

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the eighth meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2007 – 2011 Session) held on Tuesday 5th February 2008 at 8:24 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

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

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and **24** members of the public including County Councillor Mrs Mary Bayes.

- 8.1 Public session.** The Chairman said that later in the meeting there would be a report from the group organising resistance to the creation of a gypsy and traveller site in the parish. A resident asked if EHC representatives had visited the sites. The Chairman thought they had not though they may have viewed the sites from the road. Cllr Skidmore said that the group was considering how to question the validity of the work done so far.
- 8.2 Absent** Cllr Darken – resigned.
- 8.3 Declarations of interest** Cllrs Fairchild, Skidmore and Mrs Piccolo said they had an interest in the gypsy and traveller sites as they were members of the group against the sites.
- 8.4 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Tuesday 4th December 2007 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Purvis and seconded by Cllr Morris.
- 8.5 Matters arising from the Council minutes**
- 8.5.1 Consultation on reorganisation of the local health service.** Cllr Skidmore reported on a web site, ‘Delivering Quality Healthcare in Hertfordshire’. This concerned decisions taken by the health boards of East and West Herts on 19th December 2007. The HCC Health Scrutiny Committee would consider these decisions. Some of the main features were: acute services were to be centralised at the Lister Hospital, Stevenage; local General Hospitals were to be developed in Welwyn Garden City and Hemel Hempstead. Princess Alexander Hospital in Harlow and Addenbrookes in Cambridge would continue to serve East Herts but were not part of the Hertfordshire consultation; urgent care centres were to be established across the area, including at Herts and Essex Hospital, Bishop’s Stortford; more work was to be done on transport and ambulance planning – £2.75M had been identified for this. More work had to be done on GP out of hours services. No changes were planned for the local GP services serving Little Hadham. The proposed increase of funding for East and North Herts PCT areas will be from £101M in 07/08 to £124M in 013/014. Cllr Skidmore proposed the Council note the report. Agreed.
- 8.5.2 Possible locations for gypsy and traveller sites.**
 The Chairman said that an organisation was being established as a local preservation society to campaign against the sites. The EERA had decided that each authority should find 15 new pitches despite EHC preference for expanding existing sites. The main grounds for objection would be; increased volume and danger of traffic using the site; the effect on services like water, drainage and sewerage; the effect on local services such as the school and police. The naming of the sites could result in a blighting of the area until sites were formally chosen. The Chairman said that the Scott Wilson report would not be subject to consultation. There would be

consultation on possible sites early in 2009. The campaign group would advertise in the Parish News for members and subscriptions – it would need at least £15,000. The Chairman said that the group would have greater freedom by being independent of the Council.

The group would give regular reports through the Parish News and at Council meetings.

The Chairman proposed that the Council should support the general aim of the group of resisting the creation of a gypsy and traveller site within the parish. Agreed.

Cllr Skidmore asked about EERA consultation. The Chairman said that the Council would respond as would the campaign group, other local organisations and individual residents. The consultation would presumably include the principles behind the selection of the chosen site. Cllr Morris said that 15 sites meant 15 pitches each of which would presumably be supplied with water, electricity and mains drainage.

From the floor, a resident asked about the views of Romehold. The Chairman said that one of the partners of Romehold was a member of the group. The group was considering whether, and when to hire professional help.

4 member of the public left after this item.

8.6 Road works

8.6.1 Cllr Morris said that the A120 was to be resurfaced from Standon to Bishop's Stortford – there would be a three day weight restriction some time between 7th February and 31st March. The Chairman asked if lorries might be tempted to use the Cradle End rat run. Cllr Morris said it was possible as the suggested diversion was very long.

8.6.2 Traffic calming measure near Little Hadham School. Cllr Morris said that, following a School petition, new signage was to be installed near the school. This would include 'Slow' road markings, verge hazard markings, clearer entrance markings and new speed limit signs. Missing signs would be replaced. There would be no amber flashing lights as there was no pavement on the opposite side of the road.

8.6.3 Traffic calming for the road from Cradle End via Bury Green, Ford Hill, Chapel Lane and Westland Green to Wellpond Green. Cllr Morris reported that HCC had agreed to carry out a feasibility study of traffic calming works provided the Council made a contribution of £5,000. This was clearly too much to pay from the precept but there were a number of possible grants available. Cllr Williamson asked if works would be carried out if the money were found. Cllr Morris thought they would. The Chairman thought traffic restrictions were unlikely as these would affect local people. He thought the main problem was traffic speed. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said that the period between 7:30 and 8:45 a.m. was the most dangerous. The Chairman said that HCC had earmarked money for Braughing roads but they too had to raise £5,000. From the floor HCC Cllr Mary Bayes said that Millfield Lane would be included in a feasibility study. She said that she would investigate any possible sources of funding. She thought the Highways Panel offer was a real step forward.

Cllr Mrs Piccolo said that a speed limit was unlikely – people adjust their speed to the road conditions. She thought raising £5,000 would show a real commitment by the community. The Chairman asked Cllr Morris to liaise with Cllr Mrs Bayes over funding.

8.7 Village Hall playground

8.7.1 Hedge cutting for the two playgrounds. The Clerk said that Mokut would cut the playground hedges on Monday 11th February and that he would instruct the contractor to lower the village hall playground hedge soon after that.

