

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the ninth meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2007 – 2011 Session) held on Tuesday 4th March 2008 at 8:46 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 **10** members of the public.

9.1 Public session.

A resident asked if Millfield Lane would be included in any measures to deal with rat runs. The Chairman said that he had been assured by Cllr Mrs Bayes that it would. A resident referred to the planning application for Ashcroft Farm. In the past the school had been offered land for a driveway to give access to a new parking space at the back of the school. Access to the existing car park at the front of the school was very dangerous at the start and end of school. No response had been received from the school. Cllr Skidmore said that he would make enquiries.

A resident referred to the planning application for Lower Farm, Bury Green. Cllr Skidmore said that he would show him the plans.

9.2 Absent Cllr Darken – resigned.

9.3 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 society that opposed the sites.

9.4 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 5th February 2007 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Piccolo and seconded by Cllr Morris.

9.5 Matters arising from the Council minutes

9.5.1 HCC Consultation on waste Development.

The Chairman said that the County was trying to deal with disposal problems. He had spoken to Cllr Tindale who had said that EHC had already responded. The Chairman said that he had also spoken to an officer at EHC who thought there was no need for the Council to respond – there were no tips planned near the parish. The Chairman said that brown bins would be delivered to residents from 7th April. From early 2009, once new disposal facilities were in place, brown bins could be used for food and cardboard as well as organic garden waste. From that time, black and brown bins would be collected on alternate weeks. In the short term, black bins would continue to be collected weekly and brown bins – for garden waste only – would be collected fortnightly. In the short term brown bins were for garden waste only.

9.5.2 Possible locations for gypsy and traveller sites.

The Chairman reminded residents that the sites named in the report had not been chosen they were only possible sites. The Little Hadham Conservation Society was asking residents to take the matter seriously – all should take an active role. Every household was to be asked to join the society and make a donation of at least £10 per household. If all houses did so almost £5,000 would be raised. Legal advice was very expensive. The Council was also strongly against the creation of sites in the parish. The Chairman spoke of the blight on the appearance of countryside and of the increased traffic. He said that there was likely to be a blight on house prices – potential buyers might be dissuaded by the possibility of a site.

The Chairman said that consultation on the EERA policy on Gypsy and Traveller sites started on 25th Feb and would end on 16th May. There would be a public enquiry later in 2008. The results of the enquiry would be published in spring 2009 when the site locations would be identified.

The Chairman said that the society committee would meet on 11th March to agree an action plan. They would probably call a public meeting for late March or early April – possibly jointly with the Council.

The Council would probably agree its response at the April meeting. The Eastern Region had to find 1200 extra pitches by 2011 – 15 extra in East Herts. This amounted to about 20 extra caravans. After this the number of sites would have to increase by about 3% p.a. There were plans for rural exception areas and encroachment onto the Green Belt. EERA had decided against increasing the size of existing sites.

The Chairman said the possible residents of the sites were defined as ‘persons of nomadic habit who had ceased to travel’. There was also a need to clarify whether transit sites were needed. There was some talk of sustainability studies. The Eastern Region already had more Gypsy and Traveller sites than other regions – many of them illegal.

The Chairman said that, with great difficulty, he had eventually found the Internet site giving a link to the response form. He said that it was important to understand the consultation process in great detail. The Chairman noted that the open-ended nature of the questions would allow a wide-ranging response. He asked the Clerk to prepare an email with links to the relevant pages on the Go East website for circulation to residents.

9.6 Road works

9.6.1 Cllr Morris said that new signs near the village school were being installed and resurfacing of the A120 and work to the Albury Road carriageway were imminent. Work on the Chapel Lane drains was due. Cllr Purvis noted that Chapel Lane west of New Road had become badly damaged. Deep ruts had been created by vehicles pulling off the narrow road to allow oncoming traffic to pass. Cllr Morris said that he would investigate.

9.6.2 Bypass – possible slip roads to the Albury Road. Cllr Skidmore said that a local farmer had suggested these to enable traffic to reach Albury and the Pelhams directly and thus avoid having to drive through the Little Hadham traffic lights. He said that he had spoken to Cllr Mrs Bayes who had told him that it was one of several matters being considered by the design team.

9.6.3 Traffic calming for the road from Cradle End via Bury Green, Ford Hill, Chapel Lane and Westland Green to Wellpond Green. Cllr Morris said there had been little progress on raising money for the investigation. The Chairman said residents needed reassurance that work would be carried out if the money were raised. Cllr Morris agreed to draft a letter to Herts Highways. Cllr Mrs Piccolo asked Cllr Morris if he could see a possible solution? Cllr Morris said an enquiry might speed work on the bypass although the community needed to find a practical solution in the meantime – people with open minds were needed to consider the problem. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said that she had spoken to Ms Jacques of Herts Highways who had seemed rather negative about finding a practical solution.

