

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 31st meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2011 – 2015 Session) held on Tuesday 6th May 2014 at 8:36 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

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

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and 27 members of the public.

31.1. Absent. None.

31.2. Co-opted councillors. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Chris Bhatt and Mrs Liz Lloyd-Williams to the council.

31.3. Declarations of interest. None.

31.4. Public session on matters on the agenda.

A resident spoke about the 2014 Hadfest music festival which he hoped would be held in the Village Hall playground on 11th and 12th July 2014. EHC was involved in approving the event including safety. There would be music on stage from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. He hoped that the stage could also be used for a more informal entertainment for local people including picnics. Any profits would go to the Essex Air Ambulance and the Isobel Hospice.

The Clerk said that, although the Council might support the event and would allow the playground to be used, the Hadfest would not be a Council event. The playground would have to be closed for public use for about a week and the organisers would have to insure the apparatus from damage and insure visitors to the event who might get hurt on the apparatus.

31.5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 1st April 2014 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as accurate.

31.6. Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on Thursday 10th April 2014 to be agreed and signed as a true record. The minutes were agreed as accurate.

31.7. Matters arising from the minutes. None.

31.8. Neighbourhood Plan

31.9. The Chairman said preparing the plan would take 3 years and would need the input of many residents. It would be expensive and would need to pass a referendum of local residents. The plan would give the community a say on where and what type of new housing would be sited. It could make proposals for dealing with issues such as flooding. He thought the Council would set up the working group which would then proceed on its own.

Cllr Williamson said he had reservations on making a Neighbourhood Plan. The District Plan would have to be agreed first which would take to 2016. The local plan might have to include 25 new houses. These would have to be sited outside the current hamlet boundaries and proposed sites would likely cause conflict within the parish from those residents neighbouring the sites and from landowners whose sites had not been included. If there were no plan EHC planning office would decide on the sites which would probably be the same as

the Neighbourhood Plan would have proposed. Cllr Williamson said a plan might even encourage building in the hamlets – if there were no plan EHC might choose somewhere else to develop.

Cllr Pearson said the notion of Neighbourhood Plans might change after the 2015 general election. If the Council planned to object to the building of new homes, creating a neighbourhood plan might be seen as confusing. Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams said that if the Council waited until the District Plan was in place it might be too late to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan by 2017. The Chairman said it would require 30 or 40 residents to be actively involved and very careful organisation would be needed.

Cllr Williamson proposed that the Council defer a decision on whether to have a plan until things became clearer. Agreed. The Chairman said he would research the pros and cons and what other local parishes proposed.

Action
JF

31.10. Allotments

31.10.1. The Chairman said all tenants had signed the new tenancy agreement and one person had volunteered to join the management committee. The management Committee would agree the siting of picnic tables and chairs at the ‘Community Orchard’.

Action
MW

31.10.2. The Chairman said any new fruit trees planted would be removed.

Action
JF

31.11. Playgrounds.

31.11.1. Cllr Williamson said the Village hall playground was in good order. Cllr Ms Woodgate said the Ridgeway playground was in order though the children were climbing on the fence in order to reach a tree.

31.12. Road matters.

31.12.1. Potholes. The Chairman said potholes at Green Street had been repaired poorly. The loose manhole cover at Acremore Street was the responsibility of the water company not HCC.

31.12.2. Hedges outside ‘Houghtons’. The Chairman said they were still waiting for EHC.

Action
GP

31.12.3. Cllr Pearson said he had arranged a meeting with Mr Noads of Herts Highways to inspect drains around the Ashe including the A120, and Albury Road, through Hadham Ford to South Cottages opposite the Thames Water Pump.

31.12.4. Installing two extra planters on the road between The Ashe and The Ford. Cllr Ms Woodgate said the new planters had been ordered. She was disappointed to see that someone had pulled up some flowers and thrown them in the road.

Action
WW

31.12.5. Damage to the footway near the Thames Water pump opposite South Cottages. The Chairman said Thames Water had agreed to repair the damage. He would chase up the matter.

Action
JF

31.13. Footpaths.

31.14. Condition of footpaths. The chairman said most of the footpaths were in good condition.

31.15. Footpath between Albury Road and the church – hand rail on the bridge and overgrown hedge on Albury Road reducing visibility. The chairman Mr Maddex, HCC Footpaths officer, was aware and contractors would deal with the matter soon.

31.16. Trees on Nut Walk. The Chairman said he and Mr Maddex had met the farmer. Mr Maddex thought the coppicing was acceptable if rather heavy handed. The landowner had the right to carry out the earthworks in the field next to the path.

31.17. Flooding.

31.17.1. Report on the ‘Drop in Surgery’ held in the Village Hall on Thursday 24th April 2014. The Chairman said the surgery had been impressive with the Environment Agency, Thames Water, Affinity Water and Herts Highways in attendance. Cllr Pearson said that he had visited a site near Waltham Abbey where a flood prevention scheme, similar to that proposed for the bypass, successfully protected 300 homes. He said grants were available towards the cost of flood protection though homeowners had to pay for the work before being able to make a claim. Cllr Pearson said many residents were finding it difficult to get insurance even if they had not been flooded. He noted that, in the February floods the electricity transformer box had almost been flooded. The electricity company had said that, had the box been flooded, they would have turned off the power. Repairs might have taken a week during which time there would have been no power to homes and the pumps supplying drinking water and removing sewage would have been turned off.

