

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the first meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2007 – 2011 Session) held on Wednesday 9th May 2007 at 8:32 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present:	Mr M Fairchild	Chairman
	Mr N Darken)
	Mr A Morris)
	Mrs C Piccolo) Councillors
	Mr J Purvis)
	Mr T Skidmore)
	Mr G Williamson)

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

1.1 Absent None.

1.2 Declarations of interest None.

1.3 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 2nd April 2007 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Skidmore and seconded by Cllr Morris.

1.4 Matters arising from the Council minutes

1.4.4 Grass at Bury Green. Cllr Darken said that the Green had been cut and was looking presentable. The Chairman said that Mr Roat of Romehold had requested that he be allowed to clear some scrub from around the access road to the new houses at Bury Green Farm. Cllr Darken agreed to discuss the matter with Mr Roat to find exactly what he required. Cllr Darken said that many at the Green were shocked to see the clearance of the hedging between Bury Green Farmhouse and the Green. He thought the clearance had spoiled the ambiance of the Green. The scrub had helped to shield the development at the site from the rest of the Green. The Clerk would find out if the clearance was permitted.

1.4.5 Sound amplification at Council meetings. Cllr Williamson agreed to discuss with Mr Jon Fardell if it was possible to improve the audibility of Council meetings for the public.

1.4.6 Uneven football pitch at the village hall playground. Cllr Williamson said that he had spoken to Mr Stephen Stigwood who would investigate whether the recent rain had made the ground suitable for rolling. The Clerk said that he would supply a key to the field.

1.5 Road works

1.5.4 Road repairs Cllr Morris said that the Council request for a safety audit on the A120 had been refused as these were only carried out when there had been significant alterations to a road. However Ms Jacques of Herts Highways supported the village school's campaign to have flashing warning lights installed outside the school. Cllr Skidmore said he had hoped that an audit would recommend the installation of flashing speed-warning signs to reduce speeding. Cllr Morris said that the speed restriction areas had been extended relatively recently though the traffic lights appeared to encourage speeding. He said that he would like the Council to clarify exactly which parts of the A120 were of most concern. Cllr Morris noted that there was a particularly dangerous point on the Standon Road where the view was restricted by the brow of the hill. The Chairman asked Cllr Morris to obtain the latest data on traffic speed and volume. Cllr Darken said that the road was very dangerous and turning out of Cradle End was particularly hazardous. The Chairman asked if Cllrs Morris and Darken would inspect the A120 and report to the Council what possible

safety measures could be installed. Cllr Morris noted that a number of road signs had disappeared – possibly stolen.

1.5.5 Meeting with Herts Highways to discuss flooding on the C15 near the village hall. Cllr Morris said that a date was still awaited. The Chairman asked Cllr Morris to contact him if nothing had been heard by 23rd May when he would follow the matter up.

1.5.6 Bypass. The Chairman said that the Council's response had been sent to HCC. He noted that County Cllr Engel had spoken at the Stansted Airport Consultative Committee meeting on surface access to the Airport about the 'onion skin' approach to planning in which it sought planning gains layer by layer. He doubted that BAA was committed to a Little Hadham bypass, which should be integral to any road scheme. Cllr Skidmore said that the next stage in the bypass process would be the meeting of the HCC Transportation Panel at the start of July 2007 when they would recommend a preferred route.

1.6 Village Hall playground

1.6.4 Application for a Partnership Investment Fund grant from EHDC. The Chairman said the Biffaward of £45,000 would pay for the new play apparatus. However there were a number of other costs such as installing tarmac for the basketball net, lowering the hedge and replacing the fence and gates. EHDC had informed the Council that there was no money left in the Partnership Investment Fund. However the Council's application had been passed to the Capital Grant Fund where it was said to be 'competitive'. The result of the application would be announced in early July 2007.

