

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 26th meeting of the **Little Hadham Parish Council** (2015 – 2019 Session) held on Tuesday 7th November 2017 at 8:00 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

Present:	Mrs E Lloyd-Williams	Chair
	Mr T Hoodless)
	Mr G Tooke) Councillors
	Mr N Wardrop)
	Mr W Wright)

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and 32 members of the public including about 5 local teenage boys.

- 26.1. Absent.** Cllr Wilkinson and Cllr Pearson [family bereavement].
- 26.2. Declarations of interest by councillors on any items below.** None.
- 26.3. Democratic ten minutes.**

Antisocial behaviour in the parish

The Chair said that the Council was aware of many residents' concerns about antisocial behaviour and it had been in consultation with the police. She said the police has sent their apologies for not attending the meeting. The Chair asked that no speakers make comments at the meeting from which those thought to be involved in wrong doing could be identified.

Mr Don Gibson said he had encouraged residents to come to the meeting because during the last two years hooliganism in the village had got worse and he thought something had to be done. He was afraid that a resident might get so frustrated that they took the law into their own hands and as a consequence ended up in court. Some weeks ago, Mr Gibson said, his car, parked outside his house, had been damaged and needed an expensive repair. A few weeks later a tyre had been deliberately punctured. He didn't know who had done this but he had kept a look out. Some time later he witnessed two teenage boys move plastic road barriers from where they were protecting a hole in the pavement. The boys laid the barriers in the road – an obvious danger to vehicles travelling on the road in the dark. He shouted at the boys who answered with obscenities and rode off on their bikes. Mr Gibson didn't chase the boys as he had to replace the barriers before there was an accident. Two nights later, two boys banged on his window and ran away. A few further days later a group of boys snapped off some ornamental pampas leaves from a neighbour's garden. Mr Gibson said he had spoken to a number of Little Hadham residents, and some in a nearby village, who also expressed concerns about antisocial behaviour. He understood that the police had been informed as well as EHC. He thought the hooliganism had to stop before someone got hurt and the Parish Council had to do something. When asked to define hooliganism, Mr Gibson said it included stupidity, something that causes aggravation and annoyance to others, and might cause damage or far worse. One of the boys alleged that one of them had been assaulted.

The Chair said the Council were aware of many incidents and she encouraged residents to inform the police using the 101 phone number.

The Chair then went on to summarise a statement from someone who lived in the village and was concerned about vandalism in the village and surrounding areas. The resident said she had reported several incidents to the police as well as speaking to the parents of those she thought were involved. She listed a number

of incidents such as drug dealing in the Village Hall car park, riding bikes up and down the village including at night without lights resulting in danger to others as well as themselves. There had been vandalism to road works at the Ford. The dropping of litter, including broken bottles, around the village including the playgrounds was also mentioned.

A resident, a mother of one of the boys, forcefully complained that a suggestion had been made that the boys had been involved in drug dealing when everyone knew that was untrue. The Chair said she had summarised a statement which did not identify who might be involved.

Another resident, a mother of two of the boys present, resented the way Mr Gibson had directed his talk at the boys keeping constant eye contact. She asked what respect residents had shown to her sons. She said she had heard some residents talking to them using 'vile' language and threatening violence. She knows that some of their behaviour is unacceptable and it disgusts her to think her children are behaving in this way. She said she will sort them out but there is another side to the story.

One of the boys present said that they would not be silly enough to do these things in the village – they get blamed for things other boys do. The Chair said that two boys had spoken to Cllr Pearson. One of the boys said that there was nothing to do in the village and that was why they were out and about on bikes. This at least enabled them to get out of the village. The Chair asked what they would want to see in the village. One of the boys suggested a youth club or some other activity in the Hall. The Chair invited the boys to talk to her after the meeting.

Another boy said they were always being blamed though there was no evidence. He had seen boys from outside the village in the playground.

A mother of one of the boys said that the boys at the meeting were assumed to be responsible for all the vandalism though there were others from outside the village causing trouble. She said her son had been accused of trouble at one time when the family had been on holiday. She thought the boys deserved credit for coming to the meeting and standing up for themselves.

One of the boys said they would like to be part of Neighbourhood Watch. Cllr Hoodless said there was a group in the village they could join. He said it was important that, if they knew of wrong doing, they should tell their parents who could report it to the police.

