

# Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2011 – 2015 Session) held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at 8:32 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

**Present:**

<b>Mr J Forgham</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>Mr R Gregory</b>	)
<b>Mr G Pearson</b>	)
<b>Mrs C Piccolo</b>	) <b>Councillors</b>
<b>Mr G Williamson</b>	)
<b>Ms W Woodgate</b>	)

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

**26.1. Absent.** Cllr Mrs Wilkinson [unwell].

**26.2. Declarations of interest.** None.

**26.3. Public session.** A number of residents raised concerns about the use of land at the east end of the allotment site. The hedge had been severely cut back and a large number of apple trees had been planted by a nearby resident. They wanted to know who had given authority for this and why the land had not been used to create new allotment plots as there were people on the waiting list. They thought the cutting of the hedge in a conservation area would have required planning consent. The residents referred to a letter from EHC allowing the use of the land for extra allotments.

The Chairman said the Council had agreed to some apple trees being planted.

Cllr Ms Woodgate said that she had held a meeting of the allotment holders and the residents but had been disappointed that they seemed unable to come to an amicable agreement over the use of the land – one resident was concerned that his services, that crossed the land, might be damaged if it was for allotments.

Residents were concerned that the land was not being rented from the Council. The Chairman thought the use of the land for apple trees was the best solution for a difficult situation. The resident who had planted them had donated the trees as a ‘Community Orchard’. However, the matter would be on the agenda for the December meeting.

Cllr Gregory wondered why the matter had been raised now. The allotments had been discussed at meetings in the past and no concern had been expressed then.

On another matter, a resident asked about the overgrown hedge outside Houghtons. Vehicles were forced to drive in the centre of the road. The Chairman said the hedge belonged to EHC and they had agreed to cut it.

Action  
Clerk

**26.4. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as accurate.

**26.5. Matters arising from the minutes.** None.

**26.6. Playgrounds.**

**26.6.1.** Broken fence post at the Ridgeway. Cllr Williamson said one post would have to be replaced.

**26.6.2.** Repairs required following the latest playground inspection. Cllr Williamson said he had spoken to Mr Foskett about the ridgeway fence post, re-securing the Ridgeway basketball post and repairing the fence at the northern end of the Village Hall playground. Mr Foskett would submit a quotation.

Action  
GW

**26.7. Road matters.**

- 26.7.1.** Little Hadham Bypass. Cllr Mrs Piccolo referred to her article in the Parish News. If a suitable funding decision was made by the government in 2014 then the bypass might open in 2019.
- 26.7.2.** Consultation on HCC 20mph strategy. The Chairman said he would prepare a response. He thought it unlikely that 20mph zones would be agreed for villages. Cllr Pearson noted that some modern large cars found maintaining 20pmh for several miles difficult. Action  
JF
- 26.7.3.** Potholes. The Chairman said he still working to get some holes repaired – particularly the sunken manhole cover on Acremore Street. Action  
JF
- 26.7.4.** Vehicles from the side roads jumping the A120 lights. The Chairman said the police had not visited recently. He thought the police had been more obvious during their recent visits meaning driver had obeyed the lights. This gave the false impression that the situation had improved.
- 26.7.5.** Litter picking on the A120. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said the situation had improved recently. The laybys were meant to be cleared weekly and the rest of the verges every three weeks.
- 26.7.6.** Siting of the village sign outside Ash Valley Golf Course and the reflective posts in Chapel Lane. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said she had received another promise that these would be installed in the next ten days.
- 26.7.7.** Distribution of salt for use on frozen paths. Cllr Pearson said HCC had agreed to deliver 25x25kg bags of road salt. He asked residents to contact him. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said she would include a notice in the Parish News. Action  
CP/GP
- 26.7.8.** EHC Highway Liaison Meeting 27th November. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said she would attend. Action  
CP
- 26.7.9.** Temporary closure of part of Chapel Lane. The Chairman noted the closure for installing gas mains to the former chapel hall.
- 26.7.10.** Incidents of vehicle crime in the parish on Sunday 20th October. Cllr Pearson said several vehicles in the parish and surrounding villages had been damaged and broken into early in the morning. The Police had arrested two individuals in connection with the incidents.
- 26.8. Disposal of rubbish collected in parish litter bins**
- 26.8.1.** The Chairman asked the Clerk to find out the details of the costs of rubbish disposal at the village hall. Action  
Clerk
- 26.9. Footpaths.**
- 26.10.** Application to divert footpath 32 at Ivy Farm, Cradle End. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said the footpath crossed the garden near to the house. She said she strongly objected to the application and referred to a draft letter she had previously circulated [appendix 1]. The Chairman said he had heard that, when a similar application in other area had been granted, it had been followed by a flood of applications from other nearby residents. It was agreed to send the letter objecting to the application. Action  
Clerk

