

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 9th meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2015 – 2019 Session) held on Tuesday 5th April 2016 at 8:07 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present: **Mrs E Lloyd-Williams** **Chair**
 Mr C Bhatt)
 Mr A Hoodless)
 Mr G Pearson) **Councillors**
 Mr G Tooke)
 Mrs M Wilkinson)
 Mr W Wright)

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and 14 members of the public.

9.1 **Absent.** None.

9.2. Declarations of interest. None.

9.3. **Democratic ten minutes.**

Mr James Fallan spoke about the advertised sale of the Millennium Wood for a guide price of £30,000. He said that there could be no guarantee of community access following the sale. Mr Fallan said he had communicated with local district and county councillors and with the public by social media. He had received overwhelming support for consideration of a bid for the site. He had explored with EHC having the wood listed as a Community Asset that would give time for the community to raise money to buy the site. The seller would not be obliged to sell to the community. If the wood were listed Mr Fallan said he would attempt to raise money from grants and crowd funding. Any money pledged would only be taken when a sale had been agreed. Mr Fallan said that he had to deal with the estate agent as the owner was difficult to contact. There were many stories about what had been promised when the wood had been set up but these were difficult to check. He hoped the Council would support his endeavours to buy the wood for the community.

9.4. **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Tuesday 1st March 2016 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as accurate.

9.5. **Matters arising from the minutes.**

9.5.1. Church End to Hadham Hall bridle path. Cllr Hoodless said he had no news.

9.6. **Strategic matters**

9.6.1. Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Wright said He had received seven expressions of interest following the leaflet in the Parish News. He would give a presentation at the Parish Assembly following which he would organise a meeting including the advisor.

Action
WW/CB

9.7. Highways

- 9.7.1.** Excessive speed of traffic through Cradle End, Bury Green, Acremore Street, Ford Hill, Chapel Lane and C15. The Chair said there had been no progress.
- 9.7.2.** Outstanding road repairs including potholes. Cllr Pearson said there had been little progress. The Chair asked if the parish was being given low priority as many reported potholes were being listed as low priority. Cllr Hoodless reported that potholes he considered as dangerous were being listed as safe. The Chair said that including photos in reports of road damage appeared to help.
- 9.7.3.** Vehicles jumping the A120 traffic lights. The Chair said there had been no progress. Nothing to report.
- 9.7.4.** Delay to the A120 bypass planning application. The Chair said that investigations were being carried out concerning possible bat colonies at the site. She had been told that these were not expected to delay the start of the construction.

9.8. Environment affairs

- 9.8.1.** Footpaths. The Clerk said that he had written to Mr Maddex concerning the Westland Green byroad who had said he would visit the site.

9.9. Groups and Amenities The Council agreed that the Village School could spend the recent donation on medals commemorating the Queen's 90th birthday for the pupils at the school.

9.10. Community

- 9.10.1.** Millennium Wood. To consider whether to make an offer to buy the site. The Chair proposed that the Council apply to register the wood as a Community Asset. Agreed. It was agreed that the Council would support the community group in its efforts to buy the wood and agreed, in principle, to make a donation. Action
ELW
- 9.10.2.** Damage to the War Memorial. Cllr Bhatt said that a vehicle had hit one corner of the wall. In the past the Council had considered making the wall strong enough to resist traffic collisions but the cost had been prohibitive. He said he would ask Mr Foskett for a quotation for making a repair. Action
CB
- 9.10.3.** Playground repairs. Cllr Tooke said the repairs were complete. He noted that someone had tried to burn one of the signs and a bonfire had been lit in the waste bin. He had recovered the bin from the river. The Chair said she would make enquiries at the school and local scout groups as to whether they could use the portable goal posts. Action
ELW
- 9.10.4.** Allotments. Cllr Wilkinson said there was nothing to report.
- 9.10.5.** Parish website. Cllr Bhatt said that the Clerk had started the website but he needed content. He asked that a notice be placed in the Parish News. The Clerk said that he could deal with the technical issues but an editor was required for the content. It was agreed that the content of the website should become a regular agenda item. Action
GP
- 9.11. Consultation and Public Relations** None.
- 9.12. Flooding.** The Chair read a report prepared by Cllr Pearson. The fields are completely saturated which means that any rainfall just runs off the fields into the highway drains and causes the ditches and River Ash to fill quite quickly.

Since New Year's Day there have been four occasions of the highway flooding between the Village Hall and Ford End, seven severe weather warnings, and three flood alerts issued for the River Ash – the last being on 27th March.

Green Street and Cradle End experienced further highway flooding on 27th/28th March they are still awaiting clearance of blocked culverts and areas where the silt has encroached on the highway restricting the width. Residents did a temporary clearance during the last flooding as highways would not attend.

The drains on the A120 northbound from the traffic lights to just north of Church End were blocked causing water to flow along the top of the road again.

All the above has also been reported to County Councillor Graham McAndrew who has also been liaising with highways.

9.13. Security Matters

9.13.1. Cllr Hoodless reported that PCSO Karen Broad had been reassigned to another area and the parish would be covered by two PCSOs based in Sawbridgeworth. Cllr Hoodless thanked PCSO Broad for all the time and concern she had spent in the parish.

9.13.2. Cllr Hoodless warned residents that there had been a number of incidents of mail being stolen from outside mail boxes. Stolen banking details had been used to steal money from accounts.