The Clerk said that in order to complete the tarmac before the installation of the new play equipment he could find the necessary £4,000 from the budget if the Council were to defer most planned expenditure such as repairs to the war memorial, donations to the school and new notice boards. However the Clerk said that if the Council did this it might not receive a grant, as the work would already have been done. Cllr Morris said that planned expenditure should go ahead as already agreed – a view other councillors endorsed. The Chairman asked Cllr Purvis to consult with SMP as to whether putting in the tarmac after the equipment would be a problem. Cllr Mrs Piccolo would consult the young people and families in the parish via organisers of the Youth Council project about the options if funding were insufficient.

1.6.5 Re-equipment of the Village Hall playground by SMP Playgrounds Ltd. Cllr Skidmore said that official notification of the contract had been received and the new equipment would be on site at the start of June 2007. Installation would take about six weeks. He proposed that the additional work be carried out and the tarmac installed when funds were available. The Chairman said that he would find out when a Capital Grant would be available if it were to be awarded. The basketball net would be turned round anyway.

Cllr Skidmore said that he needed to check the final layout with Mr Trevor Waldock of EHDC and to check there was six feet clearance for MoKut to cut the grass. Mr Stephen Stigwood had agreed to use his equipment to remove the old apparatus. The Chairman said that he would investigate lowering the hedge, using volunteers. Cllr Williamson said that he would investigate whether a flail mower could be used. Cllrs Skidmore, Purvis and Williamson would consider the progress of the work.

1.7 Parish Plan

1.7.4 The Chairman said that plans for Youth Council were slowly progressing with three mothers and families helping to set it up. There would be a meeting for young people on 6th June 2007 when the SMP presentation would be shown. Cllr Mrs Piccolo agreed to liaise with Mrs Kate Pay on setting up the Council.

- 1.7.5** The Chairman said that the Village Guide should be ready within a few weeks after some village walks had been added. Ms Hilary Davies, who was producing it, hoped that it would be funded by advertising. Cllr Mrs Piccolo asked who would organise its distribution to new residents. The Chairman said that was still to be decided.
- 1.7.6** The Chairman said that the Internet Café had held four weekly lessons and he hoped the numbers would gradually increase.
- 1.7.7** The Parish Plan Group will be meeting to organise a family event in or near the Millennium Wood at Bury Green in July.
- 1.7.8 Housing needs survey.** Cllr Skidmore said that councillors had received the analysis of the survey from Ms Sally Smallwood of EHDC. The principle conclusion was that there was a need for four affordable homes for rent in the parish. Cllr Skidmore asked that Councillors make their views known to him in the next week. Ms Smallwood had offered to give a presentation, with one of her colleagues, at a Council meeting. Cllr Morris asked if a need would exist had the survey not been carried out. The Chairman said that to buy the average house in the area, people would need to borrow thirteen times the average income in East Herts. Even the affordable houses at Bury Green Farm would be too expensive for the average income. It was agreed to invite Ms Smallwood to talk at the July 2007 meeting.

1.8 Stansted Airport

- 1.8.4** The Chairman said that there was consultation on surface access to the expanded airport – mainly involving the M11. He would prepare a draft response for the next meeting.
- 1.8.5** The Chairman said that he was representing the Council at the enquiry into the planning application for the expansion of Stansted Airport using the existing runway and he had circulated a draft of his submission to councillors. He said that he had concentrated on local issues as the Parish Plan had shown the airport to be a major concern of parishioners. Cllr Fairchild said people wanted to preserve the area's rural nature and there were worries that the airport expansion would increase traffic and urbanisation. The proposed bypass could become congested with increased airport traffic, forcing vehicles back on to the old A120, perpetuating the problem of rat running. People's perception of the closeness of the airport had changed over the years and they were more concerned at the increase in noise generated by the expansion of Stansted. Local people were also concerned about the influence of air travel on global warming. A recent informal survey through the Parish News had shown that BAA had failed to influence local opinion. Cllr Morris said that the parish was affected not only by aircraft taking off but also by landing aircraft when the wind was in the opposite direction. The Chairman proposed that his draft response form the basis of his evidence to the enquiry. Agreed. The Chairman asked councillors to contact him within the next week if they had any further views.
The Chairman proposed that he should write to the Minister of State Ruth Kelly asking her to confirm that she would accept the decision of the inquiry what ever it was. Agreed.

