

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 6th September 2022, in the Much Hadham Village Hall, at 7:35 pm.

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

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

* denotes present

In attendance: F Forth, Clerk and 1 member of the public.

22/139. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr K Hamilton and Cllr D McDonald.

22/140. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None.

22/141. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

22/142. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair noted that refreshments had been available prior to the meeting although no residents had attended. In addition, she noted that the Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) had overseen the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan being recommended for adoption at East Herts Council's Executive meeting prior to this meeting starting. The formal adoption of the Plan will be at the East Herts Council meeting on 16th November 2022.

22/143. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd August 2022 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair after the meeting.

22/144. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

The Clerk reported that the replacement dog bin for near Footpath 29 had arrived. It was agreed that this would be delivered to Cllr B O'Neill for installation.

The Clerk also highlighted that the defibrillator had recently been installed at the Pavilion although not yet operational. Once operational, the next steps will be to organise training and Cllr S Smith will take the lead on this.

In response to a question, Cllr I Hunt reported that no feedback had been received from East Herts Council in relation to The Bull Inn Asset of Community Value (ACV) application that had been made by the “Save The Bull” campaign group.

In terms of funding for the Hadham Hopper, Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) stated that officers were still investigating this matter. It was noted that this would be an agenda item at the next meeting.

22/145. MEMBERS’ REPORTS

(i) Community

Cllr K Twort reported that Saturday football team had folded as difficulties had been encountered in putting a team together. The Sunday football team was still going well.

Rubbish bins

The Chair reminded those present that a number of rubbish bins had been removed earlier in the year and noted that few comments had been received from residents.

Cllr I Hunt reported that he had physically checked the sites of the former rubbish bins and found no litter issues.

The Clerk stated that she had received a report that the rubbish bin at the war memorial was missing. The Chair and Cllr I Hunt agreed to investigate.

Recreation Ground

On behalf of Cllr D McDonald, the Clerk commented on the scar across the recreation ground left by the trench dug for the drains to the new Tennis Club hut. It was felt that the “reinstatement” work undertaken had been minimal and ineffective, with the surface left extremely unsightly, as no re-turfing had been done.

Whilst it was noted that the exceptionally dry weather would not have helped, Cllr S Smith agreed to raise this with the Tennis Club.

Village Hall

On behalf of Cllr K Hamilton, the Clerk reported that the redecoration of the main hall was running late, and was expected to be completed over the next 2 weeks, with the decorator working around existing bookings where possible.

The Ceilidh planned for the last Sunday in August had been cancelled but the idea may be revived at some point in the future. Items donated for the raffle were being returned to the donors.

Noticeboard

In advance of the October meeting, the Chair had provided Cllrs with a proposal for the new noticeboard at the Recreation Ground. It is anticipated that it will be around 1.5-2 m x 1 m in size.

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

General

Cllr S Smith commented that the weather for August had been very similar to July with high temperatures and very little rain to speak of. As a consequence, the expected growth on footpaths and bridleways had been less than expected so the proposed second wave of the annual trimming cycle, due to start mid-August, had been deferred.

Public Rights of Way

Cllr S Smith provided the following update:

- Bridleway 17: had undergone a special cut back as had not been trimmed in 2021. The foliage in places had been waist high and, coupled with the farmer ploughing right up to edge, had made the path impenetrable in a number of places;
- Footpath 11 diversion: in principle, the installation of a special barrier at the point where the footpath crosses Kettle Green Lane has been agreed. A standard barrier was considered inappropriate at that junction;
- Footpath 23: new way marker signs have been placed at Two Bridges;
- Footpath 32: opposite the Hoops Inn, a fallen tree has been cleared; and
- Footpath 39: a diversion order has been received and registered, and will be consulted upon in due course. The new route of the path is only a few feet away from the existing path and is in a well maintained condition so no issues are expected.

In response to a question, Cllr S Smith reported that it was not known whether any changes were being made to the gradient of Footpath 11 as part of the diversion order process.

