

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 28th meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2011 – 2015 Session) held on Tuesday 4th February 2014 at 8:24 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present: **Mr J Forgham** **Chairman**
 Mr G Pearson)
 Mrs M Wilkinson) **Councillors**
 Mr G Williamson)
 Ms W Woodgate)

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and **16** members of the public.

28.1. Absent. None.

28.2. Declarations of interest. None.

28.3. Resignations of Mrs Carmela Piccolo and Cllr Robin Gregory – to reassign responsibilities.

It was agreed that the following responsibilities would be assigned temporarily:
 Cllr Forgham: Consultations and Public Relations; The Green, Bury Green; Area Rep. for Hadham Park , Savernake, Cradle End Bury Green & Green Street.

Cllr Pearson: Publicity including the Parish News report.

Cllr Ms Woodgate: NHS matters; Editor of the Hadham Website.

Cllr Williamson: Little Hadham Conservation Society rep.; Area rep. for Hadham Hall, Stane Street & Church End.

28.4. Public session on matters on the agenda.

A resident spoke about the Council's decision to allow a community orchard on part of the allotment site. He thought the Council had been elected to care for the parish residents including protecting the allotment site. Land at the site had been used for an orchard, gate posts at the gate had been pulled up and much of the hedge grubbed up. Only six fruit trees had been agreed though twenty four had been planted with no consultation. The resident thought the Council discussion of the December meeting had been a 'badly rehearsed pantomime' and he noted that the two councillors who had voted against the orchard had since resigned. The resident said that a representative of EHC had told him that it would like to take the matter up but had no funding to do so.

Another resident asked if the two neighbours to the allotment site had agreed that they had given the trees to the Council and had no claim over the land or the hedge. The Chairman said that they had both signed declarations giving these assurances. The first resident said that further trees had been planted. The Chairman said he would investigate. He noted that one councillor had resigned because of ill health – not because of any issue connected to the allotments.

The first resident said he thought the land had been set aside for allotments and another resident, a former Clerk, agreed.

Another resident said that one of the neighbours did not want the land used for allotments because their services ran under the land. If this was the case, why were they happy for trees to be planted? Another resident said she thought the neighbours wanted the area tidied up in order to give a better outlook to their homes.

Cllr Ms Woodgate said that a number of residents were in favour of the orchard. She said that she felt insulted by the personal and rude accusations made by the first resident. The resident said he had made the comments about the Council not individual councillors.

Action
JF

A resident said that she thought that the Council should have reached a compromise by allowing half the trees to remain while using half the land for an allotment.

The Chairman said the decision had been made and asked to move to another topic.

A resident complained about the local district councillor who he said was never present in the parish and appeared to do nothing. The resident thought the councillor should be replaced and the asked the Council to write a letter to that effect.

A resident asked about the cutting of Bury Green. The Chairman said he Council proposed to pay for the cuts.

A resident hoped that the Council would look favourably on the suggestion for a community rest area at the allotment site.

A resident spoke about the junction of Millfield Lane with Bury Green. Vehicles had driven over the verges that had become churned up.

A resident mentioned the sunken manhole cover on Acremore Street that was very dangerous.

28.5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 3rd December 2013 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as accurate.

28.6. Matters arising from the minutes. None.

28.7. Allotments

28.7.1. Setting up of Allotment Management Committee. The Chairman proposed that a Council work party should be set up to agree a set of rules for the allotment site and to agree how a management committee should be set up. All allotment holders would be asked to sign an agreement. Any who refused to sign would be asked to leave. It was agreed that Cllrs Mrs Wilkinson, Forgham and Williamson would form the work party.

Action
GW/JF
MW

28.7.2. To consider proposals for creating a Community Rest Area proposed by a number of residents. The Chairman thought it a super idea. He proposed that about £1,300 from the New Homes Bonus be put aside to buy and install furniture and gate posts. Agreed. The Chairman said this would be a matter for the Allotment Management Committee to agree the details.