31.18. Bury Green

31.18.1. Tidying the Bury Green pond. The Chairman said he would organise a work party for 10 a.m. Sunday 8th June and asked Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Williams to encourage residents to join him.

Action
JF

31.19. Westland Green

31.19.1. Repairs to the byroad. The Chairman said there had been no progress and he asked Cllr Mrs Wilkinson to chase the matter.

Action
MW

31.20. Chairman’s report.

31.20.1. Parish Assembly Thursday 10th April 2014. The Chairman said the Assembly had been very successful with over 70 residents in attendance. He was pleased to hear the bypass would go ahead if the government gave funding.

31.20.2. Handyman vacancy. The Chairman proposed that Mr Joel Hammond be appointed at a salary of £60 per month. Agreed.

31.20.3. Proposed Hadfest at the Village Hall playground. The Chairman proposed that the Hadfest be allowed to be held in the Village Hall playground on the 11th and 12th July 2014 with the playground being closed for a week when the site was being prepared and cleared. Agreed. The Clerk said that the event would not be a Council event and the organisers would have to organise insurance to cover the apparatus in the playground and all those who attended the event. Cllr Bhatt said that the Council insurance would not give cover if there was an admission charge to enter the event.

31.21. Clerk's Report**31.22. Financial statement****Period ending 6th May 2014**

Barclay's Bank C/Acc		£18,077.32
StepSaver BP Acc		£5.19
BP Acc		£170.26
Petty cash		-£14.29
	Total	£18,238.48

Included above**Received**

East Herts Council	Half precept	£6,400.00
	Council Tax Rebate Grant	£354.28
	Total received	£6,754.28

Uncleared cheques

Little Hadham Primary School	Use school copier	£58.87
Greenman Conservation	Cutting playground hedges	£320.00
	Total uncleared	£378.87

To be agreed**To Pay**

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - April	£318.96
	Exp March	£13.70
	Float	£50.00
		£382.66
Mr Joel Hammond	Grass & bins - April	£60.00
Mr G Pearson	Distribution Assembly flyers	£20.00
NALC	LCR magazine subscription	£17.00
CDA for Herts	Annual subscription	£30.00
Mower Services	1 cut Mar 2 cuts Apr	£435.60
Sargies	2 cuts Apr Bury Green	£150.00
Mr A Purvis	Litter picker April	£111.80
	Total payments	£1,207.06

Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £16,702.55

- 31.22.1.** Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.
- 31.22.2.** Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Agreed.
- 31.22.3.** Proposed to accept the financial statement for 2013/14 previously circulated to councillors. Agreed.
- 31.22.4.** To agree and sign the Annual Governance Statement. The Chairman proposed that the Annual Governance Statement be approved and signed. Agreed.
- 31.22.5.** To receive the report from the Internal Audit. The Chairman said the internal audit, carried out by Mr Mike Smith, had proved to be satisfactory. From the floor Mr Smith noted that the fruit trees donated for the Community Orchard did not appear on the Council assets list. After some discussion it was decided not to add them.
- 31.22.6.** To agree and sign the Audit Accounting Statement. Councillors approved the statement and the Chairman signed the audit document.

31.22.7. Council insurance. The Clerk said that he had received three quotations from: Aviva, through Came & Co the current insurers, £624.98 – £593.73 if agree to fixed 3 years term except for inflation for replacement costs of equipment; Allianz, through AON £617.61; Hiscox Underwriting, through Came & Co £604.47 – £574.25 if agree to fixed 3 year term except for inflation for replacement costs of equipment. Cllr Bhatt said that the policies seemed very similar. He proposed that the Council accept the 3 year term from Hiscox Underwriting. Agreed.

31.23. Democratic 10 minutes.

A resident asked if a skip would be needed for Bury Green pond reeds. The Chairman said he hoped to borrow a tractor and trailer.

A number of residents living in or near Albury Road raised concerns about the route of the bypass. In the consultation parishioners had voted for the western route furthest from Albury Road but HCC had changed to the other route closer to their homes without consultation. This would increase noise and pollution levels and would disrupt a number of footpaths. They wanted the Council to discuss the matter and write to HCC asking for new consultation with residents. The Chairman said that these matters had been dealt with in 2008. If there was any attempt to change the route now then the whole project would fail. He said that councillors worked for the good of the community and he thought there was overwhelming support for the bypass in the parish. Another resident said that the bypass would help protect the villages from flooding.

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

31.25. Correspondence

CPRE Fieldwork magazine

MW

CPRE Countryside Voice magazine

MW

NALC LCR magazine

JF

Clerk & Councils Direct magazine

JF

HAPTC nominations for Executive Committee

JF

Harlow Council consultation on Local Development Plan

HCC Waste Development Framework letter

Local Government Boundary Commission consultation

31.26. Date of the next meeting Tuesday 3rd June 2014.

31.27. The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 10:02 p.m.