

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 37th meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2011 – 2015 Session) held on Tuesday 2nd December 2014 at 8:12 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present:

Mr J Forgham	Chairman
Mrs E Lloyd-Williams)
Mr G Pearson)
Mrs M Wilkinson) Councillors
Mr G Williamson)
Ms W Woodgate)

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and 9 members of the public.

- 37.1. Absent.** Cllr Bhatt [on business].
- 37.2. Declarations of interest.** None.
- 37.3. Public session on matters on the agenda.**
There were no questions or comments on agenda items.
- 37.4. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Tuesday 4th November 2014 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as accurate.
- 37.5. Matters arising from the minutes.** None.
- 37.6. Financial matters**
- 37.6.1.** To consider the recommendations of the Budget Work Party on spending for the remains of the financial year 2014/15. The Chairman went through the work party recommendations that had been previously circulated. He proposed that the recommendations be adopted. Agreed.
- 37.6.2.** To consider the draft budget for 2015/16 prepared by the Budget Work Party. The Chairman went through the budget that had been previously circulated. He said he wished to add to the budget the cost of replacing the litter bin at the Ashe on the A120 as the current bin was being used as a dump for builders' rubble. He proposed that the amended budget be adopted. Agreed. Action Clerk
- 37.6.3.** To agree the precept for 2015/16. The Chairman proposed that the precept for 2015/16 be unchanged at £12,800. Agreed. The precept documents were signed. Action Clerk
- 37.7. Allotments**
- 37.7.1.** Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said that work on the picnic area would start in the new year. The Chairman asked that the three fruit trees be removed as agreed.
- 37.8. Playgrounds.**
- 37.8.1.** Damage to Ridgeway hedge, gate and fence. Cllr Ms Woodgate said the repairs would be carried out in December.
- 37.9. Road matters.**
- 37.9.1.** Maintenance of the verge outside homes on Standon Road. The Chairman said the work was still awaited.
- 37.9.2.** The Chairman said a hedge had become overgrown on a house that appeared to be unoccupied on Albury Road. He said he would investigate. Action JF
- 37.9.3.** Installing two extra planters. Cllr Mrs Woodgate said the planters would be installed in the spring. Action WW
- 37.9.4.** Potholes. The Chairman said he had reported several new potholes between Millfield Lane and Green Street. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said that repairs to Lower Road in Bury Green were planned for December.

- 37.9.5.** Excessive speed of traffic on the Cradle End, Bury Green, Ford Hill roads. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said she was still in consultation with Herts Highways. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said that Chapel Lane and Westland Green should be added as they were part of the rat run. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said she had received bags of road salt from HCC. She said she would advertise in the Parish News for people who wished to collect some.
- 37.9.6.** Repairs to the fence surrounding the village pump. To retrospectively agree a quotation of £125 from Mr Mick Foskett to replace two of the fence posts. Agreed.
- 37.10. Footpaths.**
- 37.10.1.** Condition of footpaths. The Chairman said most paths were in good repair if very muddy.
- 37.10.2.** Footpath between Albury Road and the church – hand rail on the bridge and overgrown hedge on Albury Road reducing visibility. The Chairman said there had been no progress. Action JF
- 37.10.3.** Willow trees next to the river near Ford Fields. The Chairman said he had spoken the Mr Joel Hammond who had agreed a contract to carry out the work for £75. He proposed the contract be accepted. Agreed. Action JF
- 37.11. Flooding.**
- 37.11.1.** Multi-agency meeting. The Chairman said the meeting had been very successful. Thames Water had submitted a bid to replace the sewage pumps at Bridgefoot Farm at a cost of two to three hundred thousand pounds. The pump at Albury had not been upgraded. The Environment Agency had agreed to continue cutting back vegetation on the Ash on a regular basis and had agreed to install a flood gauge near Cllr Pearson’s home so that he could raise warnings when levels rose. The Chairman said Herts Highways were actively investigating whether rainwater drains had illegally been connected to the sewers. They were also checking the Lloyd Taylor Close tributary. Members of the fire brigade had been issued with advice and had received training on how to deal with flooding. HCC were investigating the flooding at Green Street. The Chairman thought the meeting had been positive.
- 37.12. Bury Green**
- 37.12.1.** Dog fouling on the Green. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said her campaign continued. Action ELW
- 37.13. Westland Green**
- 37.13.1.** Repairs to the byroad. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said the byroad was now a quagmire and the green had been damaged since 4x4s had driven across it. She thought the repairs to the byroad were not adequate. It was agreed that Cllr Mrs Wilkinson would contact Mr Maddex, HCC footpath officer, to discuss how the byroad could be improved. Action MW
- 37.14. Inspiring Libraries.** To consider HCC consultation on money saving measures including closing the Mobile Library service. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams read a letter that she had previously circulated and proposed it be sent to HCC [Appendix 1]. Agreed. Action Clerk
- 37.15. Chairman’s report.**
- 37.15.1.** Councillor recruitment. This was deferred to the next meeting.
- 37.15.2.** Defibrillator. To consider purchasing a defibrillator for use in the parish. There was much discussion about where a defibrillator should be sited, whether it should be secured with a combination lock with the combination being obtained by dialling 999, the poor mobile signal in the parish and whether it would be

close enough to many parts of the parish to make a difference in an emergency. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said there would be an initial cost of about £2,500 with running costs for such things as new pads and battery. It was agreed that Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams would continue her investigations including whether the Health Centre would be willing to have the defibrillator attached to the Little Hadham Surgery.

