

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the thirty-sixth meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2003 – 2007 Session) held on Monday 2nd October 2006 at 8:26 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 13 members of the public.

- 36.1** **Absent** Cllr Mrs Gibson.
- 36.2** **Declarations of interest** None.
- 36.3** **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Monday 4th September 2006 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Fairchild and seconded by Cllr Feather.
- 36.4** **Matters arising from the Council minutes**
- 36.4.1** Bus shelter. Cllr Stigwood said that he was having difficulty obtaining cedar shingles for the roof. He hoped to get the maintenance, including repairs to the seat and painting the shelter with preservative, completed soon.
- 36.5** **Road works**
- 36.5.1** Cllr Morris reported that the rainwater drains on the C15 from the traffic lights to the war memorial would be repaired taking about five weeks starting in October. The road would be closed for much of this time. Cllr Morris said that this should solve most of the flooding caused by heavy rain. There would be a site meeting between Herts Highways, Cllr Morris, the Clerk and some local residents on Wednesday 4th October 2006 to discuss the planned work.
- 36.5.2** Cllr Morris said that the analysis of the traffic surveys for the traffic lights and Bury Green / Cradle End were still awaited. Cllr Fairchild said that a number of his neighbours had reported the excessive speed of vehicles using Ford Hill as a rat run. Drivers seemed to have little regard to the safety of other traffic and pedestrians.
- 36.6** **Village Hall playground**
- 36.6.1** **Biffaward** The Chairman said that he was optimistic that there would be a satisfactory result to the Council's grant application. The Council was sending a cheque for £5,102 as a third party contribution. The money would be refunded if no grant were awarded.
- 36.6.2** **EDF works.** The Clerk reported that there had been no progress on moving the electricity pole at the northern end on the playground. The Chairman asked the Clerk to write to EDF reminding them that this was part of the agreement made when the Council allowed the siting of the transformer in the playground.
- 36.6.3** **Work in the playgrounds** The Chairman reported that Bigfoot had not carried out the remedial work on the Ridgeway playground. He asked the Clerk to make enquires. The bill would not be paid until the work had been completed satisfactorily.
- 36.6.4** **Hedge cutting** The Clerk reported that Mokut had cut the playground hedges as closely as their equipment would allow. Mr Taylor, who had complained about the over long hedges restricting car parking space at the Ridgeway, had declared himself satisfied with the cutting. Cllr Fairchild said that several parents were reluctant to allow their children to use the village hall playground, as the hedge was

too high to see over. Mokut had been asked to quote for lowering the height of the hedge. Cllr Fairchild expected complaints, as the hedge would be unsightly for some time. The Clerk said that the Council had never formally agreed to the lowering of the hedge. Cllr Fairchild proposed: The hedge bordering the C15 and the village hall playground be lowered so that it can be seen over by people standing on the C15 pavement. Agreed. Cllr Fairchild said that if the Council were to spend considerable sums on playground equipment, it would be much more secure if it were clearly in view.

- 36.6.5** The Chairman said that existing plans and quotations for playground improvements needed to be updated. He proposed: a work party be set up to consider plans for the playgrounds and to produce a recommendation for developments including a plan showing the proposed new layout of equipment in the playgrounds. The Chairman suggested that the work party should include: himself; Mr Trevor Waldock [EHDC]; Cllr Fairchild; Cllr Foreman; Ms Tracy Northcote; the Clerk. Agreed. Cllr Foreman said that the original submission for the Biffaward said that the Council would invite a representative of Biffa. The Chairman said that he would study the conditions for the award. The Clerk said that the work party would have to produce a full business plan for the project including competitive quotations.

36.7 Parish Plan

- 36.7.1 Progress report** Cllr Fairchild said that a number of alternative sources of funding were being looked into.

- 36.7.2 Parish Fun Day** Cllr Fairchild reported on a very successful first Fun Day. There had been a very happy atmosphere with lots of laughter. He was sure that the day would help reinforce the community spirit. There had been many helpers. 500 programmes had been printed and sold out – Cllr Fairchild estimated that 600 to 700 people had attended. Over £2,000 had been collected which, after expenses, should allow a significant contribution to the village hall. Cllr Fairchild said that the Parish Plan Group had received £800 from the Stansted Community Trust that distributes fines levied on airplanes exceeding the noise limits. The money would be spent on a marquee and kiosk for future years.

The Chairman congratulated Cllr Fairchild and his many workers.

- 36.7.3 Housing needs survey** The Chairman said that minor amendments had been made to the questionnaire following comments from councillors. The questionnaire was expected to be distributed on 23rd October and returned by 24th November 2006. There would be a meeting of councillors and EHDC in December to discuss the results. EHDC considered a 30% return sufficient to make the survey meaningful. The Council would not be bound by the results.

