

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 4th October 2022, in the Much Hadham Village Hall, at 7:30 pm.

#Cllr B Bird

*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 and # denotes co-opted at the meeting (Minute ref: 22/158)

In attendance: 4 members of the public and apologies were received from F Forth, Clerk who was unwell. In her absence, Cllr S Smith would prepare the draft minutes.

22/157. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

22/158. CO-OPTION OF BILL BIRD AS A PARISH COUNCILLOR

Bill Bird was welcomed to the meeting and given an opportunity to introduce himself, though well known to many, as a long-term resident of Green Tye, and as a previous Parish Councillor. Following this, it was RESOLVED to co-opt him as a Parish Councillor and he indicated his willingness to sign the appropriate governance documents with the Clerk at the earliest opportunity.

The Chair welcomed Cllr B Bird to the Parish Council and would discuss portfolios with him in due course.

22/159. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

The Chair declared an interest in a payment to be approved (agenda item 22/168 (ii)) and would therefore not be participating in nor voting on the related motion.

No other declarations were made or applications for dispensations sought.

22/160. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

22/161. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair stated that it was good to have a full complement of councillors once again, as the Parish Council had been one short, since January.

The Chair stated that some councillors and their spouses were entertained to a Charity Race Night at the Henry Moore Foundation last Friday, by Cllr I Devonshire (EHC) who during his year as Chair of East Herts is raising money for The Stroke Association. The evening was enjoyed by all that attended and the event raised a considerable sum for the nominated charity.

The Chair reported the Recreation Trust had held another Movie Night, again very well attended and enjoyed by all even though the temperature was a little on the chilly side. Due to all the hard work of the volunteers running the food and drink stalls, £2,000 was raised. Although this is a fraction of the funds raised in pre-covid years, it is hoped the Trust will be offering small grants to village groups/societies shortly. Traditionally, the main beneficiaries of the Fete have been the Sports Association and the Village Hall, but fortunately in the last 2 years, these organisations had received automatic government covid grants, and so, for the time being, their accounts look reasonably healthy.

Finally, the Chair reported that The Bull Inn had now been designated as an Asset of Community Value. Grateful thanks were given to the Save the Bull committee members who undertook this work, and the successful outcome from their hard work and thoroughness.

Cllr I Hunt commented that the achievement of the Asset of Community Value status for The Bull meant that should the current owners, Punch Taverns, ever wish to sell, the community would be given time to submit its own bid to buy it, should it so wish.

22/162. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 6th September 2022 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair after the meeting.

22/163. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

None.

22/164. MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) Community

Sports Association/Village Hall Management Committees

The Chair reported that the Sports Association and Village Hall Management Committees were understandably concerned about securing future funding, in the absence of the Fete. The structures for managing these village assets had been looked at over the years at

various times, and so the Parish Council is investigating various options, which will also enable a review of the funding structures.

The Chair assured residents that the Parish Council is actively investigating various avenues, and will be consulting with the existing management committees and interested parties, before coming to any decisions.

Pavilion

The agreement with Faraway Tree Kindergarten Ltd for the use of the Pavilion from the 5th October 2022 for a period of 12 months for a monthly fee of £820, had not been signed due to the Clerk's absence. Cllr D McDonald would follow this up.

Defibrillator

Cllr S Smith reported that the device had now been installed and registered. He stated that he had started the regular checklist process to ensure the device was continually available and ready for use and had sent in the first monthly report to the Community Heartbeat Trust (CHT).

Cllr S Smith had also written to all the clubs and users of the recreation ground requesting who they wish to nominate for training. He had received a dozen names so far and once he had a suitable number he will formerly place an order with the CHT for one of their sessions. Depending on the overall uptake there may be a need for a second course. Each course will be held at the Pavilion at a mutually convenient day and time.

Cllr S Smith confirmed that each course could be held for as many as 50 people, though the size limitations of the Pavilion would be the governing factor for how many could attend.

Village Hall

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

- On Line Booking System – this is going very well and more bookings have been made. There is now a regular monthly weekend booking at the higher rates;
- the Committee would like to employ a part time Booking Secretary and a Job Description is being prepared;
- in the absence of the Treasurer, the Committee Chair explained that the re-decoration of the main hall had been slightly more expensive - the final bill was £7,626;
- repairs and maintenance – there have been problems 3 times in the past 6 months when toilets were blocked;
- car parking remained a difficult problem;

- the Committee is concerned to find ways of replacing the funds raised in the past by the annual Fete; and
- a Health & Safety Checklist was circulated and discussed.

