

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 6th June 2023, in the Much Hadham Village Hall, at 7:38 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

In attendance: F Forth, Clerk and no members of the public.

23/90. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllrs B Bird and S Smith.

23/91. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

The Chair declared an interest in a payment to be approved (agenda item 23/100 (i)) and would therefore not be participating in nor voting on the related motion.

No other declarations were made or applications for dispensations sought.

23/92. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

23/93. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reported that the Annual Parish meeting had been well attended with a number of local community organisations providing information prior to the formal meeting. Two issues emerged from the residents' questions: the Village Hall carpark and Electric Vehicle charging points.

The Chair was thanked for organising the meeting.

23/94. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 16th May 2023 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair after the meeting.

23/95. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

The Chair stated there were no updates. Cllr I Hunt reported that, following a discussion with the Clerk, the fixed asset register was nearing completion.

23/96. MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) Community

Recreation Ground

Cllrs D McDonald and K Twort reported that a Sports Association meeting had taken place. The Chair and Treasurer had changed as Fred Pavey had stepped down. The Parish Council expressed its thanks to Fred for all his hard work with the Sports Association. It was suggested that it would be helpful if the Parish Council were to receive copies of the minutes from the Sports Association meetings.

Cllr D McDonald reported that the funding review was still progressing. Some helpful legal advice had been received, parts of which were being clarified. Once received, discussions will take place on the way forward, including clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the Parish Council and Sports Association respectively.

Pavilion

Cllr D McDonald reported that he was developing a survey to consult residents on possible ways the Pavilion could be used in the future.

The Chair reported that given the current limited use of the Pavilion, together with the football season ending, it had been agreed that the arrangement with the cleaner would be terminated, with effect from the end of June.

Cllr K Twort highlighted that with the cessation of the cleaner, no one would be checking the Pavilion internally. It was suggested that this could be undertaken when the weekly defibrillator check takes place.

In addition, it was also agreed that consideration be given to having a contract cleaner available for one-off pre-hire cleans, advertising the available space and holding future Parish Council meetings there.

Village Hall

Cllr K Hamilton stated that the Hall remains very busy. In addition, she reported that:

- the Charity Commission details have been brought up to date;
- for the 2019 and 2021 accounts, an independent examination had been undertaken as the income exceeded the £25,000 threshold. The accounts and examination reports have been submitted to the Commission. It was noted that the late submission may have a detrimental effect on the Village Hall's ability to secure future grant funding;
- a positive response to the advert for a bookings secretary as 3 offers had been received; and
- the car park will form part of the maintenance and development plans. Re-surfacing will cost approximately £30,000 and the view of the Parish Council was being sought in relation to the following questions:
 - What would the Parish Council's response be to parking problems in the village if the Village Hall were to lock the car park when not in use?
 - Would any measures be needed to prevent anti-social parking?
 - Should parking in the village be regulated in some way?
 - Could parking be improved in some areas by marking spaces etc?

In terms of the car park points, the Chair queried whether the results of the mini car park survey undertaken at the Village Hall AGM were known. Following discussion, it was agreed that the questions would be circulated for discussion at a future meeting.

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

General

On behalf of Cllr S Smith, the Clerk reported that due to the dominating high pressure, a nice period of dry weather and long sunny spells had been experienced since the last meeting. This had further increased the growth on the ground and in hedgerows and generally made it pleasurable for ramblers and horse riders.

Public Rights of Way

On behalf of Cllr S Smith, the Clerk provided the following update:

- Footpath 11 Diversion: pre-order consultation is still underway with the agents seeking to resolve the outstanding objection to the latest published proposal;
- Footpath 20 Bridge Repair: completion is expected to happen in October/November this year. Herts County Council (HCC) will seek to extend the closure of the footpath/bridge beyond the current 6 month period it was intended for;
- PRoW: all clear with no new issues reported or pending. The current trimming and strimming cycle for Much Hadham is almost complete, with just Footpaths 33 and 57

outstanding. If residents are concerned about the state of paths, please report them to HCC via their website and HCC will ensure they are visited in good time; and

- way marker post: is down on Footpath 29 at the edge of the wooded area and needs replacing.

River Ash

Cllr B O'Neill reported that he had written to a number of organisations, for example Thames Water, about ways to monitor the water quality.

(iii) Highways (inc street lighting)

Street lighting

In response to a question from Cllr B O'Neill, the Clerk confirmed that the official transfer of the street lights to Herts County Council had not yet been completed but an update would be sought after the meeting. As a reminder, it was noted that the Parish Council ceased to pay for the maintenance and energy of these lights from 1 April 2022.

Replacement bollards

The Chair reported that Cllr G McAndrew (HCC) had provided a proposal for the replacement of bollards at the Moor Place entrance, near the war memorial. This proposal had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. Whilst not on the agenda, following discussion, it was agreed to report back the Parish Council's view that:

- there should be no bollards on the right hand side;
- the two little existing concrete bollards in front of the gate pillars should remain;
- 4 new cast iron bollards should be installed as outlined in the proposal; and
- a request be made that the area is resurfaced prior to the installation of the replacement bollards.

"20s plenty"

Cllr D McDonald confirmed that the development of a residents' survey was in progress.

(iv) Media

On behalf of Cllr S Smith, the Clerk reported that the new design and refurbishment of the Parish Council website was still in progress.

(v) Security

Cllr J Liversage reported that there had been no reported crimes for May. In addition, she reminded everyone that various types of scams are being used to defraud people of their money so be alert with cold calls. In particular, do not give out banking or personal details.

Cllr J Liversage also highlighted that, given the holiday season, holiday booking frauds are evident. It was noted that people in their 20s and 40s accounted for 44% of reported losses, dispelling the myth that only older people are targeted.

