

## MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025, in Much Hadham Village Hall, at 7:30 pm.

\*Cllr B Bird

Cllr T Bond

\*Cllr I Hunt (Vice Chair)

\*Cllr J Liversage

\*Cllr D McDonald

\*Cllr B O'Neill

\*Cllr S Smith

\*Cllr P Taylor (Chair)

\* denotes present

In attendance: J Westlake OBE, Acting Clerk, and 8 members of the public.

### 25/120. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr T Bond.

### 25/121. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Cllr I Hunt declared an interest in the grant application from Citizens Advice East Herts (agenda item 25/129) and would not be participating in, nor voting on, the related motion.

No other declarations were made or applications for dispensations sought.

### 25/122. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

### 25/123. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcements:

- The Council was sorry to receive Cllr J Pillai's resignation due to work and family commitments. He was thanked for his contribution for which the Council was grateful
- The Councillor vacancy had been publicised and the Council looked forward to hearing from interested parties
- The Staffing Committee recruitment group had done an excellent job in advertising the Parish Clerk vacancy, and the position had been filled.
- The Chair thanked Jackie Westlake who had again volunteered to take the minutes

- The Chair was sorry to have missed Picnic in the Park which appeared to be another successful community event. The Council was grateful to the organisers for their hard work
- Members of the public were in attendance, and were asked to note they could not speak, except during the agenda item, “Residents’ Comments”.

#### 25/124. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and were signed by the Chair.

#### 25/125. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

The Chair reported there had been no recent additions. Any other items would be covered by subsequent agenda items.

#### 25/126. MEMBERS’ REPORTS

##### (i) Community

##### Recreation Ground

Playground equipment: Cllr J Liversage reported she had met a representative from Broadfield Leisure to inspect the playground equipment in advance of Picnic in The Park. Where required for health and safety, the equipment had been repaired and renovated.

Paths: Cllr S Smith reported the path from the Recreation Ground to the High Street had been repaired and the incline modified. The work had been to a high standard.

##### Other:

- (i) Cllr B O’Neill reported that the spiked aeration roller had been uncovered again. It was unclear to whom the roller belonged and there was some discussion as to whether East Herts District Council could take it away or whether it could be scrapped;
- (ii) Cllr D McDonald advised that the pavilion hire terms and conditions had been updated and improved. It was suggested that the Bowls Club would be a more appropriate venue for many hires.

**ACTION:** Cllr T Bond to post the new terms and conditions for the hire of the Pavilion on the Council website on his return.

## Village Hall

Cllr I Hunt noted that, with the resignation of Cllr J Pillai, a vacancy had arisen for a Parish Council-nominated appointment to the Management Committee to join Cllr B O'Neill, the Council's other representative. As Cllr I Hunt was on the Management Committee in a personal capacity, he suggested it would be appropriate for him to be named as the replacement for Cllr J Pillai as a Parish Council-nominated representative.

It was agreed a motion to that effect would come forward at the next Council meeting.

### (ii) Environment (including Public Rights of Way)

Cllr S Smith reported that, due to rising contractor costs, there had been no second cutting and trimming cycle this year. Some budget had been retained to cope with any additional trimming should there be any requests from the public, but with the approach of autumn, the need for this should diminish.

1. **Old Lordship Farm Bridleway 54** – The bridge on this pathway had been completely redecked.
2. **Byway 45 at Bucklers Farm** – Very low hanging branches had been reported. These would be dealt with in the next few days.
3. **Footpath 25, High Street to the Ford** – Very low hanging branches in several places had been reported. These would also be tackled in the next few days.

### (iii) Highways (including "20s plenty")

There was no change to the status of Danebridge Road as previously reported. In addition, the tall, dead tree at the top of Danebridge Road had been reported to the owner who would be dealing with it in due course.