Cllr Foreman asked how specifically the survey would affect planning in the parish. If a developer were to carefully devise plans that exactly fitted the conclusions of the housing needs survey, would that developer get preferential treatment? The Chairman said that the survey would show if any housing were needed and if so, of which type – e.g. low cost. The results of the survey could become part of the district council's supplementary planning guidance. The design statement produced by Broughting PC was now part of the District Plan. Cllr Foreman said that advice would be needed in drawing up any guidance. The Chairman said that this would be one of the things discussed at the meeting with EHDC in December.

- 36.7.4 Relationship between the Council and the Parish Plan Steering Committee**

Cllr Fairchild said that the Clerk had produced a list describing a number of alternative forms the committee might adopt. Cllr Fairchild said that there was an urgent need to formalise the position. He would prefer the group to be a trust separate from the Council though it could report to it. The Chairman asked who

would be responsible if the group were to get into trouble. Cllr Fairchild said that the trust would have to take out insurance. Cllr Fairchild said that he would urgently work to set up a formal organisation.

36.8 **Stansted Airport**

36.8.1 Cllr Fairchild said that SSE calendars and Christmas cards were on sale.

36.8.2 Cllr Fairchild said that UDC had postponed a decision on the expansion of Stansted using the existing runway until 29th November 2006 due to the lack of information about surface transport. There were fears that UDC might lower the bar on conditions to be met and so allow growth by stealth. The council had been reminded of the high court ruling, following the judicial review, that they could refuse the application if environmental concerns were not met.

36.9 **Chairman's Report**

36.9.1 The Chairman spoke of the EHDC Rural Parish Conference 23rd November 2006, Cottered. He invited councillors to attend. Cllr Fairchild said that he had agreed to speak on creating a parish plan, especially funding.

36.10 **Democratic 10 minutes**

The meeting closed at 9:17 p.m.

Mr Pearson said that Herts Highways had not given clear answers to concerns raised by local people concerning the drainage works on the C15. In particular access to residents, school buses and the bus service for other residents, especially the elderly. He was also concerned that the planned works did not address the main cause of the flooding – soil washed from fields opposite the village hall blocking the pipes. Some way had to be found to reduce soil entering the pipe in the first place. Any soil that got into the pipes should be capable of being flushed out with out blocking the ditch.

Mr Oliver asked about rubbish being thrown into the bed of the Ash. Cllr Morris said that he would investigate.

Mrs Ward asked what could be done to stop diverted traffic using the Cradle End / Bury Green road during the road works. The Chairman said that he had sympathy but the work had to be done.

The meeting reopened at 9:23 p.m.

36.11 **Clerk's Report**

36.11.1 **Financial statement**

Period ending 2nd October 2006

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£16,491.72
High Rate BP Acc		£4.94
BP Acc		£165.06
Petty cash		£33.45

Total **£16,695.17**

To be approved for payment

Mr M Dedman Litter picker	(September)		£89.61
Mr B Evans	(P/Clerk - (September)	£321.82	
	Exp (September)	£20.64	£342.46
Mrs K Green	Grass bins (September)		£40.63
EHDC	Allotment rent		£20.00
Mokut	3 cuts September + hedges		£552.25
CPRE	Annual subscription		£26.00
Biffa Waste Services 10% third party contribution			£5,102.00

Total payments **£6,172.95**

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £10,522.22

Playground	£7,298.00
Uncommitted	£3,224.22

- 36.11.2** Resolved to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.
- 36.11.3** Resolved to accept accuracy of financial statement. Proposed Cllr Feather, seconded Cllr Fairchild. Agreed.
- 36.11.4** The Clerk reported that the lorry owner's insurance company had accepted liability for the damage to the wall around the war memorial and that a loss adjuster would visit shortly.
- 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 Agendas and minutes of Council and committee meetings | |
| NALC Annual magazine | MF |
| Urbanscape hardware catalogue | MF |
| DEFRA Rural Services Review magazine | TS |
| Clerks and Councils Direct magazine | TS |
| SSE Newsletter | MF |
- 34.14** **Any other business.**
- 34.14.2** The Chairman said that Rev Chris Boulton would hold the Parish memorial service at the war memorial on Sunday 12th November 2006.
- 34.14.3** Cllr Morris reported that Herts CC had cancelled some school buses meaning that children had to use service buses. These buses were now overcrowded with some children having to stand. An extra bus had been laid on. Parents were concerned that Herts CC would not answer phone calls and had failed to reply to letters. The Chairman asked Mr Nigel Pay to draft a letter for the Clerk to send to Herts CC. Cllr Fairchild noted that one member of the parish owned a red double-decker bus that might be provide a solution.
- 34.15** **The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9:46 p.m.**
- 34.16** **Date of the next meeting Monday 6th November 2006.**