

Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the 31st meeting of the **Little Hadham Parish Council** (2015 – 2019 Session) held on Tuesday 1st May 2018 at 8:24 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

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

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and 8 members of the public.

- 31.1. Absent.** None. Cllr Wilkinson left the meeting at 8:30 pm.
- 31.2. Declarations of interest by councillors on any items below.** None.
- 31.3. Democratic ten minutes.**
A resident asked why the Village Hall playground hedge had not been cut. The Clerk said that, despite repeated reminders, the contractor had failed to carry out the work and now it was too late as birds were nesting in the hedge. The resident thought it was a safety issue and that the hedge should be cut.
- 31.4. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Tuesday 3rd April 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record.
- 31.4.1.** Matters arising from the minutes. None.
- 31.5. Strategic matters**
- 31.5.1.** Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Wright said that, following the Parish Assembly, more residents had attended the latest meeting of the Plan group. Because housing at the former GSK site appeared to be going ahead, the newcomers to the group thought naming potential building sites in the Plan would only encourage development. The current 6.2 years Land Supply in the district reduced the pressure on housing sites. The group voted down the proposal to include site allocation in the Plan. He thought the Council should make the final decision. Cllr Wright said that the decision depended on whether the District planning policy could be relied on – that there should be no developments outside village boundaries. He believed that allocated sites would protect the parish from unwanted developments. However, he thought the public meeting to consider proposed sites was unlikely to take place. The Chair said she had been at the meeting and had voted against allocating sites. She thought things had changed over time. She was disappointed that some members of the group were considering leaving and she was concerned about how the group would function in the future. She thought the Council should be more actively involved. Cllr Williamson had said it was unusual for cat 3 and 2 hamlets to allocate sites. Cllr Wright said the landowners of the possible allocated sites were concerned that the meeting was not going ahead. He thought the landowners were reassessing options and might submit applications before the Plan was in place. The owners of the former GSK site had serious money and consultants. Cllr Hoodless asked what would happen if the Land Supply was

lower in future years. Some district councils found some applications turned out not to be possible so their Land Supply dropped. The Chair said that when it set up the Plan the Council agreed not to be too involved. Cllr Wardrop noted that the Plan should be involved in other matters other than planning and the Council could be more involved there. A lot of work was involved. Cllr Wright said the group was about to apply for an extra grant but this would only be available if sites were allocated. The Chair read a report from Cllr Williamson. [Appendix 1] She thought the Council needed to meet the Plan group. Cllr Wright said he was stepping down as chair of the group due to pressure of work. He was looking for new Chair. He thought any meeting about allocating sites would have to be very soon. A meeting as late as September would be too late to influence the former GSK site. Cllr Wardrop said he had heard mixed views on site allocation from residents he had spoken to. The Chair thought that the view at the Assembly had been strongly against allocating sites. She proposed that she should convene a joint meeting of councillors with the Plan group. Agreed.

31.6. Highways

31.6.1. Drive safe scheme. The Chair said the local PCSO had been assigned to the group which had gained two extra members. She spoke of a letter from a resident concerning the dangers of children crossing the A120 at the traffic lights on their way to school. She had passed the letter to Cllr McAndrew. Cllr Wardrop thought a crossing was needed and it should not wait until the bypass was in place. Cllr Pearson reported on a Police website that enabled on line reporting of crime and also anti-social and reckless driving such as red light jumping and mobile phone use whilst driving. If a person takes some video on their smartphone or dashcam of the driver jumping the lights or using their phone, then reports on line, the police say they will come and view the video within 48hrs. This may be useful for the residents that brought up the safety issue at the lights as they could do some online reporting. That in itself becomes quantifiable as we can ask residents to let the parish clerk know when they have reported something and at a later date ask the police for example, how many of the 100 incidents reported were viewed within 48hrs and what were the outcomes.

31.6.2. Outstanding road repairs including potholes. Cllr Pearson said he had no new reports.

31.6.3. Bypass. There were no new reports.

31.7. Environment affairs

31.7.1. Condition of footpaths. Cllr Hoodless said he had successfully applied for a grant to prepare a leaflet of walks around the parish. The Chair thought it should be linked to the Neighbourhood Plan.

31.7.2. Inspection of trees for which the Council is responsible. Cllr Hoodless said he was still chasing Gascoyne Cecil Estates.

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31.7.3. Damage to the war memorial wall. The Clerk said the repairs had been carried out.

