

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2007 – 2011 Session) held on Tuesday 1st September 2009 at 8.37 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present: **Mr M Fairchild** **Chairman**
 Mr A Morris)
 Mr T Skidmore) **Councillors**
 Mrs M Wilkinson)

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

24.1 Public session.

There were no questions or comments.

24.2 Absent. Cllr Mrs Piccolo [holiday], Cllr Purvis [holiday] and Cllr Williamson [holiday].

24.3 Declarations of interest. None.

24.4 Minutes of the Annual Council meeting and of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2009 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Wilkinson and seconded by Cllr Morris.

24.5 Matters arising from the Council minutes.

24.5.1 The Chairman reported that a small group, supported by the Ramblers Association, the P3 group and the Much Hadham footpath officer, was carrying out a survey of the parish footpaths. It hoped to report by the end of the year.

24.5.2 The Clerk reported a letter from the local PTC concerning an application to open a pharmacy in Much Hadham. After applying the relevant rules the PTC had decided that the applicant, Mr S.S.Uppal, could open a pharmacy, as the nearest pharmacy was over 3 miles away. However the number of patients registered at the Health Centre was less than 2,750 meaning it was in a ‘reserved location’. This allowed the Health Centre to keep its dispensary even if a pharmacy were to be opened. The Clerk said that the next move was with Mr Uppal who had to decide whether a pharmacy near the Health Centre dispensary was a sound business proposition.

24.6 Road matters

24.6.1 Cllr Morris said that the ambiguous 30 MPH signs had been removed from Chapel Lane.

He noted that Oliver Heald MP had written to the government encouraging it to fund the bypass.

24.6.2 The Chairman noted that the local police were calling a meeting to discuss speeding on the A120. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said that she would investigate.

24.7 Playgrounds

24.7.1 Recommendations following the annual playground inspections. The Chairman reported that the repairs to the Ridgeway fence had been completed. He noted that graffiti had appeared on the slide at the Village Hall playground. Cllr Williamson would attempt to remove it. Cllr Williamson would also install two ‘No Dogs’ signs at the Village Hall playground.

24.8 War memorial.

24.8.1 Repairs to the surround wall. The Chairman presented a quotation from a local contractor to rebuild the north wall using new foundations, the existing yorkstone and a concrete infill at the back. Localised repairs would be made to the other two sides. The Chairman proposed that the Council accept the quotation for £2,532 + VAT. Agreed.

24.8.2 Consultation on refurbishment of the war memorial. Cllr Skidmore read a paper concerning a quotation for cleaning the war memorial [Appendix 1]. The Chairman proposed that Cllr Skidmore should obtain a second quotation while he would consult the views of local people including the Royal British Legion and descendants of some of those named on the memorial. He would include a note in the Parish News. As there was no money in the budget he might request local donations. Agreed.

24.9 Parish bus shelters. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson reported that the shelter near the A120 traffic lights was in poor repair with damage to one wall and to the roof. The Chairman said that Cllr Williamson had a list of repairs and he would ensure that the bus shelter was added to it.

24.10 Parish Plan.

24.10.1 The Chairman reported that a successful 5-a-side football match had been held at the Village Hall playground. The next event would be a barn dance on 24th October 2009.

24.11 Stansted Airport – consultation on aircraft noise. The Chairman presented a draft response to the consultation [Appendix 2] and proposed that it be sent in the name of the Council. Agreed.

24.12 Chairman's report.

24.12.1 Council Business Plan. The Chairman spoke of the draft plan that had been circulated to Councillors. He said that he would not propose the Council accept the plan as there were so many councillors missing. He would propose it at the October meeting and he encouraged councillors to contact him with their comments.

24.12.2 Public consultation on the East of England Plan to 2031. 7:00 p.m. 9th September 2009 in Stevenage. Cllr Morris said that he was not available. The Chairman said that either he or Cllr Skidmore would try to attend.

24.12.3 The Chairman reported that the police were holding a meeting on 23rd September 2009 to discuss the effect use of PCSOs in rural areas. He would try to ensure the Council was represented.

24.12.4 The Chairman said that there had been no response to his suggestion in the Parish News that a car-sharing scheme be set up.

24.13 Clerk's Report

24.13.1 Financial statement

Period ending 2st September 2009

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£9,654.90
StepSaver BP Acc		£5.19
BP Acc		£169.88
Petty cash		-£21.29
	Total	£9,808.68

Included above

Received

Parish Plan - returned loan		£577.00
HM Revenue & Customs	VAT refund	£793.71

Paid

Mower services	Grass cutting July	£257.60
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Payments to be approved by the Council

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - (August)	£283.98	
	Exp (July & August)	£19.17	
	Float	£50.00	£353.15
Mrs K Green	Grass & bins (August)		£44.40
Miss A Windmill	Litter picking (August)		£97.53
Mower Services	Grass cutting August		£257.60
Mrs E Booth	P.O. cleaning		£30.00
Mr G Williamson	Fencing supplies		£120.53
BDO Stoy Hayward LLP	Auditors		£155.25
The Young Ones'	Donation 2008 & 2009		£200.00
	Total payments		£1,258.46

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £8,600.22

24.13.2 Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

24.13.3 Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Proposed Cllr Morris, seconded Cllr Skidmore. Agreed.

