

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2007 – 2011 Session) held on Tuesday 3rd November 2009 at 8.33 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

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|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Present: | Mr M Fairchild | Chairman |
| | Mr A Morris |) |
| | Mrs C Piccolo |) |
| | Mr J Purvis |) Councillors |
| | Mr T Skidmore |) |
| | Mrs M Wilkinson |) |
| | Mr G Williamson |) |

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and 4 members of the public.

26.1 Public session.

There were no questions or comments on agenda items.

26.2 Absent. None.

26.3 Declarations of interest. None.

26.4 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 6th October 2009 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Piccolo and seconded by Cllr Purvis.

26.5 Matters arising from the Council minutes.

26.5.1 EHC Emergency Planning seminar. Cllr Morris said that he would attend.

26.5.2 EERA Plan consultation. Cllr Morris summarised a draft response [Appendix 1] and proposed that it be sent in the name of the Council. Agreed.

Action
BE

26.5.3 NATS consultation on new flight paths. Cllr Morris reported that the publication of the new routes had been delayed until at least September 2010.

26.6 Road matters

26.6.1 Cllr Purvis said he had no reports of work carried out in October. Cllr Morris agreed to send the list of ongoing road problems to Cllr Purvis for him to update each month. Cllr Mrs Piccolo agreed to report a bad pothole on Acremore Street and a broken manhole cover on Ford Hill to Herts Highways.

Action
AM CP
JP

26.7 Refurbishment of the war memorial. Cllr Skidmore recommended that the Council accept a quotation from J Day & Son of Bishop's Stortford of £455+VAT. This was for cleaning the memorial and repairing the mortar using a lime mix agreed with the EHC Conservation Office. The quotation was considerably cheaper than a previous quote and used a less aggressive cleaning method. Agreed. Cllr Skidmore said EHC had awarded a grant for £150 and so far £250 had been donated. The Clerk said that he could find the balance from Council funds. Cllr Skidmore said that the work should be completed for the next Remembrance Sunday.

Action
BE

26.8 NHS consultation on merging PCTs. Cllr Skidmore summarised a paper that had been circulated to councillors [Appendix 2]. He proposed that his draft be the basis of the response sent in the Council's name. Agreed.

Action
BE

26.9 Police matters. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson reported on a meeting of local people with the area PCSOs. Concern had been expressed about speeding – especially near the

A120 traffic lights. The PCSOs said that they would monitor the traffic though drivers generally behaved sensibly when they were about. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson noted that no one yet had reported seeing the police checking traffic near the lights. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said that the police were now confiscating property used by offenders in the furtherance of crime such as computers and dogs used for hare coursing. She was still waiting for clarification on the opening times for Bishop's Stortford police station and would publicise them through the Parish News. The Chairman asked if crimes labelled 'unreported crimes' were affecting the reported crime figures. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said she would ask at the next meeting.

Action
MW

26.10 Parish Plan.

26.10.1 The Chairman said that the barn dance had been postponed as too few tickets had been sold – possibly because many families were away on holiday at half term.

26.11 Stansted Airport The Chairman noted that the chairman of Ryanair, the largest user of Stansted Airport, had threatened to abandon future expansion plans for the company if it failed to agree a deal with Boeing for new aircraft.

26.12 Chairman's report.

26.12.1 Council Business Plan. The Chairman presented the final version of the Plan that had been previously circulated to councillors. Cllr Skidmore said that referring to several items as 'on going' was too vague and more definite dates should be specified. The Chairman said that it was hard to give dates for several items. However it was important to revisit the Plan on a regular basis to assess progress. He proposed that the Plan be adopted. Agreed.

26.12.2 Possible adoption of red telephone kiosks at the Ford and Bury Green. The Chairman asked if the Council was in favour of adopting the boxes and if so what was to be done with them? A number of ideas had been suggested. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson said she was not in favour as the Council had more important things to do. She noted that a box adopted by Standon Council now needed painting and most of the windows had been broken. Cllr Williamson said he was in favour of expressing interest in adopting the boxes. It was agreed that the Clerk would get further details of any constraints on how the boxes could be used or disposed of while Cllrs Williamson and Mrs Piccolo would consult with local residents and prepare a plan for using the boxes.