9.7 Village Hall playground The Chairman said that the lowering of the village hall playground hedge was due shortly. The new gates and litterbins were awaiting installation. The last £690 of Biffaward money had been received.

9.8 Repairs to the war memorial surround wall. The Chairman said that the offer of cheap kerbstones was not now available and Herts Highways had decided that a traffic control system would need to be in place during any work on the wall. These two facts meant that the cost of the repair was now beyond the Council’s funds. The

Council would have to find some other way to deal with the problem – probably by diy repairs.

- 9.9 Parish plan** The Chairman said that only a disappointing 20 replies had been received to the questionnaire. Residents had generally thought the Parish Plan worthwhile. The Fun Day particularly impressed them together with the re-equipped playing field and the improved newsletter. Most people still had their copy of the Plan. However, people were not sure if the parish was any friendlier. Many offered to help though not all had given their address.

The Parish Plan Group expected to shortly announce two public events and to publish the Parish Welcome Pack and Parish Guide.

9.10 Stansted Airport.

9.10.1 Council response to NATS proposed changes to flight paths and ‘stacking’ areas

The Chairman said that the Council would have to respond to the proposed new flight paths by mid May 2008. He recommended delaying the response to allow time for the information to be absorbed. NATS was trying to avoid low flying over towns and villages, to allow for traffic expansion and burn less fuel by reducing delays and so cause less pollution. He said that new technology allowed planes to keep to the centre of flight paths. This improved things for many but could make things worse for those below the flight paths. Stansted would have two dedicated stacking areas – Luton would have one. Stansted flight paths were routed under Luton paths so planes were to be kept at lower altitudes for longer. The Chairman said there was a need to investigate whether approach paths could be higher although NATS was encouraging gradual decent which was better at keeping down noise.

Cllr Morris thought the new landing flight paths were a little further away from the parish. The proposals made no reference to the expansion of Heathrow. However, as the scheme is expected to last over twenty years, expansion of all London airports must be taken into account.

The Chairman proposed that a layman's explanation be included in the parish News. Agreed.

Cllr Morris was concerned planes would become more frequent and that, in future, there would be more large transatlantic planes that were much noisier. The new scheme was due to come into operation by early 2009 that suggested that the matter had already decided. Cllr Morris thought very strong protests were needed – in particular Bishop’s Stortford was likely to be seriously affected.

9.11 Chairman’s report.

9.11.1 Parish Assembly Thursday 17th April 2008.

The Chairman proposed that the following should be invited to speak: Mr Max Ashley [parish charities]; Herts Police; Mrs Liz Stockley [village school]; the Conservation Soc.; Mike Smith [Parish Plan]; Cllr Tindale [EHC] and Cllr Mrs Bayes [HCC]. Agreed.

9.11.2 Fly tipping

The Chairman said that when legal dumping was expensive there was a temptation to dump rubbish in country lanes. Oil and bike parts recently dumped in the parish had cost EHC £500 to remove. Police asked residents to note registration numbers and any writing on vehicles and report them to the non-urgent police number. Any dumps of chemicals should be reported using 999.

9.12 Democratic 10 minutes

The meeting closed at 9:50 p.m.

A resident spoke about people using noisy cross-country motorbikes on Hoecroft Lane. The noise was very loud and persistent. The police had been informed but they had a resource problem meaning they were unable to respond with any urgency. The Chairman said that he would bring the matter up at the Assembly.

9.13 The meeting reopened at 9:54 p.m.

9.14 Clerk's Report**9.14.1 Financial statement****Period ending 4th March 2008**

Barclay's Bank C/Acc	£6,937.96
High Rate BP Acc	£5.09
BP Acc	£168.19
Petty cash	£49.30

Total	£7,160.54
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Included above

Earth Anchors - litter bins for playground [paid 13.2.08]	£568.70
Howe Fencing - gates and fencing for playground [paid 13.2.08]	£622.75

Uncleared Cheque

Miss A Windmill	£93.65
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Receipts

Allotment rent	£24.00
Rural Action East - final part of Biffaward	£690.27

Total receipts	£714.27
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To be approved for payment

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - (Feb)	£273.47	
	Exp (Feb)	£18.56	£292.03
Mrs K Green	Grass bins (Feb)		£41.85
Miss A Windmill	Litter picking (Feb)		£93.65

Total payments	£427.53
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Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £7,353.63

9.14.2 Resolved to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

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

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

Correspondence. The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant councillors

CPRE Herts Newsletter

MF

CDA for Herts playground training application

JP/GW

NALC magazine

MF

SSE newsletters

MF

9.16 Any other business. None.

9.17 Date of the next meeting Tuesday 1st April 2008.

9.18 The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9:59 p.m.