8.7.2 Further works in the village hall playground. Cllr Williamson said that the response to the questionnaire had been very disappointing. It had become clear that some ideas, such as a tennis court, were too expensive. There was a general feeling that something should be done about the war memorial. Cllr Williamson proposed

that the Council should spend about £2,600 for lowering the hedge, new fence and gates, moving the basket ball frame, new litter bins and new notice boards.

The Clerk said that this would not leave enough in the Council account to pay for any overrun on the war memorial costs. Cllr Williamson proposed that the expenditure on the playground should be reduced to about £1,300. Half of this would be paid for by the remaining Biffaward grant and the other by the EHC capital grant. Other works for the playground could be considered when the war memorial costs were clear.

Agreed. Cllr Williamson said that moving the basketball frame and the notice boards would have to wait.

8.7.3 Plans for repairing the war memorial surround wall. The Chairman said that he had an offer of surplus granite kerbstones. Including installation they would cost £2,500. There would be a meeting soon with the contractor and Herts Highways to discuss if traffic lights were necessary and whether the cost would have to be borne by the Council. The Clerk asked if planning permission was needed. The Chairman thought that was the case and, as it was a conservation area, the conservation officer would have to be consulted. The Chairman proposed that no decision on works should be made until the full costs had been estimated. Agreed,

8.8 Parish plan The Chairman said that the Parish News questionnaire on the results of the plan had received 9 responses to date. The group would be meeting shortly to review progress and to consider future plans and sources of funding.

8.9 Stansted Airport. The Chairman said the result of the enquiry on airport expansion would be published at Easter. He expected BAA to apply for planning permission for the second runway very soon. The Chairman noted that BAA was heavily in debt as was the company that owned it. He also noted that Ryanair was forecasting a 50% fall in its profits.

8.10 Chairman's report.

8.10.1 HCC Consultation on waste Development documents. The Chairman said that all Herts landfill sites would be full by 2009. New waste treatment and recycling facilities were needed. Continuing landfill was a last resort. The Chairman proposed that the Council should seek the advice of Cllr Tindale. Agreed. The Chairman asked the Clerk to invite Cllr Tindale to talk at the next meeting.

8.10.2 Dept. for Communities and Local Government. Consultation on Orders and Regulations relating to the conduct of local authority members in England.

The Chairman proposed that the Council make no formal response. Agreed.

8.10.3 Herts village of year. The Chairman said that the competition was now about quality of life. He proposed that the Parish Plan Group be asked to investigate. Agreed.

8.10.4 Police – invitation to seminar on rural policing. The Chairman said that he would attend. He noted that crime figures in Herts had fallen more than in the rest of the country. However drug offences were up 22% – more than the rest of the country.

8.10.5 The Chairman said that Cllr Nigel Darken had tendered his resignation from the Council due to pressure of work. The Chairman said that the resignation was accepted with regret and he thanked Cllr Darken for his time and effort.

The Chairman said that he would like to involve a young person in Parish Council matters. Cllrs Williamson and Mrs Piccolo said that this should be weighed against the need for a representative for Bury Green.

The Clerk said that talk of who might be co-opted was premature as a notice had to be displayed for 14 working days notifying the vacancy. If there was no response, standing orders described the procedure to be followed for co-opting a member.

Cllr Mrs Piccolo agreed to take temporary responsibility for Bury Green and Police matters.

8.11 Democratic 10 minutes**The meeting closed at 9:37 p.m.**

A resident asked how long it would take for the results of a rat run feasibility study to be complete if the £5,000 could be found. He was concerned that the building of the bypass could make it irrelevant. Cllr Mrs Bayes said that a bypass might take 8 or 9 years and something had to be done in the mean time. The Chairman said that the Council would be sure of what would be achieved and the time scale before any money was paid.

The meeting reopened at 9:40 p.m.**8.12 Clerk's Report****8.12.1 Financial statement****Period ending 5th February 2008**

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£8,932.05
High Rate BP Acc		£5.09
BP Acc		£168.19
Petty cash		£10.26
	Total	£9,115.59

Uncleared Cheque

Little Hadham School		£600.00
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To be approved for payment

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - (Nov+Dec)	£273.69	
	Exp (Nov+Dec)	£24.70	
	Float	£50.00	£348.39
Mrs K Green	Grass bins (Jan)		£41.85
Miss A Windmill	Litter picking (Jan)		£93.65
EHC - playground inspection			£105.75
Mr T Skidmore -Taxi to attend NHS Quality Health Conf.			£29.00
Mr M Fairchild - materials war memorial repairs			£10.21
	Total payments		£628.85

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £7,936.74

8.12.2 Resolved to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

8.12.3 Resolved to accept accuracy of financial statement. Proposed Cllr Purvis, seconded Cllr Skidmore. Agreed.

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

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

CDA for Herts Newsletter	MF
Herts Assoc Local History newsletter	JP
Commission for Local Communities	JP
CPRE Fieldwork magazine	TS/CP
Herts Building Preservation Trust newsletter	TS/CP/GW
Clerks & Councils Direct magazine	MF
NALC Newsletter	MF
HAPTC newsletters	AM/MF

8.15 Any other business. None.

8.16 Date of the next meeting Tuesday 4th March 2008.

8.17 The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9:45 p.m.