

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the thirty-fifth meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2003 – 2007 Session) held on Monday 4th September 2006 at 8:40 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present: **Mr T Skidmore** **Chairman**
 Mr M Fairchild)
 Mr T Feather) **Councillors**
 Mr A Morris)

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and **14** members of the public.

35.1 **Absent** Cllr Mrs Gibson, Cllr Foreman [abroad on business] and Cllr Stigwood.

35.2 **Declarations of interest** None.

35.3 **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Monday 3rd July 2006 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Morris and seconded by Cllr Feather.

Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on Thursday 13th April 2006 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Feather and seconded by Cllr Fairchild.

35.4 **Matters arising from the Council minutes**

35.4.1 Bus shelter. Cllr Stigwood was absent. The matter was deferred to the next meeting.

35.5 **Road works**

35.5.1 Cllr Morris reviewed the list of outstanding repairs. All gullies had been inspected and repairs were in the integrated works programme. The traffic light timings had been adjusted again to reduce waiting times on the A120 in an attempt to reduce rat running. Further changes were possible. The road between Cradle End and Bury Green had been resurfaced. Resurfacing of Ford Hill had been delayed for water main works that would close the road for 3 days between October and March. The Chairman enquired about a site meeting with Ms Chrissy Jacques of Herts Highways. Cllr Morris said that this would be after completion of the two road surveys at the traffic lights and Bury Green. The traffic lights had been surveyed over four days though analysis of the data was not complete. He had asked that the current fifteen-second green light timings for side roads be increased to thirty seconds.

35.6 **Flooding of the Ash.**

35.6.1 Cllr Morris reported that the response of the Environment Agency to the Council's request for a bid for local levy funding was much as expected. A business case was being prepared by the Environment Agency for the Regional Flood Defence Committee. However the scheme for the Ash would have low priority and would be unlikely to get funding. There was a need to increase pressure. Cllr Morris said that the conclusions of the river study had just been received and the Council should get sight of the business case when it is complete.

35.7 **Village Hall playground**

35.7.1 **EDF works.** The Clerk reported that the electricity posts and stays near the playground gate had been removed. The workmen had intended to move the pole at the other end of the playground so that the stays were no longer in the field. However the owner of the next field, despite having given permission, had changed his mind. The matter was now with the lawyers. The Clerk said that he would ask EDF again to remove the portable fencing they had left in the playground.

35.7.2 Playground Repairs. The Chairman said that Mr Mynott had completed his work. The soccer shooting goal and basketball hoop and the goal from the Ridgeway had been installed in the village hall playground and the seesaw had been made safe. A new gate had been installed at the Ridgeway and that seesaw had also been made safe.

Bigfoot had installed the new swings and football posts at the Ridgeway.

Installation of the safety mats had been very unsatisfactory and the bill will not be paid until remedial works had been completed satisfactorily. Cllr Fairchild said that the Ridgeway residents were very pleased with the swings and had held a celebratory party.

The Chairman said that he had obtained quotes for picnic table and chairs for both playgrounds for £500. However the Clerk had advised him that this decision should be delayed until later in the year when the Council's finances would be clearer.

The hedges at the playgrounds would be cut at the end of September. An attempt would be made to make the Ridgeway hedge thinner and all hedges lower.

35.8 Parish Plan

35.8.1 Relationship between the Council and the Parish Plan Steering Committee

The Clerk said that the Committee had been set up to produce the Parish Plan and that was now complete. The Committee and its various steering groups now wished to implement the recommendations of the Plan. This would involve taking on risks both financial and involving public liability. The Clerk said that it was important to formalise the status of the committee and its relationship to the Council. As it was, the committee appeared to be a group of individuals who might be seen as jointly responsible if there were any problems.

Many of the committee's plans involved the village hall playground that was the responsibility of the Council. The Council would not be able to delegate this responsibility to an independent steering committee.

The Chairman said that he did not see the Committee as being separate from the Council. Cllr Fairchild said that he was taking advice from the Rural Development Council. It appears that there were no rules. Cllr Fairchild proposed that he and the Chairman should arrange informal meetings between the committee and the councillors to draw up proposals for the Council's consideration. Agreed.

35.8.2 Parish Plan progress. Cllr Fairchild said that the improvements to the playgrounds including removal of the electricity poles were part of the plan to develop a Parish Centre based at the village hall.

Many parishioners had attended the polo match at Bury Green and had had a very enjoyable day.

The Parish Newsletter had been much improved, with increased amounts of local news, thanks to Jan Finn the new editor.

The Parish Fun Day would be held on Sunday 1st October 2006 in the village hall playground. The Steering Committee had held a Bingo fund raising event in the village hall and had raised £400 towards the Fun Day.

Work was proceeding on the Youth Council and the parish website.

Cllr Fairchild said that the Fun Day would be self-funding and that any profits would go to the village hall.

35.8.3 Cllr Fairchild proposed: the Council to hire the village hall playing field, for a nominal rent of £1, to the Parish Plan Steering Committee on Saturday 1st October 2006 for the holding of the Parish Fun Day. The playing field to be closed for normal public access for that day. Agreed.

35.8.4 Housing needs survey. The Chairman presented a draft copy of the survey that had been developed with EHDC. He asked that councillors should contact him with suggestions for any modifications by 15th September 2006. The survey would be sent out on 6th October 2006 and returned to EHDC by the 27th October. The only cost to the Council would be for the distribution of the survey.

Cllr Fairchild said that the survey had been recommended by the Parish Plan Steering Committee despite being rejected by the housing focus group. When the plans for Bury Green farm were being considered there was no evidence showing if there was any local need for affordable housing. Braughing Parish Council had produced a housing design statement and this had been adopted by EHDC as part of their planning guidance.

