

# Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the thirty-second meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2003 – 2007 Session) held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006 at 8:32 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

**Present:**        **Mr T Skidmore**                    **Chairman**  
                       **Mr M Fairchild**                    )  
                       **Mr T Feather**                        )  
                       **Mr P Foreman**                       ) **Councillors**  
                       **Mr A Morris**                         )  
                       **Mr S Stigwood**                     )

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and 6 members of the public.

- 32.1**        **Absent** Cllr Mrs Gibson.
- 32.2**        **Declarations of interest**    None.
- 32.3**        **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2006 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Fairchild and seconded by Cllr Feather.
- 32.4**        **Matters arising from the minutes**
- 32.4.1**      War Memorial. The Chairman said he expected to try some experimental cleaning soon.
- 32.4.2**      Sale of redundant play apparatus. Cllr Fairchild said that he had raised £40 by selling some of the apparatus. He proposed that the Council add £10 in order to make a donation of £50 to the Bishop’s Stortford Citizens’ Advise Bureau. Agreed.
- 32.5**        **Road works**
- 32.5.1**      Cllr Morris distributed details of outstanding road repairs. He said that he would check if potholes on the Bury Green road had been repaired. A survey of traffic volume and speed through Bury Green would be carried out shortly.
- 32.5.2**      **Herts Transportation Plan – Final version.** Cllr Morris said that the final version of the plan included the Little Hadham bypass as one of three major projects but it also included a statement from the district council objecting to the bypass. The district council said that it wanted the problem of the Little Hadham traffic lights to be considered as part of a more comprehensive scheme for east/west routes west of the M11. The Herts County Council Transportation Panel was going through the exercise of considering all options for solving the traffic light hold-ups so as to be prepared should any funding source become available. Cllr Morris said that the East of England Plan, that was likely to include a bypass, would be completed in the spring of 2007. This would eventually replace the Herts plan.  
 Cllr Stigwood noted that the absence of repairs to Ford Hill was blamed on lack of permission from landowners. However, he understood that the agents for the landowners had not yet been approached.  
 Cllr Stigwood said that repairs to the non-return valve near the Nag’s Head had been due for over two years. Cllr Morris said that it was in the schedule for this year.  
 Cllr Stigwood said that there were many missing or damaged road signs – a 30MPH sign near Halfway House had been missing for over three years.
- 32.5.3**      **Bypass petition as suggested by Cllr Engel.** Cllr Morris listed the main reasons for a bypass: long hold-ups; rat-runs through Bury Green; delays to emergency services; difficult access to the school; dangers to pedestrians near the traffic lights. The Chairman asked if the matter should be dealt with under the Parish Plan. Cllr Fairchild said the Parish Plan should work in tandem with the Council.

Cllr Morris said that the Council should promote a particular plan but this would need expensive technical advice. Cllr Fairchild said a comprehensive plan for the A120 was required so that a bypass did not make things worse for Standon. Cllr Foreman thought that few residents would want to sign a petition for a bypass that did not include a route. The Chairman said further thought was needed. It was agreed that Cllrs Morris and Foreman would consider the matter further. The Clerk said that he would send councillors a copy of Cllr Engel's Assembly presentation.

### **32.6 Flooding of the Ash.**

**32.6.1** Cllr Morris said that he was trying to get progress on local levy funding for flood prevention works. The Environment Agency would have to make a bid.

### **32.7 Village Hall playground**

**32.7.1 EDF works.** Cllr Foreman said that he had spoken to EDF's agent, Mr Fernihough. The delay to the works was blamed on the weather, lack of agreement with other landowners and reorganisation within the engineering department. A possible completion date of June 2006 had been mentioned. Cllr Foreman thought this was not good enough and would press for an earlier date.

**32.7.2 Playground Repairs.** The Chairman said that the Council had agreed at the April meeting to accept a quotation from Mr Mynott for repairs and alterations to the playgrounds at a cost of £2067 + VAT. As part of this work the Ridgeway swings fixing bolts had been checked and Mr Waldock of EHDC had recommended that the swings be removed from the site as they were potentially dangerous.

The Chairman presented a quotation from Bigfoot Play Systems Ltd. for work at the Ridgeway – removing the old swings, supplying and installing 4 swings complete with safety matting and supplying and installing 2 sets of six-aside goal posts. Total cost £5,995.00 + VAT. This would be a total cost of £8,062 + VAT [£1,410.85].

The Chairman proposed that the quotation be accepted.

Cllr Foreman asked for assurance that this was the cheapest quotation. The Chairman said that quotations had been obtained from a number of companies and Bigfoot was very competitive.

The Clerk was concerned that the VAT had to be paid in this financial year but would not be recovered until the next. This might leave the Council with a cash flow problem as, if it were to win a Biffaward, it would have to write a cheque for £5,000 before any grant was paid. Cllr Stigwood suggested that the goal posts could be deferred to another year. The Chairman said that he would discuss the matter with Bigfoot. It was agreed to accept the Bigfoot quotation on the condition that the cash flow problem be resolved.

