

MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 7th October 2025, in Much Hadham Village Hall, at 7.30 pm.

*Cllr B Bird	*Cllr B O'Neill
*Cllr T Bond	*Cllr S Smith
*Cllr I Hunt (Vice Chair)	*Cllr P Taylor (Chair)
Cllr J Liversage	#Cllr J Westlake
*Cllr D McDonald	

* Denotes present and # denotes co-opted at the meeting (Minute ref: 25/137)

In attendance: V Mazza Clerk, and 28 members of the public.

25/135. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr J Liversage.

25/136. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Cllr T Bond declared an interest in a payment to be approved (agenda item 25/145 (i) and would therefore not be participating in or voting on the related motion.

25/137. CO-OPTION OF A PARISH COUNCILLOR

Alan Love and Jackie Westlake were welcomed to the meeting and given an opportunity to introduce themselves. Each candidate was Proposed and Seconded and following the vote, it was RESOLVED to co-opt Jackie Westlake as a Parish Councillor, and she signed the appropriate governance documents with the Clerk.

The Chair welcomed Cllr J Westlake to the Parish Council, and she confirmed she had no interests to declare.

25/138. NOTIFICATIONS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

25/139. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed Cllr Westlake to the Council who, during the absence of a clerk, had very kindly filled in on a temporary basis. The Chair welcomed Victoria Mazza to her first Parish Council meeting as Clerk and RFO and wished her good luck in her role.

The Chair reported that approx. 100 residents had attended the public meeting on Thursday 25th September and voiced many and various views about the planning applications for Land behind Hill House and Little Dolan's Field. These applications would be considered at the Planning Committee meeting which would start at 8.30pm.

The Chair reminded residents new to a PC meeting that they are in attendance and not permitted to speak except during agenda item 25/144, Residents Comments.

25/140. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd September 2025 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and were signed by the Chair.

25/141. REPORTS ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS

The Chair reported there had been no recent additions and the document would be regularly updated and circulated once more, in due course.

25/142. MEMBERS' REPORTS

(i) COMMUNITY

Recreation Ground

Cllr D McDonald reported Brian Ellis has announced that he will be moving on and stepping down as Secretary of the SA. This has caused the SA to review the membership of its committee, and it has mooted the possibility of recruiting (either co-opting or electing - this is not yet clear) someone from the village community. A discussion will be held as to how that might be achieved and indeed whether such an arrangement would be possible under the SA's constitution.

Cllr T Bond reported that the Picnic-in-the-Park had raised £1,800 for the Playground Equipment. The Chair suggested this could be used for new equipment rather than swallowed up in general maintenance. Cllr T Bond also reported that a regular user of the Pavilion had trouble parking at school pickup time, and that he had provided bollards and signage for the user, which had solved the problem.

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.

RESOLVED that Cllr I Hunt join the Much Hadham Village Hall management committee as Parish Council nominated appointee.

(ii) ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY)

Cllr S Smith reported the B1004 at Winding Hill and at its junction with the high street has been subject to traffic controls for the past three weeks while UK Power Networks install a new underground cable between substations near to Old Lordship Farmhouse and New Barns Lane.

Following the recent bout of high winds several trees or large branches have fallen blocking the following byways and bridleways. All have ~~now~~ since been cleared.

1. Junction of BW17 and Little Hadham FP15
2. Byway 45 (Bucklers Farm)
3. Bridleway 28 (Mill Wood)
4. Bridleway 47 (Southend)

A special mention must go to the landowner/farmer responsible for Bridleway 17 who took it upon himself to totally refurbish a section of the path without being required to. Also, to the owner of the field which borders the west side of the Great Hadham Golf Course for completely mowing the entire field which encompasses Bridleways 17 and 45, again without being asked to.

(iii) HIGHWAYS (INCLUDING "20'S PLENTY")

There has been no change to the status of Danebridge Road's dangerous subsidence issue.

"20'S PLENTY"

Nothing to report.

(iv) MEDIA

Cllr T Bond reported that an awareness campaign was launched for two major planning applications – Land to the Rear of Hill House and Little Dolan's Field – aimed at encouraging resident engagement through comments and attendance at the public meeting. Campaign efforts included the delivery of colour flyers to around 580 households, posters on village noticeboards, website banners and news articles, and an anonymous online questionnaire for public input. Thanks to all who supported leaflet distribution.

Social media activity across the Parish Council and Much Hadham Community pages included planning updates, meeting reminders, and promotion of the councillor vacancy. The Council's Facebook page was also updated with new contact details for the New Parish Clerk.

The Parish Council website featured news posts and banners about the planning meeting and councillor vacancy. A wider review is ongoing to ensure compliance with Assertion 10 and to improve accessibility and support for residents.

(v) SECURITY

In the absence of Cllr J Liversage there was no report.

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 that the information from the Airport's Noise and Track Keeping Working Group on the fact that according to recorded data the proportion of noisier aircraft using the airport had increased rather than decreased, contrary to the assumptions made by the Airport in its 2024-2028 Noise Action Plan, had not been released as it was seen as "commercially sensitive".

Cllr D McDonald has now requested details of whatever discussions the Noise and Track Keeping Working Group may have had with the airlines about their plans to introduce quieter aircraft, and if the Working Group is confident on the basis of those discussions that aircraft noise levels will be reduced to the levels targeted within the Noise Action Plan.

(vii) OTHER

Cllr D McDonald reported that the lease documents in relation to the bridge at The Hoops had all now been signed, and, subject to confirmation from the Land Registry, he was very hopeful that he would be able to report the matter finalised at the next meeting,

Cllr I Hunt asked if there was a need to order any highways salt from HCC, but Cllr B O'Neill confirmed he held sufficient quantities, which residents could request from the Clerk, for use on public highways and pavements but not for personal driveways.