9.14. Parish Council matters.

9.14.1. To consider the storage of historical Council documents. Cllr Bhatt said that the Council retained some documents dating back to 1894. These were stored in the Clerk's home and some at Mrs Angela Fardell's home. Referring to the HCC guidance on storing documents, he thought the documents would be safer stored in the County Archive where temperature and humidity were controlled. Cllr Pearson thought parking at the archive was problematic. The Chair said one of the archivists had seen some of the documents and they strongly considered that they should be stored in the archive where they could be repaired if necessary. The Chair read an email from Mrs Fardell expressing a different view. [Appendix 1]. The Clerk said that the documents would be more accessible to most residents when they were in the archive. It was agreed that the older documents should be stored at the archive where they would remain the property of the Council. The Clerk would investigate whether the archive would be able to copy the documents so that they could be available on the new website. Cllr Bhatt agreed to sort through the documents stored in a box kept at Mrs Fardell's home.

Action
CB

9.14.2. To consider the report of the work party review of the internal control of the Council. Cllr Bhatt said he had met the Clerk and had considered all of the points raised on the Council Governance form. He thought that the Council met all the standards listed and proposed that the Governance statement be agreed and signed. Agreed.

9.15. Parish Assembly – Thursday 21st April 2016

9.15.1. Presentations. The Chair said there would be presentations given by herself, Cllr Wright [Neighbourhood Plan], the Police, Mr Richard Beckett [parish charities], Mrs Liz Stockley [village school], Cllr Williamson and Mr James Fallan [Millennium Wood].

9.15.2. Static displays. The Chair said she had a number of requests including from the Toddlers Group.

Action
ELW

- 9.15.3.** Catering Arrangements. The Chair said that Mrs Gillian Bhatt had agreed to organise the catering.
- 9.16.** Chair's report.
- 9.16.1.** The Chair said she had been contacted by the organisers of Hadfest who would like to use the Village Hall playground on 16th July. It would be in aid of charity.
- 9.16.2.** The Chair reminded residents of a scheme organised by HCC to recycle electrical devices.
- 9.17. Clerk's Report**
- 9.17.1. Financial statement**

Period ending 5th April 2016

Unity Trust Bank		£14,670.55
Petty cash		£42.95
	Total	£14,713.50
To be agreed		
Received		
HAPTC	Transparency fund for website	£600.00
To Pay		
Staff salaries	March	£505.55
Clerk's expenses	March	£13.70
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE	£239.00
J Hammond	Hedging plants	£93.00
NALC	Annual subscription for LCR magazine	£17.00
Gascoyne Cecil Estates	Rent Bury Green & Westland Green	£3.13
P Knott [Mower Services]	2 playground grass cuts March	£242.00
Little Hadham School	Use School copier	£81.70
M A Foskett	Village Hall playground repairs	£1,245.00
HAPTC	Annual subscription for 2016/17	£558.18
	Total payments	£2,998.26

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £12,315.24

- 9.17.2.** Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.
- 9.17.3.** Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Agreed.
- 9.17.4.** The Clerk said that he had been notified that the Unity Trust Bank would be making a monthly charge of £6 per month. Cllr Bhatt said this was the mileage cost for the Clerk to make a visit to a bank in Bishop's Stortford. He proposed the Council continue with its account at the bank. Agreed.
- 9.18. Planning matters.** The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.
- 9.19. Correspondence**
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| NALC LCR magazine | ELW |
| Clerks & Councils Direct magazine | ELW |
- 9.20. Date of next ordinary Council meeting – Tuesday 3rd May 2016.**
- 9.21. The Chair closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9:41 p.m.**

Appendix 1 Email from Mrs Angela Fardell concerning storage of Council documents

Hello Liz and Councillors,

I am sorry I will be unable to be with you tomorrow evening but I have to take the minutes of the Vestry and AGM meetings in St. Cecilia's Church. Not all Councillors will get this as I do not have everyone's email address.

I would like to put my case for the Council's Minute Books to remain in the village as I feel that once they have been shipped off to County Hall no one will ever look at them again. Over the years I have been referring to these when something comes up that requires an older reference than the present books kept by Bev. As I have lived in the village for 40 years this month and social history has always been an interest of mine, I have acquired a lot of interesting items on our history. I was also Parish Clerk for some years and have, to my husband's horror, kept all my shorthand notebooks and cuttings from the local papers. If the books go to County Hall they are not readily to hand to refer to. Only the other day someone rang to ask me about an item of interest and to talk about past history. Sometimes I put a piece in the Parish News either from the books or from the old copies of the News of which I was also editor for some time.

To today's new residents many of the names and the decisions made seem to have no relevance but they formed our history and shaped our village and feeling of community. I think we need to keep all this close to us, within the village to share with others. Sadly we missed an opportunity to buy the Congregational Hall for an archive, to keep all the old documents for children to look at and learn from, to meet and share memories and laugh over old photographs of our younger selves. The Minute Books are an important part of this and if you decide to send them to County Hall it is my intention to take a photographic record to put on a disc as I have for some of the Church records.

They make enjoyable reading - did you know Westland Green was requisitioned to grow vegetables during the war?

When Maggie Smith produced Frederick Harris's memoir of Little Hadham (and her very successful play to commemorate the beginning of the First World War) she did this from photocopies pages, the original having been lost. Bryan Burton, a local historian and teacher at Hadham Hall also had a large archive which I assume is at County Hall but who has time to take off work or transport to go to Hertford? The three Minute Books I have are kept carefully in a cupboard, up high away from flood water, and anyone is welcome to inspect them at any time.

Thank you for reading this.

Angela