- 26.11.** Condition of footpaths. The Chairman said Mr Maddex had been inundated by reports of fallen trees blocking footpaths. He asked residents to pull fallen branches aside when it was safe to do so.
- 26.12. Flooding.**
- 26.12.1.** Preparations for the multi-agency meeting in January 2014. The Chairman said that he was still waiting for the minutes of the previous meeting. Cllr Pearson said that the Environment Agency had no funding for clearing the bed of the Ash for at least two years. This was despite promising to do so at the meeting. It was agreed to write to the Environment Agency asking them to stand by their promise. Action JF  
Action GP
- 26.13. Bury Green**
- 26.13.1.** Tidying the Millennium Wood. The Chairman said the bad weather had thwarted the work party's plans.
- 26.13.2.** Tidying the Bury Green pond. The Chairman said the work party had cleared the scrub and cleared some weed from the pond. Unfortunately the gale had brought down some branches that needed clearing. Action JF
- 26.14. Westland Green**
- 26.14.1.** Repairs to the byroad. The Chairman said he was still waiting to hear from Mr Maddex. He asked local residents to write strongly worded letters to HCC and their county councillor in the hope of getting something done. Action JF
- 26.15. NHS report.** There was nothing to report.
- 26.16. Allotments.**
- 26.16.1.** Collection of rents. The Chairman said Mr Joel Hammond had collected the rents.
- 26.17. Parish Plan Group.**
- 26.17.1.** The Group had no plans for this year but was working on the event to commemorate the start of the Great War.
- 26.18. Council charity donations**
- 26.18.1.** Cllr Mrs Piccolo referred to a list of criteria for making donations that she had previously circulated. After some discussion it was thought charities should be considered on their merits not in order of receipt, should receive only one donation and that there should be a total sum agreed for donations. Cllr Williamson agreed to circulate the criteria used by EHC and Cllr Mrs Piccolo said she would circulate an amended list. Action GW/CP
- 26.19. Chairman's report.**
- 26.19.1.** Remembrance Sunday 10th November 2013. The Chairman invited all residents to attend.
- 26.19.2.** To consider discussions with the Village Hall Committee to concerning the current provision of sound and lighting facilities. Cllr Gregory said the pantomime group was in negotiations with the hall. Action RG
- 26.19.3.** To consider communications between the Council and residents including the website, Twitter and Facebook. The Chairman said that Twitter would be a useful way to communicate with residents in emergencies. Cllr Gregory said he agreed with the Clerk that the authority of Council Twitter messages would be

unclear. The Chairman agreed to use a personal account to communicate with residents.

Action  
JF

- 26.19.4.** Unilateral notices made to the Land Registry for several residents. Following changes to Land Registry law some people had received notice from previous owners of the land registering interest in certain aspects of the property. Residents were advised to seek legal advice though it appeared that the unilateral notices did not effectively change the existing situation.

**26.20. Clerk's Report**

**26.20.1. Financial statement**

**Period ending 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

Barclay's Bank C/Acc	£18,392.92
StepSaver BP Acc	£5.19
BP Acc	£170.22
Petty cash	£48.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>£18,617.24</b>

**To be agreed**

**Already paid**

Mower services Cutting grass at playgrounds [paid13/10/13] £145.20

**To Pay**

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - October	£318.96	
	Exp October	£19.71	£338.67
Karin Green Garden Services	Grass cutting October		£50.00
Royal British Legion	Wreath		£25.00
Little Hadham Brownie Pack	Donation		£200.00
Little Hadham PCC	Graveyard upkeep		£250.00
Little Hadham Village Hall	Hire of hall		£27.50
Mower services	Cutting grass at playgrounds		£290.40
Mr A Purvis	Litter picking October		£111.80
	<b>Total payments</b>		<b>£1,438.57</b>

**Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £17,178.67**

- 26.20.2.** Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.
- 26.20.3.** Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Agreed.
- 26.20.4.** To agree a work party to prepare a draft budget for 2014/15. It was agreed the Chairman, Cllr Gregory and Cllr Mrs Piccolo would meet the Clerk to prepare a draft budget for consideration at the December meeting.

Action  
Clerk

**26.21. Democratic 10 minutes.**

A resident thought the police were making little difference in changing behaviour at the traffic lights as they could be easily seen by drivers.

A resident said that there was no hand rail on the bridge over the Ash on the footpath between Albury Road and the church. Another resident reported that the visibility along Albury Road at the end of the path was very restricted because of overgrown hedges. The Chairman said he would report them.

Action  
JF

A resident asked for the total cost of maintaining the parish playgrounds. The Clerk agreed to calculate them.

A resident asked that a sign giving the allotment rules be displayed at the allotments. The Chairman said this would be on the December agenda.

Action  
Clerk

Action

A resident objected to the plans for Appleby – such a ‘huge house’ was unsuitable for the small hamlet of Cradle End.

**26.22. Planning matters.** The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.

**26.23. Correspondence.**

Clerks & Councils Magazine

JF

CPRE Field Work magazine

CP

SSE letter

CP

HAPTC notice of 2014/15 subscription

JF

War Memorials Trust leaflet

WW

HCC Setting lower speed limits consultation

JF

EHC Bishop’s Stortford North planning details

CP

**26.24. Date of the next meeting Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013.**

**26.25. The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 10.05 p.m.**

### **Appendix 1**

**Re. Your Ref: LC/sjl/8973-2 – Footpath 31 (existing) Footpath 32 (proposed diversion) – Cradle End, Little Hadham.**

Little Hadham Parish Council acknowledges receipt of your letter dated 14th October 2013. The Council has considered the proposal therein and writes to express its views as follows.

The Council objects in the strongest possible terms to this proposal.

Footpath 31 has been in situ for several hundred years making it an ancient footpath. History shows that during past centuries, before this particular path was recognised as a definitive public footpath, farmers and workers of the land used it as a track.

It is the Council's belief, above all, that this footpath should remain in its present situation for the sake of its historic past. The Council has serious concerns over the precedent which would be established should this footpath be allowed to be diverted. Furthermore the Council generally believes that the diversion of footpaths would be detrimental as they are a special feature of our village and should remain exactly so.

The Council understands the applicants bought the land in a separate transaction some years after having moved to Ivy Farm thus the assumption would be that the applicants would have been fully aware, at the time of purchase, that a footpath by its very nature would from time to time carry pedestrians along its length no matter its whereabouts.

The importance of the footpath far outweighs low amounts of inconvenience experienced by the applicants.