

HUNSDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 20th February 2017 in the Village Hall, Hunsdon

Present: - Chairman B Toll, Cllrs D Gibbs, S Oliver, C Page.

In attendance: - J Robinette (Clerk), Dist. Cllr B Brunton, Cty Cllr R Beeching, B & J Carthy (PPP), 12 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence.

Cllr F. Maule and Cllr B. Dunthorne

2. Approval of minutes of parish council meeting held on 16th January 2017.

Agreed & signed by the chairman.

3. Matters arising.

None.

4. Reports from members representing the Parish Council on outside organisations and attending meetings on behalf of the Council

(a) Parish Paths Partnership. Bud Carthy read out his report: Nicholas Maddex is trying to arrange a meeting with Peter Findlay and ourselves, to help clarify Peter's thoughts on the potential footpath diversions in the Broomlands area, which we have previously spoken to you about. As a prelude to this, Martyn, John and ourselves discussed various options. Bud and Martyn met with Nicholas Maddex to discuss a range of footpath issues. These included renovating a stretch RUPP 12 (Back Lane) which John had developed as an Easy Access Route, but which has deteriorated somewhat. It is hoped that the worked could be funded by the Parish Path Partnership

(b) Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). Nothing to report.

(c) Village Hall Management Committee. Nothing to report.

(d) Allotments. Nothing to report.

e) Police Liaison. Police crime report was read out by Cllr D Gibbs. There were no crimes reported in January for the Parish. Over the past few months we have seen a large rise in the number of reports of criminal damage to land in rural East Herts and this problem continues. Our special operation utilising officers from East Herts, North Herts, Essex and the Special Constabulary is on-going and we would urge you to continue to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity with as much detail as you can, by calling 101 or contacting your Safer Neighbourhood officers directly. Don't forget to keep an eye on your sheds and outbuildings and make sure you check them regularly, as some villages in the area have had a significant increase in thefts. Make sure you mark valuable items and consider adding extra security to your shed or outbuilding to help to keep your property safe. From March 1 2017, drivers will receive six points on their driving licence and receive a £200 fine for using hands on mobile phone their mobile phone whilst driving. These changes will have a significant impact on young drivers as they risk having their driving licence revoked following a first offence. Motorists will no longer be offered the opportunity to go on a driver awareness course. Newly qualified drivers, who have a ceiling of six points for their first two years on the road, could immediately lose their licence if they are caught.

(f) SHN. Nothing to report

(g) Dist. Council. There is still some discretionary grant money for local charities. Applications need to go through Dist. Cllr Brunton and Claire Pullen at EHDC. Cllr Brunton is liaising with Mr P Gregory at EHDC regarding financing the repair of the church wall. Brickhouse Farm appeal has been submitted. A meeting has taken place with relevant parties on site to discuss a solution with the tenants of Olives Farm: a positive outcome is expected.

(h) Cty Council. Cty Cllr R Beeching stated that HCC were agreeing the budget on 22nd February. FINANCES AT HCC. The Adult Social Care budget has a grant of £4.1 million from Govt after the Autumn Financial settlement. This comes from the NH Bonus being reduced to £1.25 million to HCC and the 10 districts have lost £5.2million. Increase in Demographic pressures and grant reductions means there is a £47.9 million gap in 2017/18 After internal changes this gap is now down to £5.0m HCC has the flexibility to raise 1% in Social care budget by increasing the Council Tax, plus the 1.9% which was allowed last year. Increases are limited to 3% a year for three years, but no more than an overall amount of 6% up to 2019/20. However, the HVCCG are refusing to pay their amount to HCC for Social, care of £8.5m Overall this means most probably a 3% rate rise for 2017/18. The equivalent of 23p per week of half a pint of milk week. 2. County wide survey gave the following results...Given the choice between a reduced service and a rate rise 61% said increase the Council tax. Also 80% supported a reduction in expenditure of the Council Support Services 50% would back a reduction in Library services, 49% back reduced Environment and planning expenditure.

5. The Neighbourhood Plan. Since the last Parish Council meeting there have been two developments: -The joint neighbourhood planning group met with Mark Prisk and he restated his opposition to the GA policy in the District Plan believing it to be unsustainable in its current form and has subsequently asked EHDC to reform this policy in respect of a reduced number of houses outside the Green Belt in the Sawbridgeworth area. He has also met with the Housing Minister and discussed the proposals and the garden town bid that East Herts have made in conjunction with Harlow and Epping.

You may know that the government have now approved on-going finance for the Harlow Garden Town which has four new settlements including the GA proposals. The Minister has agreed to meet with him and the NPG. The date to be arranged. On the 28th January, the HENPG participated in a seminar with PFP C & P and their professional team, East Herts and the County Council by way of introduction to all parties and to explore the issues that affect us. From the outset, it was made clear that our participation does not signal acceptance of the GA proposals but our engagement is to secure the best possible outcome for our communities in Hunsdon and Gilston if the District plan is approved following the EIP.

The key issues are: -

The concept framework - what is envisaged by Garden Villages, are they just housing estates on the outskirts of Harlow?