28.8. Playgrounds.

28.8.1. General repair of the playgrounds. The Clerk said he was concerned that a positive record of weekly inspections was not being kept up to date. Cllrs Mrs Woodgate and Williamson agreed to send the Clerk an email after each inspection.

Action
GW/WW

28.8.2. Repairs. Cllr Williamson said that Mr Foskett had been unable to make the repairs because of the bad weather.

28.8.3. Hedge cutting. The Clerk said Greenman were waiting for dry weather as the tractor would churn up the wet ground.

28.9. Road matters.

28.9.1. Potholes. The Chairman said he still working to get some holes repaired – particularly the sunken manhole cover on Acremore Street. The blocked culvert in Millfield Lane would be reported. He noted that the newly laid road surface on the A120 appeared to be breaking up.

Action
JF

28.9.2. Vehicles from the side roads jumping the A120 lights. The Chairman said the police had installed warning signs.

- 28.9.3.** Hedges outside ‘Houghtons’. The Chairman said that PCSO Karen Broad was still dealing with the matter.
- 28.9.4.** Siting of the reflective posts in Chapel Lane. The Chairman said he was still waiting after 13 months for them to be installed.
- 28.9.5.** Planting bulbs in the planters and round village signs. The chairman said he and Cllr M Wilkinson had planted bulbs round village signs.
- 28.9.6.** To consider installing two extra planters on the road between The Ashe and The Ford. It was agreed to buy the planters at an approximate cost of £900. Cllr Ms Woodgate agreed to obtain permission from Herts Highways. Action WW
- 28.9.7.** Refuse collection. Safe return of bins and unemptied bins. The Chairman said he had not received any complaints recently. Cllr Pearson said some bins had not been emptied at Christmas time and EHC had refused to return.
- 28.9.8.** Damage to the Chapel Lane verge near the Ford Field car park. The Chairman said the refuse cart had been cutting the corner in order to miss parked cars. Residents had offered to make repairs. The Chairman said he would talk to Herts Highways. Action JF
- 28.9.9.** Maintenance of the car park opposite the Nag’s Head. The Chairman said the publican had offered to repair the hardstanding opposite the pub. The Chairman said he had advised him to contact Herts Highways.
- 28.10. Footpaths.**
- 28.11.** Condition of footpaths. The chairman said most of the fallen trees, caused by the recent gale, had been cleared.
- 28.12.** Footpath between Albury Road and the church – hand rail on the bridge and overgrown hedge on Albury Road reducing visibility. The chairman said he had reported the matter to Mr Maddex, HCC Footpaths officer. Cllr Pearson said that the footpath by pathway cottages was collapsing into and partially blocking the ditch. Action JF
- 28.13. Flooding.**
- 28.13.1.** Flooding incidents during December and January. Cllr Pearson said there had been flooding at Green Street, Millfield Lane and Cradle End. The sewers had surcharged at the Ford and there was still sewage on the road and pavement. Herts Highways were due to clean up but had yet to do so. The culvert under the road at Pathway Cottages was blocked and a tree fallen in the Ash had yet to be cleared.
- 28.13.2.** Preparations for the multi-agency meeting. Cllr Pearson said the meeting would be on 21st March 2014. Mr Oliver Heald MP would be inviting relevant agencies to attend. Action JF
- 28.13.3.** Garden waste thrown into the bed of the Ash. Cllr Pearson said this had been washed down stream and had blocked the bridges. The Chairman said he had spent some time clearing it. Cllr Pearson said Mr David Collins of Church End Farm has spoken to him about creating a flood area further upstream. The Chairman said there had been complaints about the sewage pump that appeared not to be powerful enough. Affinity water was having to use tankers to

remove excess sewage that the pump could not cope with. He understood some residents were taking action concerning the disturbance and damage to the roads.

28.14. Bury Green

28.14.1. Tidying the Bury Green pond. The Chairman said he had organised a work party for 9th March. He was waiting for permission from the owners of the Millennium Wood before organising a tidy up there.

