - Parish lights	2,768.00	-	First loan repayment will be in the next financial year
Administration costs	3,100.00	1,248.77	
Insurance	3,250.00	722.25	
Audit fees	830.00	745.00	
General Data Protection Regulation compliance	35.00	35.00	
Election expenses	-	-	
Maintenance of open spaces	13,400.00	7,661.11	
Litter Agency	4,008.00	2,672.00	
War memorial (lighting and maintenance)	700.00	104.17	
Street lighting (energy and maintenance)	2,000.00	-	
Pavilion	3,500.00	3,870.55	Additional maintenance work undertaken
Grants and donations (Section 137 expenditure)	1,000.00	900.00	
Sport and recreation grants (Section 106 funded)	-	3,000.00	
Neighbourhood Plan	-	90.00	
Revenue - Maintenance of Village sign	4,000.00	-	Estimated final cost for refurbishment of sign £2,810. No costs as yet for post.
Revenue - Maintenance of bus shelters	8,000.00	10,439.09	£1,463.09 over approved quote of £8,976 due to additional cost of materials and labour, plus a pavement licence
Capital - Playground equipment	8,000.00	5,578.53	Cost less than expected
VAT	5,000.00	5,131.74	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	72,178.46	52,362.71	