Infrastructure - transport, water sewerage, schools, health, social green and the funding for these

Governance - the mechanisms for managing the planning process, the infrastructure investment and the community assets handed over by the landowners

Community engagement - our Neighbourhood Plan

The seminar has been minuted and these will be made available on the HENPG website. The question of Governance became the most salient topic and it was agreed to meet again to discuss this issue on its own. The meeting has been arranged for April 1st. For those interested in by just what is meant by Governance, PFP published a proposal in December on the East Herts website. Martyn Reid has agreed to join our team on the NPG and anyone else who wishes to contribute would be welcome to join.

6. Village Infrastructure.

a. Glebe Land Exhibition 22nd February. Village Hall. Bloor Homes are holding an exhibition of plans for a proposed housing development plan on the Glebe Land, off Acorn St. Most villagers have received an individual invitation to come along and view these plans. The PC have seen no plans yet and will be attending this exhibition too. There was much discussion from attendees that Hunsdon does not need another piecemeal development and that the sustainability of the village was being compromised again. With the approval of the Crane Yard PA, the village has reached its minimum growth target of 37 houses until 2033. This is considerably in excess of the figure in the District plan which we are judged to be able to accommodate as a Category 1 Village. Even if the Gilston Area is approved - 10,000 houses and our Neighbourhood Plan is approved with the housing that we want where we want it, there will be still be a 5 year housing deficit in East Herts and we remain vulnerable to speculative applications. Chairman B Toll explained that a Neighbourhood Plan, once, agreed, would hopefully allow residents to have a say on where future developments could be sited around the village, but till then local PC's and residents unfortunately have little say in the process. He encouraged all villagers to go the exhibition and inform the developers of their individual views. If a planning application is then submitted each resident **must** put their views directly to EHDC in writing. The PC will hold a public meeting to discuss any PA that may be submitted and then respond to EHDC reflecting the views of the community. The PC will consider professional advice if a PA is submitted.

b. Tree report for the Dell. The clerk has requested quotes from local trees surgeons regarding the tree report sent from EH. At present only one has been received back. There will be a further update at the next meeting.

c. New E mail Addresses. The PC are in the process of changing its e mail address. The new one of the clerk is up and running and is clerk@hunsdonparishcouncil.org. the individual ones to councillors will follow.

7. Planning

i. Decision by EHDC Development Control on earlier applications.

- i. Ladygrove. Ext to create leisure facilities. Granted
- ii. 1, Acorn Street. 2 storey side ext. and rear. Granted
- iii. Fillets Farm. Unauthorised track. Enforcement Notice: Completed

ii. New Applications:

- i. 1 Homesteads. 2 storey side ext. and 1 storey rear ext.
- ii. Little Samuels Farm: Installation of 15m lattice tower.

Planning Update:

HSY. The landlord has been given 1 months' notice to clear the wood yard of any equipment used for waste transfer. This notice will expire on 1st march and the PC will be requesting an update from HCC regarding this and future monitoring of the site.

Nine Ashes development. The planning officer is due to make a decision on this development this week and then it will be passed onto the Development Control to be scheduled at its meeting.

8. Finance

Spending for approval

Clerk's salary for February	£407.20
Cash for Litter pickers	£100.00
J Felstead (setting up new e mail domain)	£130.00
Heart Internet (10 mail boxes)	£59.99
Heart Internet (new e mail domain)	£65.95
Microsoft software update	£59.99

9. Correspondence.

a. Donation for History Society. Cllr D Gibbs had received an e mail from this society in the village asking for a small donation to help fund speakers and hiring of the village hall. This will be considered at the next meeting.

10. Any other business.

a. Playing Field lease. Members of the public present asked for an update on the playing field lease. Chairman B Toll informed the public present that the lease had expired in June 2014 and the PC had continued to pay rent every 6 months to Bidwells, St Albans Diocese Mgt company. In December, the PC had not received an invoice for the PF only the tennis courts, so the clerk questioned this. Bidwells informed the clerk that the lease had now been given the local PCC. Rev M Dunstan had visited chairman B Toll last week and confirmed this and that now the PCC were the landlords of the Playing Field but not the tennis courts. The new lease would also incorporate the new piece of land in the Glebe field that was part of the condition of the PA for the new chapel. Chairman B Toll stated to Rev Dunstan that the PC had always declared that it did not wish to take this piece of land on as it was unsuitable. This would now need to be resolved. Members of the public were very concerned regarding the changing of landlord with no notice from the Diocese. It was suggested that the PC take further legal advice regarding the old lease's terms. The councillors agreed to take further advice. The clerk informed the public that Rev Dunstan had written to the clerk and stated that the Glebe land development and the renewal of the playing field lease were totally unrelated and that he was concerned that villagers may link the 2. He wished that it was made explicitly clear at this meeting that the local church (including himself and the PCC) is not connected to Bloor's development proposal: notably, they have not profited from the sale of the land and will not profit in any way from Bloor's scheme. He also confirmed within this email that the PCC had recently acquired an overriding lease of the playing field and the PCC, not the Diocese will shortly be contacting the PC formally about this.

b. Litter and Potholes. Cllr D Gibbs has had correspondence with Environmental Services concerning the amount of litter in Church Lane and on the A414. A litter pick has recently been done by ringway. Several large potholes on Church Lane and Stanstead road have been reported to HCC also.

c. Gullies on Stanstead Road. A resident informed the council that t all the gullies along the Bonington's stretch of the road seemed to be blocked by leaves etc. Although there is a schedule for gully clearing the clerk will inform HCC again.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm

Minutes are always available on the village web site - www.hunsdon.org.uk .