Remember – report all non-emergency matters by calling 101.

(vi) Stansted Airport

Cllr D McDonald reported that he was still waiting for the changes which Stansted Airport propose to make to flight paths to be announced.

(vii) Other

The Jolly Waggoners

Cllr I Hunt reported that permission for the development of 2 houses at the Jolly Waggoners had been refused. The primary reason was that it is an unsustainable location, as defined under the District Plan, as the development would not be on brownfield land or within the village boundary. Development of a greenfield site would be an unacceptable incursion into the countryside. Other reasons for refusal were that no justification had been provided for not meeting the Neighbourhood Plan's policy requirement for smaller housing, and no evidence had been provided that a marketing-based assessment had been undertaken to clearly show that a pub is no longer needed.

Cllr I Hunt also stated it was up to the developer to decide whether to appeal this decision.

Land behind Hill House

Cllr I Hunt reported that the developers for the land behind Hill House had been in touch to seek the Parish Council's view on developing this site. He highlighted that his response had indicated that development of this site was unlikely in the next few years due the Neighbourhood Plan, the recent change in power at East Herts Council and the upcoming review of the District Plan.

In addition, Cllr I Hunt stated that an onsite meeting was proposed by the developers to discuss the maintenance of the site, the boundary fence and a damaged oak tree. Invitations to attend this meeting would be extended to other interested parties.

23/97. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

None.

23/98. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

None.

23/99. GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTATION

Following discussion on some specific points, RESOLVED to approve the Planning Committee Terms of Reference.

23/100. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

The Clerk highlighted that the documentation supporting the payment to the Pavilion cleaner had been annotated to reflect that the payment this month was the last payment being made. In addition, she reported that the invoice she had been waiting for from Much Hadham Landscapes Ltd since the payment approval at the April meeting had been received and the payment would be authorised online after this meeting.

It was noted that information requested from the Sports Association for the grass cutting grant, deferred from the previous meeting (Minute ref: 23/84 (i)) was still outstanding.

RESOLVED that the accounts, as shown below, be duly authorised for payment. The Chair did not participate in this item or vote due to her declared interest. (Minute ref: 23/91)

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - JUNE 2023

Ref	Payable to	For	Amount
OP238	BA ICCM	Membership fee relating to cemetery management	95.00
OP239	Treefusion Ltd	Tree survey update	300.00
OP240	Auditing Solutions	Internal Audit review 2022/23	558.00
OP241	MH Village Hall	Hall hire 23 May 23	21.00
OP242	PA Taylor	Refreshments for Annual Village meeting (23/5/23)	113.98
SO	M Windmill	Litter picking (Jun)	91.00
OP243	D Billson	Pavilion cleaning (Jun)	80.00
OP244	FM Forth	Clerk's salary (Jun)	781.04
Total payments			<u>2,040.02</u>

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

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statement for 2023/24 to date was received. The summary financial position is as below and comparison to the annual budget is attached at Appendix A. No matters were highlighted by the Clerk.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 6 JUNE 2023

	Parish Council £	Burial Authority £	Total £
Opening balance - 1 April 2023	64,058.77	33,469.72	97,528.49
Income	24,260.25	1,715.00	25,975.25
Expenditure	- 14,445.22	- 545.00	- 14,990.22
Closing balance	<u>73,873.80</u>	<u>34,639.72</u>	<u>108,513.52</u>

FUND BALANCES

Barclays Bank Business Reserve Account		47.46
Unity Trust Current Account	113,046.08	
Add: Outstanding deposits	-	
Less: Unpresented items	<u>-4,580.02</u>	108,466.06
Total Fund Balances		<u>108,513.52</u>

Earmarked Reserves are excluded from the Parish Council balance to identify the general balance available for the Parish Council:

Parish Council closing balance		73,873.80
<u>Earmarked Reserves:</u>		
(1) Section 106 receipts for sport or recreation	1,570.00	
(2) Open spaces	9,905.00	11,475.00
General balance available for Parish Council		<u>62,398.80</u>

Note: general balance not to fall below £30,000 unless due to cash flow, or in the case of unexpected events or emergencies.

23/101. PLANNING

RESOLVED to appoint a Cllr K Twort as a substitute member to the Planning Committee with immediate effect.

23/102. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

23/103. CLERK'S INFORMATION

None.

23/104. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday 4th July 2023 at 7:30 pm at the Green Tye Mission Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:55 pm.

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON AS AT 6 JUNE 2023

(Parish Council only)	FULL YEAR	YEAR TO	COMMENT
	2024	DATE	
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	
	£	£	
INCOME			
Precept	43,000.00	21,500.00	
Pavilion income	300.00	300.00	Football sub from 2022/23
Grant	300.00	-	
Other	60.00	-	
VAT reclaimed	5,000.00	2,460.25	
TOTAL INCOME	48,660.00	24,260.25	
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs	9,844.00	2,343.12	
PWLB loan repayment - Pavilion	5,387.46	2,693.73	
PWLB loan repayment - Parish lights	2,734.64	1,367.32	
Administration costs	3,015.00	949.16	
Legal costs	1,000.00	-	
Insurance	2,850.00	1,089.75	
Audit fees	815.00	465.00	
Election expenses	-	-	
Maintenance of open spaces	7,500.00	3,839.27	
Litter	2,000.00	273.00	
War memorial (lighting and maintenance)	1,085.00	1.48	
Pavilion	5,550.00	560.44	
Grants and donations (Section 137 expenditure)	1,000.00	300.00	Grant to PG/GTPS for King's Coronation event (£300)
Sport and recreation grants (Section 106 funded)	-	-	
Revenue/Capital Projects (to be allocated)	5,000.00	-	
VAT	5,000.00	562.95	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	52,781.10	14,445.22	