

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the Eighteenth meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2007 – 2011 Session) held on Tuesday 3rd February 2009 at 9:24 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)
	Mrs M Wilkinson)
	Mr G Williamson)

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and **18** members of the public.

18.1 Public session.

A resident asked if plans for the bypass had been set back by EERA's failure to make it a priority. Cllr Morris said he thought not – Cllr Bayes had said that she was seeking other funding sources.

18.2 Absent None.

18.3 Declarations of interest. Cllrs Fairchild, Skidmore and Mrs Piccolo declared an interest in Gypsy and Traveller sites, as they were members of the Little Hadham Conservation Society.

18.4 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 2nd December 2008 having been previously circulated were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Piccolo and seconded by Cllr Purvis.

18.5 Matters arising from the Council minutes. There were no matters arising.

18.6 Footpaths in the parish. To consider whether the Council should join the Parish Paths Partnership.

The Chairman proposed that the Council join the Parish paths partnership [P3] and that Cllr Mrs Wilkinson should liaise with local volunteers. Agreed. Cllr Fairchild said that the first task would be to conduct a survey of parish footpaths. From the floor Ms Veneta Aldous volunteered to act as parish co-ordinator for the scheme.

18.7 Possible locations for gypsy and traveller sites.

18.7.1 Public enquiry into the EERA policy on gypsy and traveller sites. The Chairman said the report had been published. It rejected proposals from EHC and LHCS among others that new sites should be concentrated in areas of the region where there was an obvious need for extra places. The report recommended that the number of sites in East Herts be increased from the 15 extra pitches originally proposed by EERA to 20 extra pitches. The report was not concerned with specific sites. The Chairman said he thought the government was likely to endorse the report. There would be more consultation before EERA published a list of proposed locations. LHCS hoped to consult with EHC and other bodies involved in the issue.

18.8 Road works.

18.8.1 Little Hadham bypass. Response of EERA to Herts Highways application for funding. Cllr Purvis read a paper that had been circulated to councillors [appendix 1]. He said that Cllr Bayes continued to investigate other sources of funding and that preparation planning for the bypass continued.

18.8.2 Near miss road accident near the A120 traffic lights. Cllr Skidmore reported that a vehicle had driven on the wrong side of the road to pass a queue of traffic waiting in the C15 at the traffic lights. It had narrowly missed a mother and her three small children. The police had been informed. The Chairman asked for an update at the next meeting.

18.9 Police matters.

18.9.1 Community police meeting. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson reported on a poorly attended meeting. Insp Kenney had talked about the Rural Information Gathering System [RIGS] in which local people used pagers to inform others of suspicious behaviour. Residents could phone the police to request a pager. The Chairman asked Cllr Mrs Wilkinson to write a note for the Parish News. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said that the police were targeting hare coursing, as this was often associated with other crime. The police could supply 'Rural Watch' signs and they had shed alarms for sale. The next meeting was on 21st April 2009.

18.9.2 Draft Policing Plan. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said the plan had been published and was available on the Herts police website. The main objectives were to make residents be and feel safe in their communities, to reduce crime and to target known offenders such as drug dealers. She said that the police were calling for an increase in the police element of the council tax. Without this they will have to reduce staff numbers. The Chairman asked Cllr Wilkinson to invite PC Fegan to talk to the Council and to interpret the plan as it affected local people.

18.10 Sustainable Community Strategy.

18.10.1 The Chairman read a report [Appendix 2] on a seminar attended by Cllrs Morris, Mrs Williamson, Skidmore and Fairchild. The Chairman said that he hoped that many of the provisions would be included in the next edition of the Parish Plan.

18.10.2 Thermal imaging survey. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said that '3Veg', a group of people from Standon, Broughing and Little Hadham, was seeking funding for a thermal imaging camera. The camera would be used to reveal heat loss from local homes. The residents would be given advice on how to make their homes more energy efficient. The Chairman proposed that the Council should encourage the group. Agreed.