31.7.4. Noise from aircraft using Stansted Airport. Cllr Hoodless said there were plans to remove the ban on night flights at Heathrow. He was concerned it might extent to Stansted. Cllr Wright proposed that the Council become a member of

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- Stop Stansted Expansion at £10 per month. Agreed. The Chair said she would ask for a resident to attend meetings held at the airport consultation meetings.
- 31.7.5.** Damage to parish kiosks. The Chair proposed that the Council buy a new glass panel at a price of up to £30. Agreed.
- 31.7.6.** Redundant A120 phone kiosk. Cllr Pearson said it was listed to be removed by 2022 but no actual date was available.
- 31.8. **Groups and Amenities**** The Chair said the Mothers and Toddlers group had thanked the Council for their donation.
- 31.9. **Community****
- 31.9.1.** Playgrounds. Cllr Tooke said Sargies expected to carry out the fence repairs shortly. He would get a quote for cutting the playground hedges.
- 31.9.2.** Replacing/repairs playground gates including use of Tesco grant. Cllr Tooke said he had not received the quote from the resident and expected an alternative quote soon. Action GT
- 31.9.3.** Replacement litter bin for the Ridgeway playground. The Clerk said Mr Joel Hammond would install the bin very soon. Action Clerk/GT
- 31.9.4.** Allotments. The Chair reported on an informal meeting of councillors and the allotment overseer. [Appendix 2] Action ELW
- 31.10. **Consultation and Public Relations**** The Chair reported there were still problems with the Facebook account. She was currently the only person able to edit the site.
- 31.11. **Security matters****
- 31.11.1.** Cllr Hoodless reported on a number of phone scams and break ins to sheds across East Herts. The police were investigating off-road motor bikes in the Cradle End area. Cllr Pearson encouraged residents to report incidents to the 101 police number.
- 31.11.2. **Flooding.**** Cllr Pearson reported a tree had fallen into the River Ash near to the Nags Head PH and he had reported to the Environment Agency for removal who were dealing with it. Cllr Hoodless said that the culverts at Green Street had been cleared.
- 31.12. **Parish Council matters.****
- 31.12.1.** General Data Protection Regulation. To consider preparation for the institution of GDPR on 25th May 2018. Cllr Tooke proposed that the Council agree to appoint the Local Council Public Advisory Service as Data Protection Officer at a cost of £150. Agreed.
- 31.12.2.** To consider the report from the Internal Audit. Cllr Tooke said that the report prepared by Mr Mike Smith had shown nothing untoward and proposed that it be accepted. Agreed.
- 31.12.3.** To agree the Annual Governance Statement. Cllr Tooke read through the list of statements and proposed that they all be accepted as accurate. Agreed. The Chair signed the Statement.

31.12.4. To agree the Statement of Accounts for 2017/18. The Chair proposed that the Statement of Accounts be accepted. Agreed. The Chair signed the Audit document.

31.13. To agree the Council insurance for 2018/19. Cllr Tooke proposed that the Council accept the quotation for the Insurance for 2018/19 from Came & Company. Agreed.

31.14. Chair's report. There was no report.

31.14.1. The Chair reported that the Assembly had been well attended. She thanked Mrs Hoodless for the excellent catering. She noted that several parish councils had significantly increased their precepts.

31.14.2. Clerk's Report

31.14.3. Financial statement

Period ending 1st May 2018

Unity Trust Bank		£31,236.41
Petty cash		£21.87

Total	£31,258.28
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Included above

Received [27/4/18]	Half precept	£6,770.00
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Paid

Mrs G Bhatt [17/4/18]	Easter lunch food and wine	£527.29
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Mr M A Foskett	War Memorial repairs	£490.00
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Unity Trust Bank	Service charge January to March	£18.00
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Uncleared cheque

Mother's & Toddlers donation		£100.00
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To be agreed

To Pay

Staff Salaries	April	£517.62
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Clerk's expenses	April	£20.60
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P Knott (Mower Services)	2 cuts playing fields April	£242.00
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Earth Anchors Ltd	Litter bin Ridgeway playground Parish Assembly	£372.00
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Mr T Hoodless	refreshments	£118.90
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Mr G Tooke	Playground posters	£240.00
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Came & Co.	Council Annual Insurance	£686.63
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Local Council Public Advisory Service		£150.00
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Anne Wright Graphic Design	CA document for Neighbourhood Plan	£300.00
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Total payments	£2,647.75
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Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £28,510.53

31.14.4. Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

31.14.5. Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Agreed.

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

31.16. Date of next ordinary Council meeting – Tuesday 5th June 2018.

31.17. The Chair closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 10.08 p.m.

Appendix 1 Report from District Cllr Geoff Williamson concerning the Neighbourhood Plan.