The Chair noted a meeting with Highways was being arranged, and she was endeavouring to find out who had replaced Cllr Graham McAndrew as responsible for HCC Highways' Highway Locality Budget Scheme. The following would be discussed:

- A "hidden turning" sign approaching Station Road
- Double yellow lines on the high street at its junction with Kettle Green Lane
- Danebridge Road subsidence
- The broken fence along the water course on Oudle Lane opposite the Village Hall

### "20s plenty"

Nothing to report. A meeting with Herts County Council was being arranged to understand progress on the issue, although it was clear that Much Hadham was not a candidate as the focus was currently on urban areas.

#### iv) Media

On behalf of Cllr T Bond, the Chair reported the following:

##### **Parish Clerk Recruitment**

- Advert updated and new posters placed in the village notice boards and at Londis
- Facebook posts to all local groups and PC page covering 100k+ followers
- PC website updated
- New advert requested on HAPTC (Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Council) website
- New advert placed on SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) website

##### **Social Media Activity**

Social Media posts covering:

- September PC meeting
- Changes to refuse collections and recycling
- The Mitre Run Road Closures
- Clerk recruitment
- Email Scam Alert
- Assistance for missing food waste collections
- Councillor Vacancy
- Stansted Airport Expansion Objection
- Hill House planning application and update
- Picnic in the Park

##### **Pavilion**

- 2 Aluminium HIRE ME signs had been ordered and attached to outside of Pavilion
- With the help of Cllr D McDonald, a new Pavilion Hire Agreement, Booking Form and Fee Structure had all been completed

##### **MHPC Website**

Posts created:

- Councillor Vacancy
- Stansted Airport Expansion Objection
- September PC meeting
- Mitre Run Road Closure Map and Traffic Order
- General updates and corrections

(v) Security

Important Notice: Join 'Herts Connected': The 'Neighbourhood Alert' that replaced OWL. Visit <https://www.hertsconnected.co.uk/> and sign up. Once signed up you can follow neighbourhood alerts on this website.

Cllr J Liversage reported the following:

Notices

- Members of the rural policing team attended the Picnic in the Park event on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> August to engage with residents
- Hertfordshire Constabulary and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council would be running a month-long programme in October, of Knife Amnesty. The Knife Angel would be hosted in WGC town centre during October to support a programme of intensive anti-violence youth engagement events. Details could be found on Herts Constabulary website
- Older Person Activity (OPALS) event at Wodson Park on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025, 10am -2pm offering advice, information and support on a wide range of services available to reduce the vulnerability of senior citizens. Refreshments will be served and FREE hot meal. Representatives from a variety of agents will be presenting or attending. If residents would like to attend they should contact Terry Morris on 07740670642 or email [terry.morris@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:terry.morris@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

ACTION: Cllr J Liversage to send details to Cllr T Bond on his return for posting on social media

- Hertfordshire Constabulary was seeking a volunteer chaplain to support staff in East Herts. For those interested, please contact [penny.brown@herts.police.uk](mailto:penny.brown@herts.police.uk)
- Hertfordshire Constabulary, with the RSPCA, was reminding dog owners not to leave dogs in cars, which could risk the life of the dog
- Anti-social behaviour, speeding and retail crime were just some of the issues that Neighbourhood Police currently have as priorities

Reported Crime

There was no reported crime in August.

Remember to report all incidents and crime so that resources can be appropriately allocated. For all non-emergency matters please call 101 OR online reporting via <https://www.herts.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

(vi) Stansted Airport

Cllr D McDonald reported the following:

Previously, Stansted Airport had applied to Uttlesford District Council to increase the airport's maximum permitted annual passenger throughput from 43m to 51m, with the construction of 2 new taxiway links to the existing runway and engineering changes to Junction 8 of the M11. This amounted to an increase of around 75% above current actual annual throughput making Stansted the second largest airport in the UK, after Heathrow.

The Parish Council considered the negative impact of the proposed development on the area would significantly outweigh any benefits and resolved to file an objection to the application. Since the July meeting the objection (to be found on the Uttlesford District Council planning website under planning application UTT/25/1542/FUL) had been filed. Summaries of the objection and links to the full text have been reported on the PC website and in the Parish magazine.