18.11 Dilapidated seat and notice board at Westland Green. The Clerk said that any money from the Parish Paths Partnership scheme would not be available in the near future. Cllr Purvis proposed that he use the timber already purchased to make a repair to the seat. Agreed.

18.12 Playgrounds

18.12.1 Recommendations following the annual playground inspections. Cllr Williamson said that a small number of repairs needed to be made at the Ridgeway including trimming a tree and repairing a fence. Volunteers would complete the work when the weather improved.

18.13 Stansted Airport.

18.13.1 Hearing into plans for the enquiry into the planning application for the expansion of the airport using a second runway. The Chairman said it was likely that the inspector would recommend that the enquiry should take a year rather than the 6 months proposed by the government. He said there was pressure from community groups to delay the enquiry for 6 months to allow for the sale of the

airport. He noted that the drop in passenger numbers during the recession had put projected increases in passenger numbers back about 4 years.

18.13.2 New flight paths. Cllr Morris said that he continued to lobby local parish councils to object to the proposed flight paths. NATS was still considering possible alterations to its plans.

18.14 Chairman's report.

18.15 Civic awards. The Chairman said that EHC had invited councils to recommend local people who had worked to help the local community for an award. He proposed that councillor should decide whether to submit any names. Agreed.

18.15.1 NALC report on Parish Council Empowerment. The Chairman said the government wanted to give greater empowerment to town and parish councils. There was £¾ million available to help councils become quality councils. The Chairman said it might give councils more say over local matters.

18.15.2 Village of the Year competition. The Chairman proposed that the Council should not enter the competition as it did not have sufficient resources and there was little support for the idea from the community. Agreed.

18.15.3 London Marathon. The Chairman said that Cllr Purvis intended to run in the London Marathon and invited residents to sponsor him in aid of McMillan Nurses.

18.15.4 Theatrical productions. The Chairman commented on an excellent production by Little Hadham Pantomime Group and encouraged residents to support the forthcoming production of 'Peter Pan' performed by The Young Ones.

18.15.5 Council Business Plan. The Chairman said that the Council had no formal objectives – it needed to be proactive rather than reactive. Cllr Skidmore had obtained a plan from another council as a guide. The Chairman proposed that the Council draft a 5-year plan. Agreed.

18.16 Parish Plan. The Chairman said that the Parish Plan Group had received a Herts Community Foundation grant that would allow the revised plan and village guide to be printed. Future events included a fun run in the summer, that would help bond the hamlets in the parish together, and a barn dance on 24th October 2009 in the village hall. The Chairman said that Parish Plan questionnaires had been distributed with the Parish News and he encouraged residents to complete and return them. He had received 7 so far.

18.17 Clerk's Report

18.17.1 Financial statement

Period ending 3rd February 2009

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£7,191.66
StepSaver BP Acc		£5.19
BP Acc		£169.82
Petty cash		£51.37
	Total	£7,418.04
Included above		
Received		
S Stigwood	WG rent	£300.00
EHC - final Community Grant for playground improvements		£1,038.76
Paid		
Mynott & Son	Playground improvements	£505.25

To be approved by the Council**Received**

EDF Energy - wayleave for village hall playground £33.30

To be paid

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - (Jan)	£294.43	
	Exp (Jan)	£24.46	£318.89
Mrs K Green	Grass & bins (Jan)		£43.11
Miss A Windmill	Litter picking (Jan)		£97.53
Mr M Fairchild	Refreshments Dec meeting		£27.43
Little Hadham Village Hall	Hall rent Oct to Dec		£56.25
Mr T Skidmore	Printing copies LDF		£8.63
Little Hadham PCC	2008/09 P/News donation		£95.00
Total payments			£646.84

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £6,804.50

18.17.2 Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

18.17.3 Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Proposed Cllr Mrs Piccolo, seconded Cllr Purvis. Agreed.