Cllr B O'Neill stated that from a Health and Safety perspective, potential hirers of the hall should be aware of the various responsibilities in that area and perhaps sign a declaration acknowledging that fact when their hire takes place.

Noticeboard at Recreation Ground

Further research being carried out by the Chair and Cllr J Liversage, with view to approval at next month's meeting.

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

General

Cllr S Smith commented that with the weather turning autumnal with moderate rainfall for September most residents' gardens and lawns are now green at last. One of the results of our dry summer was seeing an early start to falling leaves, but at least there still are reasonably dry footpaths and bridleways to enjoy without resorting to wellies and a muddy boggy undergrowth which we endured last autumn.

Public Rights of Way

Cllr S Smith provided the following update:

- Bridleway FP17: the old metal sign installed by some previous owner will be replaced by a new wooden way marker;
- the Bridge Across Footpath 20 (FP20): the bridge crossing the River Ash in the middle of FP20 (by the side of St Andrew's church) will be totally replaced next Spring;
- Footpath 11 diversion: Sworders, the agents for the applicant, have agreed to minor improvements to the gradient of the slope leading to the barrier at Kettle Green Lane;
- Footpath 7 (Cox's Lane): the fallen branches and trees have been cleared according to a message received from the Farm Manager for the Chaldean estate. The Estate Manager is due to meet with the PRoW representative at Herts County Council (HCC) to clarify responsibilities for maintenance of the various paths and bridleways on the estate;
- Footpath 29: a quotation for repair to both bridges is being sought. In addition, a quote is being sought for the broken bridge on Footpath 87 (in the adjoining parish) where it meets Footpath 9;
- Bridleway 7: there has been a request made to the owner of the field behind Brands, along which Bridleway 7 runs, in particular from Footpath 48 to the horse gate at the end of the field. Apparently, no maintenance has been undertaken to the hedge or trees since the Moor Place Estate sold the land some years back and now the path is

- severely restricted; and
- Second Cycle: the second annual cycle of mowing and trimming for the parish has now been completed. If any resident sees the need for a path or bridleway outside the cycle to be maintained please contact Cllr S Smith and he will arrange with his contact at HCC to make sure it receives appropriate treatment.

(iii) Highways (inc street lighting)

The Chair reported the scheduled meeting for Thursday 6th October had been cancelled by the HCC Highways representative, and a future date will be set, hopefully before the end of the month.

Cllr B O'Neill commented that Ringway had delivered two lighting columns to him making a total of 18 stored at his residence. He also mentioned that from the original project, minor tweaking of outstanding items was still outstanding and in general there was still no synchronisation with Ringway, on some outstanding aspects.

(iv) Media

Cllr S Smith reported that there had been very little social media activity and no new posts made by the Parish Council last month.

(v) Security

Cllr J Liversage stated there were no burglaries, robberies or other crimes reported for the parish since the last parish meeting and Volunteers are being sought for the DriveSafe scheme and the roles of Police Cadet Leader and Special Constables.

New warnings issued from the 'OWL' Police initiative included:

- 'Protect Your Vehicle' advice can be found via www.herts.police.uk/opermote;
- there may be increased possibility of theft of high value gold during the season of religious festivities;
- there was a sharp rise in reports of fake emails related to energy rebates. Please forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk to check the validity; and
- exercise caution from WhatsApp messages, that pretend to be a relative, asking for money.

(vi) Stansted Airport

None.

(vii) Other

The Chair reported that the Perry Green & Green Tye Preservation Society are considering planting a tree(s) on Green Tye green in memory of her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and have been invited to produce a proposal including type of tree, location, and design of plaque for approval by Parish Council. They will also be consulting local residents before any decision is made.

Parish Council meetings

A meeting calendar for 2023 had been prepared by the Chair and circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr I Hunt reported that no other similar size parish councils in the district meet in August. Indeed, several do not meet in December too. Whilst the Clerk would need to ensure payments due in August were approved, clearly other parish councils had found ways to adjust their procedures as necessary. If the Parish Council were not to meet in August, then neither would the Planning Committee. Any planning consultation responses would, instead, be drafted and circulated to committee members for approval by email, then submitted to East Herts Council with the decisions formally ratified at the next Planning Committee meeting.

RESOLVED to adopt the circulated 2023 meeting calendar, thereby approving no longer holding a Parish Council meeting in August.

22/165. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

None.

22/166. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

(i) Maltings Lane

A resident from Maltings Lane enquired as to what progress had been made on installing appropriate notices at suitable locations to help stop large over-sized vehicles using Maltings Lane. Each time particularly very large lorries wanted to travel in either direction, their car had to be moved.