25/143. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

EHDC Cllr I Devonshire had sent his apologies, but HCC Cllr Mark Pope was in attendance and introduced himself. He explained he has a Locality Budget of £90,000, the majority of which in the 25/26 budget has been spent but he reported that much needed work to Joyce's Corner in Green Tye would come out of next year's Locality Budget. Cllr I Devonshire was thanked for raising this and other highways issues with Cllr Pope such as the uneven pavement on Tower Hill and road markings at the junction of Danebridge Road and Stansted Hill.

25/144. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

A Resident raised a matter regarding a van driver who failed to observe the 20mph speed limit and nearly collided with several residents including children, outside the school.

A resident followed up with a comment about HGVs using the ford and Malting Lane. A resident there has had a new wall knocked down.

A resident living opposite the Pavilion enquired whether the facility would be brought back into use and sought clarification regarding access to the toilet, noting that the playground is well used.

A Resident commented that following on from the public meeting on 25th September, it was noted that the Almshouses have secondary glazing only at the front. This was highlighted as important in relation to potential noise considerations, should the proposed development behind Hill House proceed. Cllr Hunt confirmed that the information he had provided the resident to the effect that there was also double glazing to the rear, was obtained from an approved planning application, and he expressed thanks for the correction.

25/145. FINANCIAL

(i) Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED that the accounts, as shown below, be duly authorised for payment. Cllr T Bond did not participate in this item or vote due to his declared interest. (Minute ref: 25/136)

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - OCTOBER 2025

Ref	Payable to	For	Amount £
DD	Npower	War Memorial Lighting Jan - Jun (DD debited 26/9/25)	142.07
OP415	MH Village Hall	Public meeting room hire 25 Sept	26.00
OP416	MH Village Hall	PC meetings room hire Jul-Sep	22.00
OP417	Broadmead Leisure	Playground equipment repair	1970.00
OP418	Anchor Press	Leaflet printing	135.00
OP419	Cllr T. Bond	Pavilion Key cut	10.00
OP420	Community Heartbeat Trust	Annual defibrillator support	162.00
OP421	V. Mazza	Salary (Sep)	354.90
SO	M Windmill	Litter Picking (Sep)	106.17
SC	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	6.00
			Total payments <u>£2,934.14</u>

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

Payments to be authorised online following the meeting by Cllr I Hunt and Cllr S Smith.

(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. The cash book and bank account had been reconciled and all agreed.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

	Parish Council £	Burial Authority £	Total £
Opening balance - 1 April 2025	55,308.40	23,948.58	79,256.98
Income	52,689.46	2,855.00	55,544.46
Expenditure	- 24,567.62	- 1,452.48	- 26,020.10
Closing balance	<u>83,430.24</u>	<u>25,351.10</u>	<u>108,781.34</u>

FUND BALANCES

Unity Trust Instant Saver			71,182.33
Unity Trust Current Account		40,391.08	
Add: Outstanding deposits		-	
Less: Unpresented items		<u>-2,792.07</u>	37,599.01
Total Fund Balances			<u>108,781.34</u>

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

Parish Council closing balance			83,430.24
<u>Earmarked Reserves:</u>			
Section 106 receipts for sport or recreation		1,570.00	1,570.00
General balance available for Parish Council			<u>81,860.24</u>

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

(ii) Corporate Purchase Card

Cllr I Hunt explained the requirement for a Debit Card for small purchases by the Clerk and Councillors which would negate the necessity of personal purchases and reclaiming on expenses.

RESOLVED To amend the Financial Regulations, inserting a new paragraph and re-numbering as follows:

“9.1 Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £200 (incl. VAT) unless authorised by council in writing before any order is placed.”

RESOLVED to issue a Unity Trust Bank Corporate Purchase Card to the Clerk and RFO

25/146. PLANNING

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 2nd September 2025 were received and the decisions taken were noted.

25/147. BURIAL AUTHORITY

The minutes of the Burial Authority meeting held on 2nd September 2025 were received and the decisions taken were noted. The Chair apologised that the Appendix A (Financial Statement) had not been included and this would be rectified.

25/148. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

25/149. CLERK'S INFORMATION

The Clerk introduced herself and invited residents to contact her with any concerns. She was looking forward to working with Parish Council and the forthcoming training for her new role

25/150. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be on Tuesday 4 November 2025 at 7.30 pm at the Much Hadham Village Hall, and preceded by a meeting of the Burial Authority at 6.45pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.18pm.

BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

(Parish Council only)	FULL YEAR	YEAR TO DATE	COMMENT
	2025/26 BUDGET £	2025/26 ACTUAL £	
INCOME			
Precept	45,000.00	45,000.00	
Pavilion income	300.00	469.00	
Grant	-	-	
Other	605.00	695.50	Bank interest
VAT reclaimed	7,705.00	6,524.96	
TOTAL INCOME	53,610.00	52,689.46	
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs	10,607.00	4,310.94	
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	2,231.08	
Legal costs	-	-	
Insurance	3,545.00	1,249.72	
Audit fees	820.00	815.00	
Election expenses	-	-	
Maintenance of open spaces	13,390.00	9,133.27	
War memorial (lighting and maintenance)	1,055.00	135.30	
Pavilion	3,840.00	411.66	
Grants and donations (Section 137 expenditure)	1,000.00	500.00	
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	1,189.60	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	56,209.10	24,567.62	