24.13.4 The Clerk proposed that the Council accept and approve the completed audit for the year 2008/09. Agreed.

24.14 Democratic 10 minutes.

A resident noted that the cleaning of the Bishop's Stortford war memorial had been particularly successful. The resident also noted that the opening times of the Bishop's Stortford police station were very confusing and asked the Council to request that the station be open at regular times.

A resident wondered why comments on agenda items were requested at the start of the meeting. The Chairman said that this enabled the Council to take the comments into account before it made a decision.

24.15 **Planning matters.** The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.

24.16 **Correspondence.** The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant members.

EHC Sawbridgeworth Community Voice	MW
Clerks & Councils Direct magazine	MF
SSE newsletters	MF
CPRE Fieldwork magazine	MW
HCC 'Towards better transport in Herts' progress report	AM
HAPTC Governance Toolkit	MF
HAPTC annual report	AM/MF

24.17 Any other business.

24.18 Date of the next meeting Tuesday 6th October 2009.

24.19 The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9:37 p.m.

Appendix 1 Consultation on Refurbishment of the War Memorial. Cllr Skidmore.

1. The refurbishment of the War Memorial (WM) is separate from the Surround Wall.
2. We have discussed refurbishment of the WM with EHC listed building people (Laurie Humphries) (LH) – who have indicated that some grant funding would be available. LH has suggested 2 specialist organisations that have done WM refurbishment in East Herts.
3. Mike Fairchild and I meet Hugh McAlpine 26th August 09. Hugh has cleaned and refurbished a number of WM in our area: Gilston, Eastwick, Roydon, Ware/Wareside.
4. Hugh has quoted £1120.00 (No VAT) his quotation is detailed (copy available) showing 7 stages, and would take 2/3 days.
5. We would need to get another quotation if we want to go any further with refurbishing the WM.

Action required

- LHPC to agree or not agree that our War Memorial should be refurbished.
- If Yes check what funding is available
- If Yes get a second quote if we are to proceed get the work done before this years 2009 November Memorial Service.

Appendix 2 Response to consultation on aircraft noise from Stansted Airport – Chairman

The draft plan does not sufficiently address the problems of noise in communities such as Little Hadham that are close to the airport or under a flight path. It does not take into account that the nature of aircraft noise - in particular its tonal characteristics and low frequency - have an exaggerated effect in rural areas, especially at night time when the ambient noise level is even lower than during the day. It is imperative that measures are included to cover helicopter noise, which is becoming an increasing irritant in rural areas. Minimum heights and lower speeds should be introduced for helicopters to reduce noise and downbeat shock waves. We are concerned at the absence of measures to anticipate any increase in volume of aircraft movements or the imposition of stiffer penalties for noise and track infringements.

The suggested framework is designed more to meet the needs of BAA Stansted than those of “the local community”. The methodology relies on average traffic figures and speeds and mean flight paths, which are then applied to NAP noise maps using a further averaging method. This technique masks the fact that people do not hear average noise but a series of loud noise events. The extent of nuisance is increased in proportion to the number of aircraft passing overhead. The draft plan does not show sufficiently whether - and how - it would reduce or prevent noise in order to conform to WHO Guidelines for Community Noise. Of most concern are the apparent inconsistencies in BAA's noise mapping information. We understand that the number of people affected by noise is not the result of 2006 noise mapping, as claimed. This mapping was conducted by the CAA but the figures submitted by BAA were provided by Defra, making it difficult to compare the two sets of data. Where a comparison can be made, the Defra figures understate those of the CAA.

Overall, there is a lack of noise reduction targets and planned action and too much reliance on merely recording what happens, such as number of noise infringements. Performance indicators stated, for example, improved communication with the public, would have no effect on noise. There is an absence of timescale and no estimates of any reduction in the number of people affected by annoyance or lack of sleep.

Best practice in international airport noise management is an imprecise benchmark, such that it would be difficult for the public to judge compliance. The aims of the European Noise Directive are to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects of environmental noise.

The only effective benchmark would be clear targets set for noise reduction for future aircraft movements in and out of Stansted that could be understood and monitored by the community.

While some of the proposals are to be welcomed, in order to conform to the new European Noise Directive, more attention needs to be paid to aircraft noise at night. We note that the END uses an average 55 decibel contour, which shows that, according to calculations by Stop Stansted Expansion, 10,000 people are seriously affected by noise from Stansted's operations - more than twice as many as previously calculated by the current 57 decibel Leq contour method. Even the 55 decibel contour does not represent the true effect of noise, as indicated by noise complaints received by the airport from people living 30 miles distant. Bearing in mind the evidence that shows the impact of noise on people's health and the cognitive levels among school children, BAA should make a commitment to raise the vectoring height of aircraft on all NPRs to 5,000 ft by 2015, and to work towards a total ban on aircraft movements between 2330 and 0600, except for emergencies.