The Chair stated that it was HCC Highways intention to install appropriate signage at the top of Stansted Hill (from Green Tye), the top of Maltings Lane (Hadham Cross) and at the top of Danebridge Road to warn drivers of large vehicles, not to enter that roadway.

(ii) Chaldean Estate

The new Farm Manager for the Chaldean Estate introduced himself and stated that he planned to meet the Project Officer for Rights of Way at Herts County Council (HCC) soon, to discuss the upkeep of the various paths and bridleways that are part of the estate.

22/167. HADHAM HOPPER

The Chair reported this was a service originally set up over 20 years ago, to help residents in the hamlets, but in particular, elderly/disabled residents of Broadfield Close and Ferndale get to a Bishop's Stortford supermarket once a week, for their shopping. It has been funded by East Herts Council (EHC) and Bishop's Stortford Town Council public transport department. EHC are pulling their funding from April 2023, and Bishop's Stortford Town Council are currently subsidising it until then. The Town Council is prepared to continue this service, but need an additional £6,000 per annum (to replace the EHC funding), and are looking to this Parish Council to continue the service.

Discussion followed on the need to continue the service and who should pay for it and whether the Parish Council should make a contribution at all. At the last meeting, Cllr I Devonshire (EHC Chair) stated he would look into the issue and the Chair agreed to ask him for an update.

The discussion concluded with the question of whether the Parish Council does indeed have the powers to fund public transport. The Chair agreed to investigate with Herts Association of Town and Parish Councils (HAPTC).

22/168. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED that the accounts, as shown overleaf, be duly authorised for payment. The Chair did not participate in this item or vote due to her declared interest. (Minute ref: 22/159)

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - OCTOBER 2022

| Ref | Payable to | For | Amount |
|----------------|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
| OP188 | Broadmead Leisure Ltd | Quarterly playground inspection (September) | 60.00 |
| OP189 | PA Taylor | Reimburse for removal of rubbish bins | 300.00 |
| OP190 | EHC | Playground inspection report (ROSPA) | 56.80 |
| OP191 | MH Village Hall | D Billson - Pavilion cleaning (Sep) | 80.00 |
| SO | M Windmill | Litter Agency (Oct) | 334.00 |
| DD | PWLB | Loan repayment (Lighting) | 1,367.32 |
| OP192 | FM Forth | Clerk's salary (Oct) | 729.04 |
| Total payments | | | <u>2,927.16</u> |

Payments to be authorised online following the meeting by Cllr K Twort and Cllr S Smith.

(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.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 4 OCTOBER 2022

| | Parish Council £ | Burial Authority £ | Total £ |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Opening balance - 1 April 2022 | 44,158.77 | 29,970.81 | 74,129.58 |
| Income | 68,223.99 | 6,460.00 | 74,683.99 |
| Expenditure | - 31,055.93 | - 2,983.90 | - 34,039.83 |
| Closing balance | <u>81,326.83</u> | <u>33,446.91</u> | <u>114,773.74</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>20,220.00</u> |

(iii) Bank reconciliation

Cllr J Liversage had not undertaken a bank reconciliation recently and would revert to the Clerk.

22/169. PLANNING

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 6th September 2022 were received and the decisions taken were noted.

22/170. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

22/171. CLERK'S INFORMATION

None.

22/172. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday 1st November 2022 at 7:30 pm at the Green Tye Mission Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:38 pm.

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON AS AT 4 OCTOBER 2022

| (Parish Council only) | FULL YEAR | YEAR TO DATE | COMMENT |
|--|------------------|------------------|---------|
| | 2023 | 2023 | |
| | BUDGET £ | ACTUAL £ | |
| INCOME | | | |
| Precept | 42,000.00 | 42,000.00 | |
| Litter Agency | 4,275.00 | 4,884.58 | |
| Pavilion income | 9,660.00 | 4,804.00 | |
| Grant | 300.00 | 172.00 | |
| Other | 60.00 | 3.13 | |
| VAT reclaimed | 5,000.00 | 16,360.28 | |
| TOTAL INCOME | 61,295.00 | 68,223.99 | |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Staff costs | 7,200.00 | 5,312.20 | |
| PWLB loan repayment - Pavilion | 5,387.46 | 2,693.73 | |
| PWLB loan repayment - Parish lights | 2,734.64 | 2,734.64 | |
| 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 | 6,159.42 | |
| Litter Agency | 4,008.00 | 2,338.00 | |
| War memorial (lighting and maintenance) | 805.00 | 121.98 | |
| Pavilion | 4,000.00 | 2,283.40 | |
| 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 | 1,913.41 | |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 58,630.10 | 31,055.93 | |