A father of one of the boys said he had spoken to the police about an incident when the family were on holiday. The police apologised but said it often was his son though he admitted to having no evidence.

The Chair said, the main message from the police is that things have to be reported – such as broken glass left in the playground. One of the boys said that when he complained to the police about someone assaulting him, the police did nothing about it. His father had to call to ask for an apology. Cllr Hoodless said that councillors frequently told police of incidents but nothing had been done about it. He said things still had to be reported as if matters kept being reported, the police would eventually be obliged to take notice. A resident said that when she had phoned 101, it had taken 55 minutes for anyone to reply. The Chair said there were limited resources though all calls were logged.

A resident said that she was speaking for a number of villagers who felt intimidated by the behaviour of some boys in the village. She said their children were scared to go out or visit the playground because they felt bullied and

intimidated. She said there had been banging on windows, calling names and damaging Christmas lights. She said some of the boys at the meeting had been responsible for some incidents as she had seen them doing it. The Chair said that naming names was not helpful – what was needed was to discuss the issues and move forward.

At 8:37 p.m. the Chair suspended the meeting for the Planning Committee meeting. The meeting resumed at 8:42 p.m.

- 26.4. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Tuesday 3rd October 2017 to be agreed and signed as a true record.
- 26.5.** Matters arising from the minutes. None.
- 26.6. Strategic matters**
- 26.6.1.** Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Wright said the Character Assessment was almost complete. AECOM had considered 17 sites following the Call for Sites. 11 were considered unsuitable while 6 were possible but with caveats. Members of the steering group would shortly visit the 6 sites and their owners would be invited to a meeting of the steering group to give their thoughts on how they saw their plots being developed. The steering group would eventually present its plan to the Council and then to the community in a referendum. Cllr Wright said a further grant towards the Plan would be applied for soon. Timing was important as grants had to be spent within 6 months of the award. Cllr Wardrop said that more information, including minutes of meetings had been added to the Neighbourhood Plan website. Asked about membership of the steering group, Cllr Wright said one member had resigned leaving about 8 though usually about 6 attended meetings. He said the group was always open to new members. Cllr Wright said most meetings were not open to the public. He did not want the group to be influenced by people who might be strongly against, or for, a particular site. Minutes of all meetings were published on the website. District Councillor Geoff Williams had been invited to the next meeting to give his perspective on planning.
- 26.7. Highways**
- 26.7.1.** Consultation with residents on traffic matters including: traffic calming measures, the Drive Safe Scheme and parking near the village pump. The Chair said the petition for the Drive Safe scheme had been submitted. The leads, which included the Chair, would be DBS checked [Disclosure and Barring Service]. The village would be assessed for safe locations. Any data collected would be considered by the police.
- 26.7.2.** Vehicles jumping the A120 lights. The Chair reported that Sgt Wallace had said traffic jumping the A120 traffic lights would not be monitored as it was deemed not to be cost effective. She said she would follow this up. Action ELW
- 26.7.3.** Flashing speed warning lights. Cllr Hoodless said that using a system that could be moved to a number of locations seemed straightforward. The Chair said she had spoken to Mr Martin Webber of Herts Highways. He said installing a warning sign would be difficult as there were no street lights to provide power. She said she would talk to Cllr McAndrew about possible funding. Action ELW
- 26.7.4.** Outstanding road repairs including potholes. The Chair said she had no new information.