The Chairman proposed that, subject to minor amendments, the survey should be carried out. Agreed. The Chairman asked the Clerk to send copies of the draft survey to the absent councillors.

35.8.5 Cllr Morris said that Herts CC had agreed to prepare plans for bypasses for Standon and Little Hadham. HCC hoped that BAA would be made to pay for the bypasses as a condition of the approval for the expansion of Stansted Airport. As HCC had agreed to proceed with the planning Cllr Morris proposed that a petition was no longer needed. Agreed.

35.9 Stansted Airport

35.9.1 Cllr Fairchild said that BAA had failed to include details of surface access to the airport in its planning application for expansion using the existing runway. As a result Uttlesford DC might put back its decision on the plans. This would likely result in the planning application going to a public enquiry.

35.9.2 Cllr Fairchild said there were lots of rumours concerning the second runway. The close parallel runways appeared to be BAA's likely option. BAA had been under pressure over its handling of the latest airport security crisis and there had been calls for its monopoly to be broken up. The earliest date for a planning application for the second runway would be August 2007.

35.10 Chairman's Report

35.10.1 The Chairman spoke of a request for nominations for Community Police Safety Awards. There were no local nominations.

35.10.2 The Police had offered matched funding for a local CSO. However the Council would be unable to afford £10,000 per year.

35.10.3 The Chairman spoke of the overgrown parcel of land next to the Ridgeway playground. The Clerk said that it belonged to EHDC and that they had recently mowed the area. The Chairman proposed that the state of the area be kept under review. Agreed.

35.11 Democratic 10 minutes

The meeting closed at 9:36 p.m.

Mr Pearson said that the gully under the C15 near the village hall was still causing problems. The pipe filled with silt washed off the field and Herts Highways had washed about a tonne and a half of mud and gravel out of the pipe and left it in the ditch. If a bypass were to be built south of the traffic lights the flooding would get much worse. Cllr Morris said that at his meeting with Mr Kyan of Herts Highways he had been told that the pipes would be sorted out.

Mrs Kain asked if there had to be a minimum number of responses to the housing survey for its results to be accepted. The Chairman said that he would find out. Cllr Fairchild said that over 60% had responded to the Parish plan questionnaire and it was hoped that a similar system would be used to distribute the survey.

Mrs Kain asked if the Council would have a say as to where any extra housing might go. The Chairman said the Council would have no control over siting but its views would be taken into account as with any other planning matter.

Someone reported that graffiti had been painted on the apparatus recently installed in the village hall playground. Cllr Fairchild said that vandals had chipped paint from the new goals at the Ridgeway. Deliberate damage to new apparatus might cause the Council to halt progress on playground improvements. He called upon local young people to keep watch.

The meeting reopened at 9:55 p.m.

35.12 Clerk's Report

35.12.1 Financial statement

Period ending 4th September 2006

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£17,195.82
High Rate BP Acc		£4.92
BP Acc		£165.06
Petty cash		-£5.40
	Total	£17,360.40

Included above

Parish Plan - Lunch refreshments, etc	Paid 15/7/06	£123.44
Herts CC - Stationary	Paid 15/7/06	£14.92
Parish Plan - printing summary report	Paid 15/7/06	£470.00
Parish Plan - printing full report	Paid 31/7/06	£105.50
MoKut - 2 cuts in July	Paid 7/8/06	£193.88

Uncleared cheque

Leventhorpe School - printing	Paid 31/7/06	£29.79
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Received

EHDC - Production Parish Plan report	Received 25/7/06	£1,323.00
EHDC - Litter picker salary	Received 1/8/06	£1,075.36
EHDC - Production Parish Plan report	Received 15/8/06	£77.00

New transactions

Received

EDF - Bury Green wayleave		£5.57
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To be approved for payment

Mr M Dedman Litter picker	(August)		£98.63
Mr B Evans	(P/Clerk - (August)	£321.82	
	Float	£50.00	
	Exp (July & August)	£19.05	£390.87
Mrs K Green	Grass bins (August)		£40.63
Mrs E Booth	PO cleaning		£30.00
CDA for Herts	Annual subscription		£30.00
MoKut grass cutting August			£105.75

Total payments £695.88

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £16,690.30

Playground	£12,400.00
Uncommitted	£4,320.09

- 35.12.2** Resolved to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.
- 35.12.3** Resolved to accept accuracy of financial statement. Proposed Cllr Feather, seconded Cllr Fairchild. Agreed.
- 35.12.4** The Clerk reported that he was in negotiations with the owners of a lorry that had badly damaged the wall surrounding the war memorial. The quotation for the repair was £2,500. The Clerk thanked the Snellings who lived nearby who had called the police to the incident and had taken a number of photographs that had provided useful evidence.
- 34.12** **Planning matters.** The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.
- 34.13** **Correspondence.** The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant councillors
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| EHDC Consultation on Licensing Principles under the Gaming Act | AM |
| EHDC Best Value Performance Plan | MF |
| EHDC Sawbridgeworth Community Voice minutes and agenda | TF |
| HCC Corporate Plan | MF |
| Herts Police Authority – Policing Plan | TF |
| SSE Newsletter | MF |
| Herts Local History Newsletter | TF |
| HAPTC Newsletter and Annual Report | TS |
| Herts Building Preservation Trust Newsletter | TF |
| CPRE Herts Yearbook | TF |
| CRPE Fieldwork magazine | TF/MF |
| CDA for Herts Newsletter | MF |
| Environment Agency River Ash flood risk management strategy study Phase 2a | AM |
| Council Clerks Direct magazine | TS |
- 34.14** **Any other business.** None.
- 34.15** **The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 10:01 p.m.**
- 34.16** **Date of the next meeting Monday 2nd October 2006.**