Action
BE CP
GW

26.12.3 Plaque for a bench in memory of the late Earnest Hounsell. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said that Ridgeway residents had raised money and a bench had been purchased. She proposed that the Council donate £25 towards a plaque for the bench. Agreed.

26.12.4 Chairman' Statement. The Chairman said that he would be leaving the parish after fifteen years residence and would be moving to Debden near Saffron Walden in Essex. He intended to resign from the Council at the December meeting. Cllr Skidmore had also decided to resign at the December meeting after over ten years on the Council – much of it as Chairman. The Council would need two new councillors and would have to choose a new chairman. He noted that the Council had achieved much in the past few years and there was the prospect that, after the next general election, parish councils would be given more say in local matters. The Chairman said he would be host at a small farewell/pre-Christmas event at 7.15 pm before the next meeting.

26.13 Clerk's Report

26.13.1 Financial statement

Period ending 3rd November 2009

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Barclay's Bank C/Acc | £11,768.74 |
| StepSaver BP Acc | £5.19 |
| BP Acc | £169.90 |
| Petty cash | £5.71 |
| Total | £11,949.54 |

Included above

Received

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Donations for the war memorial | £75.00 |
| Sale of redundant printer | £30.00 |

Uncleared cheque

| | | |
|------|---------------------|--------|
| CPRE | Annual subscription | £29.00 |
|------|---------------------|--------|

To be approved by the Council

To be paid

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---------|------------------|
| Mr B Evans | P/Clerk - (October) | £311.54 | |
| | Exp (October) | £19.20 | |
| | Float | £50.00 | £380.74 |
| Mrs K Green | Grass & bins (October) | | £44.40 |
| Miss A Windmill | Litter picking (October) | | £97.53 |
| Mower Services | Grass cutting October | | £257.60 |
| Little Hadham PCC | Graveyard upkeep | | £250.00 |
| Village Hall | Rent for hall | | £33.74 |
| Royal British Legion | Wreath | | £25.00 |
| | Total payments | | £1,089.01 |

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £10,881.53

26.13.2 Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

26.13.3 Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Proposed Cllr Williamson, seconded Cllr Skidmore. Agreed.

26.13.4 Budget for 2010/11 The Chairman proposed that a working party meet informally to prepare a budget for 2010/11 for consideration at the December Council meeting. Agreed. The Clerk said that he would contact councillors to arrange a date and time.

Action
BE

26.14 Democratic 10 minutes.

A resident mentioned the re-opening of the unsolved murder of Josephine Backshall of Maldon, Essex whose body had been found in a field at Bury Green in 1974.

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

26.16 Correspondence. The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant members.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Herts Police leaflets | MW |
| HAPTC newsletter | MF/AM |
| CPRE Countryside Voice magazine | CP |
| HCC consultation on waste disposal | MW |
| EHC leaflets on recycling | MW |

26.17 Any other business.

26.17.1 The Chairman reported a thank you letter from Mr Brian Burton for the Council's condolences following the death of his wife.

26.18 Date of the next meeting Tuesday 1st December 2009.

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

Appendix 1 Response to the Consultation on the Revision of the East of England Plan by Little Hadham Parish Council

Q1. Do you think we have chosen the right growth scenarios to consider? If not, what other scenarios should we consider and why?

We are shocked at the scale of new housing proposed for East Herts in each of the scenarios. These form part of a doubling in the number of proposed new homes in the region over and above the original estimates. We consider that the revised plan for East Herts should have looked at an alternative scenario with a more sustainable level of housing development.

Q2. Do you have any comments on the four growth scenarios?

The projected employment growth needs to be questioned.

Each scenario for East Herts anticipates a doubling of the annual average for new homes. The number would result in the loss of identity of many villages and small towns in East Hertfordshire and the loss of Green Belt. The proposed 20-fold increase in Harlow would have a catastrophic effect on surrounding communities.

Q3. What is your preferred growth scenario and why?

We believe Scenario 1 of rolling the present scenario of 2001 to 2021 forward is the most sustainable of the four scenarios and therefore the least worst option. Scenario One preserves the rural environment to a greater extent than the other scenarios but would still have a serious negative impact.