This is summary of what I have been saying ref NP including what I said last Tuesday:

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced under the Localism Act of 2011 and are designed to give local communities more of a say as to how housing growth in their community should be shaped. The intention of the government at the outset was that all towns and villages should be encouraged to prepare their own Neighbourhood Plans, but this assumed that all communities large and small would see a degree of housing growth. Some of our neighbours, Much Hadham, Standon and Puckeridge have targets for housing growth designated under the East Herts District Plan, so they already know how many new homes they will need to accommodate over the next 15 years.

In Little Hadham's case, the job to develop a Neighbourhood Plan is in many ways very much harder because as a mix of Group 2 and 3 settlements under the District Plan there is no requirement for new housing. Therefore, for us, trying to look pro-actively towards promoting further growth is clearly going to be difficult and is highly emotive as it is for the community to decide for itself how many new homes, if any, are appropriate. There is the quite legitimate view that the village should not be "preserved in aspic" and should evolve, the question then is by how much and how fast.

As Little Hadham does not have housing targets it is not incumbent upon the parish to find preferred sites for any development, and there should only be a need to do so once any demand for housing growth in the village has been established. It must also be remembered that for a Neighbourhood Plan to get passed it must be in general conformity to the District Plan, so any site allocated, and the size of the development on it, would need to comply with the District Plan policies.

The Ford and The Ashe are both Group 2 settlements which under the District Plan would mean that limited infilling, ie up to about 5 houses, could be considered acceptable. So regardless of whether or not a Neighbourhood Plan may set a vision for growth, it can still be useful in being able to control the type and nature of any housing that may come forward, for example to state that there should be homes more suitable for our younger and older generations. A Neighbourhood Plan can also specify design criteria so that any new homes in the village are of a level of quality and would fit in well within the local context.

Regarding Glaxo, I met with our Planning Officers last week, who reported that in a recent meeting with the developer, the developer claimed that through the Community Engagement exercise, residents and both the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan group were supportive of the proposals! Please be assured that I set them straight.

Appendix 2 Report on meeting concerning the allotments.

Allotments Meeting

In attendance: Liz Lloyd-Williams, Gavin Tooke, Tony Hoodless, Clerk & Joel

A working group was set up to look at the allotments after a resident complained that a vacant end plot (which is alongside the "community orchard" had been planted with 8 fruit trees. The plot has been vacant for a year and was covered in weeds. The complainant felt it was inappropriate use of an allotment space.

Councillors meet with the Clerk and Allotment overseer Joel to discuss the current situation and discuss history. Councillors were shown the 8 plots and it was explained to them which plots are rented out. Including the plot on which Trees have been planted there are currently 2

to 3 vacant plots (currently some as half plots due to positioning). The plot in question has also been seeded with grass and very much looks like a continuation of the "community orchard".

Tenants pay yearly (currently £10) but only sign an agreement once at the start of their tenancy. There is currently a 12-month notice period. This tenancy agreement was changed after the previous Councillors agreed that the "orchard" could remain planted. Currently there are signs of the odd tree on plots. There is one site on the allotments which looked like regular bonfires have been happening, which is outside the tenancy agreement. There was also a discussion about bonfires held to dispose of council waste (such as the cutting from the Willow trees).

Cllrs discussed whether the trees should be removed from the vacant plot. Views were mixed. These were:

- if there is no demand for plots which remove healthy, planted trees
- Although it is a shame to remove trees they can be transplanted at this stage elsewhere. If they are not removed now will we be effectively losing an allotment plot when demand for them could become greater.
- I would not agree with established trees being removed at a later date.
- If the plot is being used by someone (in this case trees) they should be paying for it.
- It is unusual for someone to be allowed more than one allotment plot. If a second plot is to be allowed then it should be under the condition that if someone else want a plot they must vacate.
- The tenancy agreement we ask people to sign is not closely enough aligned with the one we ourselves must sign with the EHDC and we should redraft this. All tenants should sign a copy of this yearly. A covering letter should be placed with this in this instance.
- the notice period for misbehaviour be 3 months rather than 12.
- We should ask Joel for more regular updates and stay in contact.
- It could be possible to move the trees to the boundary fence. Keeping the plot seeded while not in use would be less of a problem.

In addition, Joel asked if Ash?? trees could be planted around the edges of the allotments to make the plot more attractive. This is yet to be agreed.

Actions:

1. Advert to be placed in the June Parish Magazine, and on our social media / website to see if there is any interest in the vacant plot spaces.
2. Tony to discuss the matter with the tenant who has planted the trees to discuss our concerns and possible courses of action.
3. The tenancy agreement to be re-written to comply with the EHDC agreement we sign.
4. Group to make a recommendation to Council. Whether this a final decision on the trees at this stage may depend on the conversation with the tenant.