Stansted Airport's Noise and Track Keeping Working Group (NTKWG) had finally responded to a message raising queries on a report on aircraft noise that had been prepared on the basis of measurements taken from the garden of Cllr J Liversage. The working group acknowledged the proportion of modern, quieter aircraft operating from the airport had decreased, contrary to one of the key assumptions made in the airports Noise Action Plan (NAP) - that the proportion of quieter aircraft using the airport would increase over time. The reasons given were that the airport was busier; the newer aircraft were slower coming from the Boeing factory than expected (delivery schedule[s] seem to have slipped, which has affected the overall % operating); and newer more efficient aircraft tended to be used on the longer sectors. With the exception of Boeing's delivery problems, Cllr D McDonald suggested those factors were foreseeable when the NAP was drafted.

Information on what steps were being taken to reduce aircraft noise was requested. Cllr D McDonald had been advised "this has been passed to commercial teams to take up with our [airline] operators". He had also asked the NTKWG to explain what pressure, if any, the airport's commercial teams intended to put upon the aircraft operators to switch to quieter aircraft. He would report on any response in due course.

(vii) Other

Significant planning applications

Cllr I Hunt spoke on the following issue.

Two significant planning applications had been made, both outside the village boundary, for (i) development on land to the rear of Hill House (3/12/1097/FUL)

where 31 houses are proposed with an access on to Tower Hill; and (ii) at Little Dolan's Field on Bromley Lane (3/25/1304/OUT) where outline permission was sought for up to 46 houses.

Neither applicant would appear to be holding a public meeting to present their proposals and answer questions so, to fill the void and help assess public opinion, the Parish Council would hold a public meeting at 7.30pm on 25 September in the Village Hall. Details would follow on social media and other channels. At the meeting Cllrs would aim to answer residents' questions as far as possible and give everyone a chance to air their views.

The Parish Council planned to make its decision whether to oppose or support each application at the meeting of its planning committee on 7<sup>th</sup> October. Residents were urged to make their views known to East Herts District Council by sending comments online via the planning portal as soon as possible.

#### 25/127. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

None.

#### 25/128. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

A resident raised the matter of the planning application relating to the land to the rear of Hill House. They expressed concern on the issue of waste water and sewage discharge possibly having access to the River Ash if there were floods.

The same resident reported they had applied to join the Parish Council and was waiting to hear from East Herts District Council regarding their application.

Another resident understood the Hill House development would incorporate underground water storage tanks.

#### 25/129. GRANT APPLICATION

Cllr I Hunt did not participate in this agenda item or vote due to his declared interest (Minute ref: 25/121).

Members were asked to consider and approve a grant request from Citizens Advice East Herts for £500. The Council had last paid £100 to the charity in October 2023. Members agreed this was a worthy cause and noted that no other grant applications had been received this year. The application noted that Much Hadham residents had benefited from Citizens Advice East Herts to the tune of £61k worth of benefits.

RESOLVED to approve the grant of £500 to Citizens Advice East Herts

## 25/130. FINANCIAL

### (i) Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED to retrospectively ratify the payment of accounts made in August.

#### **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - AUGUST 2025**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Payable to</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Amount</b>
OP404	Wight Computers	Remote Support	£45.00
OP405	MH Sports Association:	Recreation Ground grass cutting	£2,520.00
OP407	BA RB Contractors:	Paving slabs at St Andrew's	£225.00
OP408	Cllr T. Bond:	Pavilion hire signs	£26.07
OP409	PKF Littlejohn LLP:	External audit 2024/25	£378.00
OP410	Green Tye Mission Hall	Hall hire 1 July 2025	£34.38
SC	Service charge (Jul)	Bank charges	£6.00

**Total payments** £3,234.45

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

#### **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - SEPTEMBER 2025**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Payable to</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Amount</b>
OP411	Wight Computers	Web hosting & domain renewal	£105.59
OP412	Tom Walker	Cut hedges and strim grass verges	£455.00
OP413	MH Sports Association:	Pavilion Water	£202.82
DD	ICO	Data Protection Fee	£47.00
SO	Mandy Windmill	Litter picking (Sept)	£106.17
SO	Service Charge (Aug)	Bank Charges	£6.00

**Total payments** £922.58

**DD = Direct Debit | SO = Standing Order | OP = Online Payment**

Payments to be authorised online following the meeting by Cllr I Hunt and Cllr B O'Neill.

