

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2007 – 2011 Session) held on Tuesday 4th December 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 **10** members of the public.

7.1 Public session. There were no comments on agenda items.

7.2 Absent – None.

7.3 Declarations of interest None.

7.4 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 5th November 2007 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Williamson and seconded by Cllr Skidmore.

7.5 Matters arising from the Council minutes

7.5.1 Developments at Church End Farm and the former Hadham Water site.

Cllr Skidmore said that Mr Allingham of EHC planning enforcement had visited the farm and spoken to the owners and to the proprietors of a number of small businesses at the site. Mr Allingham said that the small businesses were in compliance with existing planning consents. The advertisements on the A120 do not have permission but an application was expected from the landowners so EHC would take no action at present. The consent for an extension to the former Hadham Water factory could not be revoked. The owners have permission to reroute part of Church End Lane though they must first enlarge the bell mouth of the lane onto the A120. Several councillors expressed concern about the potential enlargement of the industrial estate at the site. The Chairman said that a bypass might make access to the site easier – the extra traffic generated cancelling out the benefits of the bypass. Cllr Skidmore proposed that he should try to arrange an informal meeting with the owners of Church End Farm to discuss their plans for the future of the site. Agreed.

7.5.2 Consultation on reorganisation of the local health service. Cllr Skidmore reported on a meeting he had attended on 19th November 2007 at which the results of a questionnaire on future developments were revealed. He noted that out of 500,000 households only 6,000 questionnaires had been returned. The consultation concerned hospitals and emergency care centres and transport to these facilities. Cllr Skidmore said that he would circulate details of the main proposals and proposed that he should attend the next meeting on 19th December 2007. Agreed.

7.6 Possible locations for gypsy and traveller sites.

The Chairman said that the Council had received a detailed reply to the letter sent to EHC. It appears that Scott Wilson had visited none of the proposed sites. EHC did not believe that property prices would be affected by the report. There could be no blight compensation until formal proposals had been laid. In spring 2008, EERA would decide on the number of sites for East Herts though it would be the responsibility of EHC to identify the locations of the sites. The Council would not have the opportunity to formally comment on sites until 2009. The final decision on the location of sites would be made by EERA though the minister of state had the right to overrule the decision.

The Chairman said that the views of gypsies and travellers in the eastern region had been taken into account though he noted the comment of Mr Oliver Heald MP that East Herts was not on their traditional routes.

The Chairman welcomed a number of local people who would join a group to consider how best to resist the creation of a site in the parish. The work of the group would include studying the Scott Wilson report in detail, considering possible sites not listed in the report and whether and when to organise a petition. The Chairman noted the support offered to the Council by Cllrs Bayes and Engel and by Oliver Heald MP. Cllr Darken reported on a police liaison meeting he had recently attended. Several people had commented on the greater degree of criminal activity associated with such sites. Witnesses of such crimes were advised not to intervene but to send for the police, as there had been a number of acts of violence.

The Chairman said that he would keep the Council informed on developments at the next meeting and through the Newsletter.

The Chairman reported on a paper from the Clerk discussing whether the group working on the matter should be a Council committee, a Council work party or a group independent of the Council. He said that he had come to the view that an independent group would have greater flexibility – the Parish Plan Group had worked successfully independent of the Council.

Cllr Morris thought that an independent group would have more local support – residents would get to know the group members. From the floor a number of people named as members of the group agreed that an independent group was the best option. The Chairman proposed that the group should be independent of the Council. Agreed. Cllr Piccolo asked if police kept statistics of crimes related to sites. The Chairman said that he would find out if there were any correlation between crime rates and the presence of gypsy and traveller sites.

7.7 Road works

7.7.1 Cllr Morris said that there was little to report though patching of the C15 was proceeding.

7.7.2 The Chairman said that HCC was consulting on a policy for naming roads. He noted that it would only apply to new developments.

7.8 Village Hall playground

7.8.1 Hedge cutting for the two playgrounds. The Clerk said that he had arranged with Mokut to make the usual annual cut of the hedges at the two playgrounds. This would cost £200 + VAT. Cllr Purvis proposed that the Council accept a quote for lowering the hedge near the new play apparatus. The quote was for £320 to £360 + VAT depending on how the rubbish was disposed of. Agreed.

7.8.2 Further works in the village hall playground. Cllr Williamson said that he had received few responses to the Newsletter questionnaire asking for views on how best to spend available funds and he encouraged more to reply.

7.9 Fair trade. Cllr Morris proposed that he should apply to the Fair Trades Council on the Council's behalf to become a Fair Trade Parish. Agreed.

Cllr Morris said that he would consult local businesses and the school to encourage the use of Fair Trade products and he would invite a spokesman to talk to the Council. The drive to take action must come from the community.

Cllr Morris said that there would be no cost to the Council. He said that it might help identify fair trade products at the local Farmers' Market.