Q4. Do you agree that we have covered all the regional impacts of the four scenarios? If not, what else should we have covered?

Apart from the negative impact of unsustainable housing development on the character and environment of villages and small towns, we believe that the number of properties that would be subject to inland flood risk is underestimated.

New homes on the scale suggested would not be viable because of lack of water due to low rainfall and lack of provision for sewage and waste.

Congestion on the A120 through Little Hadham, especially for drivers from Stansted airport westwards, caused by the lack of priority for a bypass at Little Hadham is not taken into account. Any increase in housing in the region will increase pressure on the A120, especially at the Little Hadham pinch point, where a bypass is long overdue.

Q5. Do you agree that the Vision and objectives of the current Plan remain suitable for the revised Plan? If not, what changes would you make and why?

No. The strategy is wrong. The Vision and Objectives are not supported by a sustainable strategy in the medium and long term. In the short term, the strategy does not take into account the events and lasting effects of the recession. The proposed increase in homes would be reliant on job creation on a scale that would further overheat the economy in the South East. This effect would be exacerbated in East Herts, which has relatively low unemployment. Pressure should be put on central government to stimulate the economies of other regions of the UK in order to spread the housing burden more equitably, and to reduce the extent of economic migration to the UK. We suggest a root and branch review to put the Plan on a sound footing.

Q6. Do you have any evidence to suggest that policies other than those identified need to be updated or created?

Yes. The Little Hadham Parish Plan, first published in 2006 and updated this year, provided evidence that this community wishes to retain the essential rural character of this part of East Hertfordshire while recognising that we have to move with the times. That view is endorsed by Little Hadham Parish Council's Business Plan. The community supports the need for more housing but not on the scale proposed in the four scenarios. Overall, more attention should be given to affordable homes with the proviso that priority should go to local people.

The consultation states that policy on the region's airports (E7) will not be revised. We disagree. This policy is based on a White Paper produced in 2003 since when all circumstances relating to social, economic and environmental factors have changed, aviation is in long-term recession and Stansted Airport passenger numbers and flights are at their lowest level for three years.

These factors cannot be ignored and impact on housing and other needs.

Appendix 2 NHS Consultation on Merging PCTs (in Hertfordshire)

1. When PCTs were first set up some 6+ years ago we had at least 5 in Hertfordshire.

For our area we had 2, East Herts, Bishops Stortford and Royston.

2. The proposal is to create 1 PCT for Hertfordshire, with one board of directors and one management organisation.

The Strategic Health Authority for the East of England are conducting a Consultation across Hertfordshire (30th Sept 09 to 11th Nov 09)

3. Our basic questions are, thinking about "Patient Focused Care" – does this proposed merger affect the provision of basic local GP services provided for Little Hadham residents? We have assurances from the PCT that there will be no changes to the local provision of GP services.

4. There may be changes in provider services such as Herts and Essex Bishop's Stortford Community Hosp, St Margaret's at Epping etc.

This will develop as the new PCT (commissioning services) determines what is needed for local people (in Little Hadham) and more importantly how the need is to be met by the PCT provider organisation.

5. A Major concern with this proposal is a perceived decrease in the Focus on Local issues – with a PCT board and management thinly spread across Hertfordshire!

6. A recent example of a "local issue" not receiving sufficient consideration is the local paper coverage (Herts and Essex Observer 22nd Oct 09) "No Urgent Care Centre at Herts and Essex Hospital" – reason too expensive.

Was a joint venture NHS/Private sector considered to fund this? As was the case when the hospital site was developed?

7 We are required to complete the Response Form answering 2 Qs

Recommendation – suggested LHPC Response

1. "How do you feel about the proposed creation of a single PCT Board for Hertfordshire?"

Our answer - Too thinly spread to adequately represent local interests across Hertfordshire

2. "What do you think a single PCT Board should do to maintain a clear local focus and sustain local relationships, both at strategic and operational level, given the geography of Hertfordshire and its communities"

Our Answer - We need a local forum where patient views can be considered as affecting a local service provision or changes to an existing service. This before the issue hits the local paper as a fait accompli and a problem. Something like an MPs surgery, Patients Forum, or the old CHC where all proposed service changes were considered and discussed.