Action
ELW

37.15.3. Village Hall break-in. The Chairman said considerable damage had been caused but nothing appeared to have been taken. Most of the damage had been repaired.

37.15.4. Social Club. The Chairman thanked Mrs Ennis Rogers who had stepped down as leader of the group after 10 years.

37.16. Clerk's Report

37.17. Financial statement

Period ending 2nd December 2014

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£19,678.82
StepSaver BP Acc		£5.19
BP Acc		£170.30
Petty cash		£16.05

Total

£19,870.36

Included above

HM Revenue and Customs	VAT refund		£859.14
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To be agreed

To Pay

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - November & December	£637.72	
	Exp November & December	£28.00	£665.72
Mr Joel Hammond	Grass, bins & allotments - November		£70.00
Mr Joel Hammond	Grass, bins & allotments - December		£70.00
LH Social Club	Donation		£250.00
Soc Local Council Clerks	Subscription		£108.00
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE		£262.00
Mr Ben Petch	Litter picker November		£114.57
Mr Ben Petch	Litter picker December		£114.57

Total payments £1,654.86

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £18,215.50

37.17.1. Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

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

37.17.3. The Clerk said that there would be an election on Thursday 7th May 2015 and the first Council meeting had to be within two weeks. He proposed the normal meeting be held on Tuesday 7th May 2015. The Annual meeting to be on Thursday 14th May 2015 to elect the Chairman and Council officials with the first full Council meeting on Tuesday 2nd June 2015. Agreed.

37.18. Democratic 10 minutes.

A resident asked how people would know about the defibrillator. The Chairman said there would be signs. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said none of the locked machines had been stolen though an unlocked one had gone on the first day. Another resident said paramedics could reach the village in 5 minutes so what use would a defibrillator be? The Chairman said all residents should be made aware in case there was a traffic holdup. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said that a widely spread parish like Little Hadham might need more than one defibrillator.

A resident said he had seen a number of near accidents from people jumping the A120 traffic lights. The Chairman said he would ask the police to make another visit. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said there had been a number of near misses close

to the school.

A resident asked who was living at the old McVeigh Parker site. The Chairman said he would investigate.

Action
JW

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

37.20. Correspondence

CPRE Field Work magazine **ELW**

CPRE Countryside Voice magazine **WW**

CPRE Herts Newsletter **MW**

37.21. Date of the next meeting Tuesday 3rd February 2015.

37.22. The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9.35 p.m.

Appendix 1 Letter to HCC Library Service.

Dear Andrew Bignell,

Re. Inspiring Libraries Public Consultation 2014

Thank you for inviting Little Hadham Parish Council to comment in regard to your current public consultation 'inspiring libraries'. Having read the proposals the Parish Council has strong concerns about the proposed loss of the Mobile Library Service which visits areas of the Parish on a fortnightly basis.

Little Hadham is a disparate and rural Parish which has few community services (only a weekly post office and GP surgery operating from our village hall). The Mobile Library (Mobile A) is something we see as a vital service which offers community members access to books, CDs and DVDs; but also much more.

The Mobile Library acts as focal point in the week of residents who due to age, disability or other reason are largely confined to home. It offers a social hub to community members across the parish, many of who are isolated. It offers the physical opportunity to browse actual books and choose something to take home. We hope that this is something you were able to appreciate when your senior manager visited Mobile A in Bury Green last month.

Access to libraries can really inspire and enthuse our young people in the world of books. The 2014 summer maze challenge was a huge success in the community (I believe the bus exceeded its target to engage young people in this activity). If the mobile library were to be discontinued, young people would have no independent access to a library service.

This proposal also comes at a time when our parish may lose its evening and weekend bus service further limiting the community's access to the library service offered in town. We believe many of our community will not choose to, or be able to, access libraries in town.

The library service has been investing in technologies that will take it forward into a new more technological age. We believe that when looking at cuts alongside these developments it should be mindful that it doesn't lose sight of the joy of choosing and holding a real book. Our community has greatly cherished this service and will be very sad to see it go. We would question in this whether urban communities are being priorities over rural ones when considering how to save money.

We understand that the proposed Home Library Scheme will look at how books can be delivered to local communities. We are sceptical how this service would be able to compensate for the loss of 'Mobile A' but would be interested to hear more. Please can you contact Councillor Liz Lloyd-Williams on 07773 437551 to discuss this further.

We also wonder if alternative solutions have been adequately considered. For example, it has been suggested to us that people might be willing to pay a small fee to use the Mobile Library Service when it visits.

That our nearest town library has been listed as a Tier 1 library is of some comfort, however, in conclusion we are not in support of the replacement of the Mobile Library in favour of an expanded Home Library Service. We wonder how our young people would be able to access libraries. We wonder how the library service would reach people who are unwilling or unable to access their library via the internet or by phone or to travel into town, and wonder whether in reality it will just alienate a proportion of readers and future readers, reducing the number of people it is able to serve meaningfully.