(iii) Highways (inc street lighting)

The Chair reported that the intention is to have a meeting with Herts County Council (HCC) Highways at the beginning of October. In addition, she highlighted that an email had been received that detailed the 5 places where new signs were being considered to highlight the existence of the ford and to discourage HGV drivers from using Danebridge Road and Malting/Oudle Lane.

Cllr S Smith reported that HCC Highways had cleared some but not all of the hanging trees and branches that were the result of the high winds and storms at the early part of the year. This will be followed up with HCC Highways at the meeting planned for early October.

(iv) Media

Cllr S Smith reported that nothing of significance had been posted on social media on behalf of the Parish Council. In addition, he stated that he, in conjunction with the Chair, would be reviewing the Parish Council's website with a view to making improvements.

(v) Security

Cllr J Liversage reported that no crimes had been reported in Much Hadham during August.

(vi) Stansted Airport

None.

(vii) Other

The Chair and Cllr J Liversage raised the idea that the August meetings should no longer be held. All Cllrs to consider this proposal.

22/146. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) confirmed that East Herts Council's Executive had voted unanimously to recommend that the Council adopt the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan.
(See Minute ref: 22/142)

Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) also reminded those present that he was hosting a "Race night" on the 23rd September with proceeds going to the Stroke Association.

22/147. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

None.

22/148. PAVILION

The Chair highlighted that Cllr D McDonald was in the process of revising the annual agreement with Faraway Tree Kindergarten Ltd (FTKL) for the use of the Pavilion. She also commented that the owner of FTKL had undertaken some maintenance, mainly to repaint the walls and window frames in the main room. In addition, a carpet cleaner is being employed to deep clean the carpet.

During discussion, the following points were raised for follow up:

- does FTKL have permission to practice as an early years care provider;
- does FTKL have appropriate insurance cover in place; and
- is there a break clause in the contract.

The Chair also commented that the owner of FTKL also wanted to hire the Pavilion 1 evening per week and it was agreed that the charge would be £10 per hour (standard hire rate) but that the cleaning charge of £12 would not be applied.

It was also noted that there is a risk that the energy prices will go up significantly in the coming months. It was acknowledged that the existing heaters being used are not necessarily ideal, from a consumption perspective, and perhaps consideration needs to be given to changing these.

RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Chair, Cllr I Hunt and Cllr D McDonald to approve entering into an agreement with Faraway Tree Kindergarten Ltd for the use of the Pavilion from the 5 October 2022 for a period of 12 months for a monthly fee of £820.

22/149. SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE (SID)

Following discussion, it was RESOLVED to approve an extended warranty from Herts County Council of 5 years for the Parish Council's SID (north) at a cost of £1,000 payable in 2023/24.

It was agreed that the Clerk would obtain a copy of the warranty.

22/150. 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT

Cllr S Smith provided the background to the 20's Plenty initiative, explaining that it was a UK initiative and has the potential to save lives.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was RESOLVED that Much Hadham Parish Council will:

- support the 20's Plenty for Hertfordshire campaign;
- call on Herts County Council to implement 20mph in Much Hadham; and
- write to Herts County Council to request 20mph speed limits on streets throughout Hertfordshire where people live, work, shop, play or learn, with 30mph as the

exception on those roads, where full consideration of the needs of vulnerable road users allows a higher limit.

It was agreed that Cllr D McDonald would send the letter on behalf of the Parish Council.

22/151. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that the amount for the noticeboard refurbishment was as per the quote previously received and approved.

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

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - SEPTEMBER 2022

Ref	Payable to	For	Amount
OP177	Wight Computers	Web hosting & domain renewal	93.59
OP178	BA B Bird	Perry Green Burial Ground noticeboard repair	22.75
OP179	BA MH Landscapes	Maintenance at burial grounds Apr - Jun '22	540.00
OP180	BA Seated Furniture Ltd	New bench - Perry Green Burial Ground	574.24
OP181	FM Forth	Clerks expenses 24 Feb 22 to 5 Aug 22	324.31
OP182	Mr RJ Kidger	Noticeboard refurbishment	1,540.00
OP183	Broxap	Purchase of dog bin	268.80
OP184	T Walker	Hedge cutting - Causeway + clearing around bus shelters + clearing around seat Station Road	295.00
OP185	J S Wilson & Son (Bookbinders) Ltd	Binding of minutes (5 volumes)	325.00
OP186	MH Village Hall	D Billson - Pavilion cleaning (Aug)	80.00
SO	M Windmill	Litter Agency (Sep)	334.00
DD	ICO	Data protection fee	35.00
OP187	FM Forth	Clerk's salary (Sep)	729.04
Total payments			5,161.73

Payments will be authorised online following the meeting by Cllr B O'Neill and Cllr K Twort.