1.9 Chairman's report.

- 1.9.4 Parish Assembly.** The Chairman said that over sixty people had attended. There had been a good range of speakers and a friendly atmosphere.
- 1.9.5 District Elections.** The Chairman said that Cllr Tindale had been re-elected for the Little Hadham ward with 469 votes to 217 for Mr McPherson – a turnout of 37%.
- 1.9.6 Timing of the democratic ten minutes.** The Chairman proposed that there should be a time at the start of the Council meeting during which members of the public could comment on items on the agenda. This would allow councillors to take these views

into account when making their decisions. There would be a shorter period near the end of the meeting for members of the public to make more general points. Agreed.

1.10 Democratic 10 minutes

The meeting closed at 9:43 p.m.

A resident agreed that the blind summit on the Standon Road when approaching Little Hadham was a real danger. She also said that a number of heavy lorries were using Ford Hill early in the morning leaving a lot of mud on the road and making turning out of side drives very dangerous. Cllr Williamson asked if Ford Hill could have a weight restriction. This would be registered on GPS maps. The Chairman asked Cllrs Morris and Williamson if they could investigate what signs might be used to deter lorries. Cllr Morris hoped that rat running would be reduced now the traffic lights appeared to be keeping waiting times down.

A resident said that at the bypass exhibition it was said that most of the A120 traffic was going to and from Bishop's Stortford and surrounding villages. Cllr Morris said that he would try to obtain the data.

A resident asked if a sign could be put up near the school to encourage people to turn off their engines. The Chairman said that he would put a note in the Newsletter so that local people at least could be asked to do so.

The meeting reopened at 9:55 p.m.

1.11 Clerk's Report

1.11.4 Financial statement

Period ending 9th May 2007

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£11,738.81
High Rate BP Acc		£5.00
BP Acc		£166.32
Petty cash		£12.35
	Total	£11,922.48

Included above

Receipt

EHDC	half precept	£5,403.00
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Payment

L.H. Village Hall	Hall rent	£73.00
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Uncleared cheque

Chq. 101293	Médecins Sans Frontières	£25.00
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To be approved for payment

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - (April)	£267.70	
	Exp (April)	£51.20	
	Float	£50.00	£368.90
Mrs K Green	Grass bins (April)	£41.85	
	Mower petrol	£4.75	£46.60
Miss A Windmill	Litter picking (April)		£89.61
Little Hadham Village Hall	Hire of Hall		£65.00
Allianz Cornhill Insurance plc	Insurance		£572.28
HAPTC	Annual subscription		£488.26
Mr M Fairchild	Assembly refreshments		£134.87
Herts Assoc Local History	Subscription		£14.00
Mrs Jann Finn	Extra Newsletter page		£30.00
	Total payments		£1,809.52

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £10137.96

1.11.5 Resolved to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

- 1.11.6** Resolved to accept accuracy of financial statement. Proposed Cllr Darken, seconded Cllr Fairchild. Agreed.
- 1.11.7** Resolved to accept the Financial Statement for 2006/07 and to sign the accounts book. Agreed.
- 1.11.8** Resolved that the signatories for Council cheques and for dealing with the Council account at Barclays Bank be Cllrs Fairchild, Skidmore and Williamson. Agreed.
- 1.12 Planning matters.** The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.
- 1.13 Correspondence.** The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant councillors
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| HAPTC Newsletter | TS/MF |
| NALC Magazine | MF |
| EHDC The School Travel Plan | CP |
| Various local history documents | |
| EHDC Draft Supplementary Planning Document – affordable housing | TS |
| Charity Commission Newsletter | MF |
| Clerk & Councils Direct magazine | MF |
- 1.14 Any other business.**
- 1.14.4** Cllr Darken said that he had heard no opposition in Bury Green to calling the row of new houses on the Bury Green Farm site ‘Farm Close’.
- 1.14.5** Cllr Purvis said that there was some concern in Westland Green about the upkeep of the Green and he would like it to be on the agenda for the next meeting.
- 1.15 Date of the next meeting Wednesday 9th May 2007.**
- 1.16 The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 10:05 p.m.**