- 26.7.5.** Bypass. The Chair said there had been objections to the compulsory purchase order and the diversion of public paths and roads. This meant there would be an enquiry by the inspector held in public in the Village Hall for five days in February/March. The Chair agreed to obtain more details Action
ELW
- 26.8. Environment affairs**
- 26.8.1.** Condition of footpaths. Condition of footpaths and installation of kissing gates. Cllr Hoodless said the kissing gates had not been installed. He said he would find out why. Action
TH
- 26.8.2.** Inspection of trees for which the Council is responsible. Cllr Hoodless said he had spoken to a representative of Gascoyne Cecil Estates who said he would discuss it with his colleagues. The Estate was also considering overgrown trees and hedges at Green Street where the responsibility was disputed between themselves and Herts Highways. Action
TH
- 26.8.3.** To consider the future of the C15 planters including relocation or possible removal. The Chair said she had spoken to former councillor Wendy Woodgate who had agreed to maintain the planting. The Chair said the Council should keep the situation under review.
- 26.8.4.** Damage to the Cradle End bus shelter. Cllr Hoodless said he had asked for a quotation for the repair. Asked about insurance, the Clerk said there was a £250 excess. A claim might affect next year's premium. Action
TW
- 26.8.5.** Noise from aircraft using Stansted Airport. Cllr Wright said he had received the report from the noise survey carried out by the airport using a noise meter in his garden at Green Street. The report was rather technical and he said he would ask SSE to review it. Action
WW
- 26.9. Groups and Amenities** No new information.
- 26.10. Community**
- 26.10.1.** Report on the campaign to improve broadband speeds within the parish. No new information.
- 26.10.2.** Playgrounds. Cllr Tooke said he was pleased that there was little to report. There were some outstanding repairs and none of the gates worked effectively.
- 26.10.3.** Replacing/repairs playground gates including use of Tesco grant. He had spoken to the resident who agreed to fit one gate and quote for the other three – he hoped the Tesco grant would cover the cost. Cllr Hoodless and the Chair spoke of grants, particularly Stansted Airport fund, that might be applied for. The Clerk reminded the Council and those residents present that the gates were to prevent small children running into the road and that those who vandalised them were putting these children at risk of injury or even death. Action
GT
- 26.10.4.** Allotments. Cllr Wilkinson said there was nothing to report.
- 26.11. Consultation and Public Relations**
- 26.11.1.** Council website. Cllr Wardrop said he and the Clerk were working on designs. Action
NW
- 26.12. Security matters**
- 26.12.1.** The Chair said she had driven round the parish with Sgt Wallace. He had said the police were concerned about antisocial behaviour in the parish and said Operation

Panther used a graduated approach to young wrongdoers of – warnings, then visits to parents and then a visit to the police station. He thought calls to 101 were important as is alerted other services and brought more police resources to the area. Sgt Wallace thought CCTV a good idea though a live feed would be expensive. Cameras could be installed in the playground though signs would be required. The Chair said she would investigate a scheme used by Sawbridgeworth Council.

Action
ELW

Sgt Wallace was aware that people thought calls to 101 were a waste of time but he said that all calls were logged and would lead to action by the Safer Neighbourhoods team. Cllr Wright said many residents felt intimidated by the antisocial behaviour. He asked if the Council should contact the County Police Commissioner. Cllr Hoodless said that police had done little so far and it was agreed that he would draft a letter to the Chief Constable.

Action
TH

26.13. Flooding. Cllr Pearson had reported no issues in October.

26.14. Parish Council matters.

26.15. Chair's report.

26.15.1. The Chair said there were no active applications for litter picker. The said she would commission an eye-catching poster.

Action
ELW

26.15.2. Remembrance Sunday 10:50 at War Memorial 12th November. The Chair invited all residents to attend.

26.15.3. The Chair said that Angela and Jon Fardell had decided to stand down from running the Village Hall after many years. She thanked them for all their excellent work and wished them well.

26.15.4. Christmas meal. The Chair said the grant they would apply for did not pay out until January. Because time was short, she proposed that she apply for a grant for an Easter meal in consultation with Chris and Gill Bhatt.

Action
ELW

26.16. Clerk's Report**26.16.1. Financial statement****Period ending 7th November 2017****Unity Trust Bank**

£31,841.82

Petty cash

£4.72

Total £31,846.54**Included above****Received**

HM Revenue & Customs VAT refund - Neighbourhood Plan £397.03

VAT refund - Parish Council £328.41 £725.44

Yet to be paid

Mrs E Lloyd-Williams Book token - leaving gift for litter picker £30.00

To be agreed**To Pay**

Staff Salaries August £401.62

Clerk's expenses August £13.40

Petty Cash float £50.00

Little Hadham Village Hall Hire Hall July and September £50.00

Disposal of rubbish July to Sept £58.50 £108.50

Royal British Legion Donation Remembrance Day wreath £30.00

P Knott (Mower Services) 2 cuts playing fields in Oct 1 cut Nov £363.00

Total payments £996.52**Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £30,900.02****26.16.2.** Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed**26.16.3.** Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Agreed.**26.17. Planning matters.** The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.**26.18. Date of next ordinary Council meeting – Tuesday 5th December 2017.****26.19. The Chair closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 9:50 p.m.**