18.18 Democratic 10 minutes**The meeting closed at 10:20 p.m.**

A resident complained about the time the police were taking to investigate the near accident at the traffic lights, what he thought was poor road clearing of the snow by Herts Highways and the fact that the village school had closed for two days because of the snow. The Clerk said that the school could not open if sufficient staff were not able to reach the school. The Chairman said that he had asked for Ford Hill to be gritted but this could only be done when all major county roads had been cleared. A resident thought it a pity that the Best Kept Village competition had been replaced by the Village of the Year.

A resident thought that parishioners should not be put forward for Community Awards.

The meeting reopened at 10:30 p.m.

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

18.20 Correspondence. The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant members.

Dept Communities and Local Government – Consultation on local government publicity.

MF

Essex CC – Consultation on Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

MF

NALC – Newsletter

MF

Countryside Management Service – Newsletter

MW

CPRE – Fieldwork magazine.

TS

Clerks & Councils Direct magazine.

MF

SSE – Newsletter

MF

HAPTC

MF/JP

EHC – Sawbridgeworth Community Voice agenda and minutes.

MF

CDA for Herts – Newsletter

MF

18.21 Any other business. Cllr Mrs Piccolo referred to SCooTS a scheme to provide young people with motor scooters to get to work or college. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson proposed that the Council should encourage the scheme. Agreed. The Chairman asked Cllr Mrs Piccolo to write a note for the newsletter.

18.22 Date of the next meeting Tuesday 3rd March 2009.

18.23 The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 10:31 p.m.

Appendix 1 – Email concerning the status of the bypass. – Cllr Purvis

The Little Hadham bypass was one of three projects in Hertfordshire that were priorities for EERA funding. As I understand it, now that two of them [the Watford and Croxley projects] have been selected for regional funding allocation, the bypass becomes the next priority in Hertfordshire. That could be good news except there is no funding available unless the County's highways authority can get funding from the Challenge Fund or some other source.

The parish council will do everything it can to support the efforts of the highways authority to maintain the priority status of the bypass and to secure the necessary funding.

It is too early to say whether this is a setback. If it is, people in the village and surrounding areas will be disappointed because we have waited a long time for confirmation that Little Hadham is to get a bypass. However, work on the bypass was not due to start until at least 2012 and we have been assured that, meanwhile, topographical studies and other work will continue so the scheme can be delivered as soon as funding becomes available.

Appendix 2 Report on EHC Sustainable Communities Seminar

1. Contribute to the Strategic Partnership's efforts to cut environmental pollution. East Herts is highest polluter in the region – especially traffic, is this local traffic or passing through? 20% of emissions are domestic (homes). We have very high car ownership in Little Hadham and a reasonable bus service through some hamlets.

Possible ways in which Little Hadham could contribute [ideas for discussion]:

- A transport study (an unfinished parish plan project) to establish need, eg more buses
- A Hoppa service to take commuters to BS station
- Car share scheme (save money, meet the neighbours)
- Annual car-free day
- Promote cycling and walking (mountain bike event via parish plan?)
- School local history project: how people used to get around
- Push the heat imaging camera scheme as part of a 'climate proof' programme (E Herts are aiming for 20% reduction by 2020)
- Create awareness of the issue of climate change and sustainability including aviation pollution (excluded from stats)
- Better re-cycling and waste management
- A study of LH's biodiversity
- Wrap up the whole thing under a 'Know your carbon footprint' theme

2. Better communication.

- Create a village-wide email network
- Use it to reinforce Neighbourhood Watch
- Plug into Police crime alerts
- Explore work-balance opportunities (publicise the experience/benefits of those who work from home some of the time)

3. Sport and recreation

EHC want to promote parks, sport, leisure facilities, especially for the young.

- How can we use the 'vacant' part of the VH playing field (talk to Herts Youth Connections?)

4. Volunteering

How can we build our volunteer base?

Notes:

- An Action Plan will be produced by EHC in April, adopted autumn
- Some of the themes that came out of brainstorming were: better communication, involve schools, solve the transport issue
- EHC claim to have an evidence base that might save us research