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statement for 2022/23 to date was received. The summary financial position is detailed overleaf and comparison to the annual budget is attached at Appendix A.

Following a request from Cllr I Hunt, the Clerk explained that the Parish Council's budget included electricity costs in relation to the war memorial and the Pavilion, both of which had been increased by 40% prior to the budget being approved in January in anticipation of higher energy costs this year. In terms of the war memorial, 50% of the budget has been spent so far and no price increase was known of as yet. For the Pavilion, approximately 60% of the budget (£1,680) had been spent so far. If the remainder of the financial year is a repeat of the first 6 months, there will be a shortfall of just over £300. This shortfall will increase if the electricity price increases, or it is a colder winter requiring an increased use of the heaters.

Cllr I Hunt queried why East Herts Council had increased its litter agency payment to the Parish Council by 14%. The Clerk agreed to investigate.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 6 SEPTEMBER 2022

	Parish Council £	Burial Authority £	Total £
Opening balance - 1 April 2022	44,158.77	29,970.81	74,129.58
Income	46,319.12	780.00	47,099.12
Expenditure	- 28,128.77	- 2,983.90	- 31,112.67
Closing balance	<u><u>62,349.12</u></u>	<u><u>27,766.91</u></u>	<u><u>90,116.03</u></u>

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

(1) Section 106 receipts for sport or recreation	1,570.00
(2) Open spaces	18,650.00
	<u><u>20,220.00</u></u>

22/152. PLANNING

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 22nd August 2022 were received and the decisions taken were noted.

22/153. BURIAL AUTHORITY

The minutes of the Burial Authority meeting held on 22nd August 2022 were received and the decisions taken were noted.

22/154. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

22/157. CLERK'S INFORMATION

The Clerk reminded those present that at a previous meeting, she had reported that East Herts Council would be promoting a scheme to make buying solar panels and electricity storage easier. This scheme is now being promoted and every resident should have received a leaflet with the scheme's details.

22/156. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday 4th October 2022 at 7:30 pm at the Much Hadham Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:58 pm.

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON AS AT 6 SEPTEMBER 2022

(Parish Council only)	FULL YEAR	YEAR TO DATE	COMMENT
	2023	2023	
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	
	£	£	
INCOME			
Precept	42,000.00	21,000.00	
Litter Agency	4,275.00	4,884.58	
Pavilion income	9,660.00	3,900.00	
Grant	300.00	172.00	
Other	60.00	2.26	
VAT reclaimed	5,000.00	16,360.28	
TOTAL INCOME	61,295.00	46,319.12	
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs	7,200.00	4,583.16	
PWLB loan repayment - Pavilion	5,387.46	2,693.73	
PWLB loan repayment - Parish lights	2,734.64	1,367.32	
Administration costs	2,960.00	1,842.02	
Insurance	2,650.00	1,337.13	
Audit fees	850.00	845.00	
General Data Protection Regulation compliance	35.00	35.00	
Election expenses	-	-	
Maintenance of open spaces	7,000.00	5,762.09	
Litter Agency	4,008.00	2,004.00	
War memorial (lighting and maintenance)	805.00	121.98	
Pavilion	4,000.00	2,203.40	
Grants and donations (Section 137 expenditure)	1,000.00	-	
Sport and recreation grants (Section 106 funded)	-	-	
Neighbourhood Plan	-	1,000.00	
Capital - Playground equipment	5,000.00	-	
Capital - Defibrillator	-	2,440.00	
Revenue/Capital Projects (to be allocated)	10,000.00	-	
VAT	5,000.00	1,893.94	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	58,630.10	28,128.77	