7.10 Parish plan The Chairman said that the Group needed to review progress in the eighteen months since the plan was published. They would seek feedback via the Newsletter – what aspects had been successful and what was still required. Most projects were complete or had been started. The Group may produce a parish plan update in 2008 to review progress and move the programme forward a further 2/3 years. Referring to the Village Centre proposal, the Chairman said that, while the

playground refurbishment had been largely completed, the various component parts of the concept needed pulling together. He would discuss these with the Village Hall committee as well as the proposed shared gateway and new notice board. The Chairman said that the Group had a small starter fund to help get future projects started.

7.11 Stansted Airport. The Chairman said that there had been few new developments although there had been some confusion caused by the minister of state as to whether the second runway at Stansted would be abandoned in favour of a new runway at Heathrow.

7.12 Chairman's report.

7.12.1 Spending for the financial year 2008/09.

The Chairman presented a document earlier circulated by the Clerk detailing expenditure for the following financial year. A Council work party had agreed the document. The Chairman said that there was a surplus of about £4,500. Expenditure of this sum would be agreed at the next meeting following the results of the Newsletter questionnaire.

Annual expenditure had increased, notably insurance for the new playground, and also for extra grass cutting because of faster growth, likely to be a result of global warming.

The Chairman proposed that the budget for 2008/09 be accepted with the exception of the spending of £4,500 that would be decided later. Agreed.

7.12.2 Precept for 2008/09 The Chairman said that increases in Council spending showed a need for a significant increase to the precept. He proposed that the precept for 2008/09 be £11,885. Agreed.

The Chairman noted that this would be an increase of 10%. However, as the parish tax base had increased for 2007/08, residents would see an average increase of 5.5% each year for 2007/08 and for 2008/09.

7.12.3 Request for a donation from the East Herts Citizens' Advice Service. The Chairman proposed that the Council should make no donation as the service was supported by EHC. Agreed.

7.12.4 Consultation on changes to the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England.

The Chairman presented a draft response to the consultation. He said that the consultation concerned the Habitat Directive of the EU but he welcomed the opportunity to make further objections to Harlow North.

He noted that supply and treatment of clean water for Harlow North had not been adequately considered and that the proposed expansion to Rye Meads would result in the loss of an ecologically important area. He also noted that the proposed development would damage the Hunsdon Meads SSSI and the Lee Valley RAMSAR site.

The Chairman proposed that the draft be sent as the official Council response. Agreed.

7.12.5 The Chairman noted that CPRE was asking for local photographs for a calendar that had a 'wow' or 'gosh' factor. He encouraged residents to send in photos.

7.12.6 The Chairman noted a number of schemes offering funding to local communities. Cllr Morris said that he would investigate a road safety grant for delivering reductions in road causality figures.

Cllr Skidmore said he would investigate funding to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

7.12.7 Cllr Morris noted that town residents were provided with brown bins for collecting compostable waste. He proposed that he should draft a letter to EHC asking why such bins were not available in the villages. Agreed.

7.13 Democratic 10 minutes**The meeting closed at 9:55 p.m.**

A resident said that in the 80s there were rules concerning the distance between homes and stables and gypsy and traveller sites. The Chairman asked him to send details.

A resident said that he had details of problems faced by residents of Cottenham because of a local gypsy and traveller site. He would circulate them to the Council.

The meeting reopened at 9:03 p.m.**7.14 Clerk's Report****7.14.1 Financial statement****Period ending 4th December 2007**

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Barclay's Bank C/Acc | £10,274.97 |
| High Rate BP Acc | £5.06 |
| BP Acc | £167.52 |
| Petty cash | £45.06 |

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Total | £10,492.61 |
|--------------|-------------------|

To be approved for payment

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Mr B Evans | P/Clerk - (Nov+Dec) | £537.04 | |
| | Exp (Nov+Dec) | £37.12 | £574.16 |
| Mrs K Green | Grass bins (Nov+Dec) | | £83.70 |
| Miss A Windmill | Litter picking (Nov+Dec) | | £187.30 |
| Little Hadham School | Donation [agreed 5/11/07] | | £600.00 |
| Stop Stanstead Expansion | Donation [agreed 5/11/07] | | £100.00 |
| Mrs E Booth | PO Cleaning | | £30.00 |
| Soc Local Council Clerks | Subscription | | £91.00 |
| HM Revenue & Customs | PAYE | | £241.56 |
| Little Hadham PCC | Copying | £24.20 | |
| | Extra Newsletter page | £35.00 | £59.20 |

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Total payments | £1,966.92 |
|-----------------------|------------------|

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £8,525.69

7.14.2 Resolved to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

7.14.3 Resolved to accept accuracy of financial statement. Proposed Cllr Morris, seconded Cllr Skidmore. Agreed.

7.15 Planning matters. The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.

7.16 Correspondence. The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant councillors

CPRE Countryside Voice magazine **JP/CP**

CPRE Herts Newsletter

JP/CP

HAPTC Newsletter

MF/GW

Clerks and Councils Direct magazine

MF

SSE Newsletter

MF

EHC Code of Conduct Training

ALL

7.17 Any other business. None.

7.18 Date of the next meeting Tuesday 5th February 2008.

7.19 The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 10:03 p.m.