The Chairman said that he would discuss the plans with Ridgeway residents and would give a presentation with the help of Bigfoot. Cllr Fairchild said that some of the residents had expressed an interest in raising money for playground equipment and might be persuaded to help with the cash flow problem. Cllr Feather suggested that a village dance or disco might raise some money.

### **32.8 Parish Plan**

**32.8.1** Cllr Fairchild said that the original date for introducing the completed plan, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006, was in the school half term when many would be away on holiday. He proposed a change to Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2006. Agreed.

**32.8.2** Cllr Fairchild said that design of the final plan was in progress. Residents would receive an eight page, full colour summary version of the plan. This would be available at the meeting. EHDC had agreed to pay £1,400 to cover the complete cost of printing. Councillors would receive a full version of the plan.

**32.8.3** Cllr Fairchild encouraged people to sign up for the Good Neighbour scheme, sponsored by the CDA for Hertfordshire, either with requests for help or with offers of help.

**32.9 Stansted Airport**

**32.9.1** Cllr Fairchild said that the plans to expand Stansted using the existing runway were before Uttlesford District Council. The proposed increase in passenger numbers to 35 million p.a. when converted to numbers of flights was a 48% increase in traffic movements. Uttlesford District Council was under pressure to scrutinise the plans very closely as this would make Stansted the busiest single runway in the world. Cllr Fairchild would consider the application to see if there were any further actions the Council could take. He would also check the timetable for the application.

**32.10 Chairman's Report**

**32.10.1** The Chairman reported that the appeal inspectors had visited the Barleycroft Recycling works and expected to make their decision in six to eight weeks.

**32.10.2** The Chairman spoke of the Parish Assembly. He was pleased that 62 people had attended. Cllr Fairchild thought that this was largely due to improved publicity.

**32.10.3** The Chairman said that the Council insurance policy was due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006 at a cost of £460.26. The Clerk said that the Council's property was not currently insured as the playground equipment had little value. He had obtained a £180.02 p.a quotation to insure the £13,000 that the Council planned to spend on the playgrounds. This would have a £125 excess. The Council had budgeted £500 for insurance. The Chairman said that only £8,000 was planned to be spent immediately and proposed that property damage cover be taken out for this amount. Agreed.

**32.11 Democratic 10 minutes**

**The meeting closed at 9:38 p.m.**

Mr Wild said that if the Council was short of money for the playground it should not pay £50 to the Citizen's Advice Bureau. The Chairman reminded Mr Wild that the Council was short of money, as it had been obliged to pay almost £800 for a Council bye-election. Mr Wild said that this was a democratic right and could not be avoided. The Clerk said that he advised the Council not to discuss this matter with Mr Wild and that he would write to Mr Wild giving a considered answer to his questions.

A loose manhole cover on the A120 Standon Road was reported. Cllr Morris said that he would investigate.

A noisy teenage party at the village hall was reported. Many neighbours had been disturbed by the noise and vandalism. The Chairman said that the Council was not responsible for the village hall but he understood that the parents of the teenagers had paid for the damage.

**The meeting reopened at 9:44 p.m.**

**32.12 Clerk's Report**

**Financial statement Period ending 2nd May**

**2006**

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£14,565.70
High Rate BP Acc		£4.89
BP Acc		£164.73
Petty cash		-£1.75

**Total £14,733.57**

**Included above**

Rural Action East - final Parish Plan Grant	Received 6/4/06	£1,217.26
Little Hadham Village Hall	Paid S/O 4/4/06	£73.00

**To be approved for payment**

Mr M Dedman Litter picker	(Apr)		£87.36
Mr B Evans	(P/Clerk - (Apr)	£318.82	
	Exp (Apr)	£60.69	
	Float	£50.00	£429.51
Mrs K Green	Grass bins (Apr)		£40.63
HAPTC	Subscription		£472.71
Mr M Fairchild - Assembly refreshments and flyer delivery			£84.19
MoKut - 2 grass cuts	April		£211.50
<b>Total payments</b>			<b>£1,325.90</b>
<b>Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £13,457.67</b>			
Playground		£12,255.62	
Uncommitted		£1,152.05	

- 32.12.1** Resolved to accept payment of accounts. Agreed
- 32.12.2** Resolved to accept accuracy of financial statement. Proposed Cllr Fairchild, seconded Cllr Stigwood. Agreed.
- 32.13** **Planning matters** The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.
- 32.14** **Correspondence** The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant councillors.
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| EHDC Bishop's Stortford Transport Study consultation       | AM |
| EHDC Agendas, minutes and reports                          |    |
| EHDC Bishop's Stortford Community Voice                    | TF |
| CPRE Local Government Frameworks workshop                  | MF |
| HAPTC Newsletters and Council workshop                     | TS |
| Local Council Review magazine                              | TS |
| War Memorial Heritage grants information                   | TS |
| Herts Building Preservation Trust Newsletter and programme | TF |
- 32.15** **Any other business.** Cllr Fairchild reported a letter from a resident of Chapel Lane complaining about the disrepair of the Nag's Head bus shelter. The Chairman said that there were no funds available to pay for repairs and Cllr Stigwood agreed to look into organising a volunteer work party.
- 32.16** **The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9:52 p.m.**
- 32.17** **Date of the next meeting Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2006.**