Action
JF

28.14.2. Cutting the grass on the green. The Chairman proposed that the Council pay for three-weekly cuts of the Green. Agreed.

28.15. Westland Green

28.15.1. Repairs to the byroad. The Chairman said that the work was half complete and the green was a mess. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said the material used was far too fine and the byroad was worse than it had been. The byroad needed a base of large stones or bricks.

28.15.2. Parish telephone kiosks. Cllr Ms Woodgate said the use of the kiosks as a library had been a great success. However, they had become a bit of a dumping ground and many books had become damaged by falling on the floor. She said she would write in the Parish News asking for residents to show some restraint.

Action
WW

28.16. NHS report. There was nothing to report.

28.17. Parish Plan Group.

28.17.1. The Group was working on the event to commemorate the start of the Great War. They are looking for some 12 to 14 year olds to give some readings. The Chairman said that there were some early discussions on a music festival in the field opposite the Nag's Head.

28.18. Chairman's report.

28.18.1. To consider cleaning the parish war memorial as part of the commemoration of the start of the 1st world war. The Chairman said he had received two letters on the subject – one for and one against the cleaning. Cllr Williamson asked if it might be more appropriate to mark the end of the war in 2018. Cllr Ms Woodgate said that pressure washing, which she understood had been used in the past, was not recommended. It was agreed that Cllr Ms Woodgate would seek advice on the matter.

Action
WW

28.18.2. To consider posters displayed near the A120 traffic lights. The Chairman said he had received complaints from Albury PC because a sign advertising their Antique Fair had been removed. From the floor, former Clerk Mr Don Gibson said that he understood it to be one of the Clerk's duties to remove unapproved posters. If left, the poster made the area around the traffic lights very unsightly. It was agreed that the Clerk should refused any requests to display posters from outside the village.

28.18.3. The Chairman said that Albury PC had asked him to advertise their vacancy for a parish clerk.

28.19. Clerk's Report**28.19.1. Financial statement****Period ending 4th February 2014**

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£15,429.87	
StepSaver BP Acc		£5.19	
BP Acc		£170.24	
Petty cash		£4.91	
	Total		£15,610.21

To be agreed**To Pay**

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - January	£318.96	
	Float	£50.00	
	Exp January	£13.70	£382.66
Karin Green Garden Services	Grass & bins - January		£50.00
Mr A Purvis	Litter picker January		£111.80
Little Hadham PCC	Donation to Parish News		£250.00
Little Hadham Village Hall	Hire of Hall - Oct to Dec		£39.37
Mrs Mary Wilkinson	Flower bulbs		£6.98
	Total payments		£840.81

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £14,819.40

28.19.2. Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

28.19.3. Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Agreed.

28.20. Democratic 10 minutes.

A resident, a local farmer, said the wrong material had been used the repair the Westland Green byroad and the road did not seem to be wide enough. He noted that the posts for marking the byroad were still in his yard. Action Clerk

The resident said that he had given permission for a one-off festival in his field in 2013 and would not allow an event this year. He said that the Parish Plan Group was looking to plant poppies to commemorate the starting of the 1st World War. He thought this needed careful thought because poppies were a persistent weed. The resident said that he understood oak trees were being cut down at Patmore Heath. The Chairman said the Albury Parish News referred to a restoration project at the heath.

A resident thought the Council was being mean minded by not allowing surrounding villages to advertise at the A120 traffic lights.

A resident spoke about blocked drains on the A120 Stortford Road. The Chairman said they had been reported a number of times.

A resident said a gate post for the allotment would have to be removable to allow loads on manure in.

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

28.22. Correspondence.

NALC LCR magazine

JF

Clerks & Councils Direct magazine

JF

Groundwork Annual Review

JF

HCC consultation on 'waste site allocation'

HCC consultation on 'travel plan guidance for business and residential development'

SSE newsletter

28.23. Date of the next meeting Tuesday 4th March 2014.

28.24. The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9:53 p.m.