(ii) Financial Statement

The financial statement for 2025/26 to date was received from Cllr I Hunt. The summary financial position was as below and comparison to the annual budget is attached at Appendix A.

## SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 28 AUGUST 2025

	Parish Council £	Burial Authority £	Total £
Opening balance - 1 April 2025	55,308.40	23,948.58	79,256.98
Income	29,507.27	2,855.00	32,362.27
Expenditure	- 21,115.88	- 1,452.48	- 22,568.36
Closing balance	<u>63,699.79</u>	<u>25,351.10</u>	<u>89,050.89</u>

### FUND BALANCES

Unity Trust Instant Saver			70,782.14
Unity Trust Current Account		19,179.73	
Add: Outstanding deposits		-	
Less: Unpresented items		<u>-910.98</u>	18,268.75
<b>Total Fund Balances</b>			<u><b>89,050.89</b></u>

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

Parish Council closing balance			63,699.79
<u>Earmarked Reserves:</u>			
Section 106 receipts for sport or recreation		1,570.00	1,570.00
General balance available for Parish Council			<u><b>62,129.79</b></u>

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

Cllr I Hunt noted the Council bank balances were too high and it was important that the Council should commit to increase expenditure, particularly on projects that had been agreed. Members noted said projects included the trees on the Recreation Ground, maintenance and other work on the Pavilion, and expenditure on the playground equipment. On the latter item, Cllr J Liversage would meet Broadfield Leisure in September to discuss how to take matters forward.

(iii) Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

Cllr I Hunt noted the external auditors had completed their review of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2025. They reported it was prepared in accordance with proper practices and no other matters gave cause for concern or required to be drawn to the Council's attention.

A "Notice of Conclusion of Audit", which detailed the public rights of inspection, would be published for 14 days from 3 September, and the audit certificate added to the website.

25/131. PLANNING

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 were received and the decisions taken were noted.

25/132. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

25/133. CLERK'S INFORMATION

None.

25/134. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be on Tuesday 7 October 2025 at 7:30 pm at the Much Hadham Village Hall.

Meeting dates for 2026 had been circulated and Councillors were requested to note all dates, including the March meeting, which would be at Green Tye Mission Hall when confirmed.

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There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.17pm.

**BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON AS AT 28 AUGUST 2025**

<b>(Parish Council only)</b>	<b>FULL YEAR</b>	<b>YEAR TO</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>DATE</b>	
	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b>	
		<b>£</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>			
Precept	45,000.00	22,500.00	
Pavilion income	300.00	187.00	
Grant	-	-	
Other	605.00	295.31	Bank interest
VAT reclaimed	7,705.00	6,524.96	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>53,610.00</b>	<b>29,507.27</b>	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Staff costs	10,607.00	3,956.04	
PWLB loan repayment - Pavilion	5,387.46	2,693.73	
PWLB loan repayment - Street lights	2,734.64	1,367.32	
Administration costs	3,830.00	1,893.48	
Legal costs	-	-	
Insurance	3,545.00	1,249.72	
Audit fees	820.00	815.00	
Election expenses	-	-	
Maintenance of open spaces	13,390.00	7,451.10	
War memorial (lighting and maintenance)	1,055.00	-	
Pavilion	3,840.00	401.66	
Grants and donations (Section 137 expenditure)	1,000.00	-	
Sport and recreation grants (Section 106 funded)	-	-	
Replacement bench	-	530.00	For Ash Meadow
Revenue/Capital Projects (to be allocated)	5,000.00	-	
VAT	5,000.00	757.83	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>56,209.10</b>	<b>21,115.88</b>	