



HUNSDON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Monday 20th March 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs B Toll (Chair), F O'Shea, D. McDonald, S. Oliver, D Ottolangui

In attendance: Clerk, Cllr Eric Buckmaster, 5 members of the public

23.02.01 To receive and accept apologies for absence. Cllr Oliver sent her apologies due to poor health. Cllr Buckmaster has sent apologies due to attendance at a meeting but will try to get along at 8.30pm. Cllr Burton has resigned from the Parish Council. Cllr Toll wants to thank Steve Burton for work and contribution to the Parish Council, particularly his financial expertise. Cllr Buckmaster arrived at 8.35pm.

23.03.01 Declaration of Interest and dispensations – receive from councillors on items on the agenda.

- To receive Declaration of Interest and Dispensations from councillors on items on the agenda – None.
- To receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests - None.
- To grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate – None.

23.03.02 Approval of minutes of meeting held on February 20th, 2023. Minutes approved and signed by Chair

23.03.03 Matters Arising

23.02.08.1 Strategic Planning and Community Activities

NPG responded to the V1-6 Revisions on our behalf and to the Village 7 viability assessment and revisions. Cllr Toll proposes the two letters sent on our behalf to be appended to our minutes on our website. Agreed

23.03.04 East Herts District / County Councillor Reports – Cllr Buckmaster (Appendix 1)

Essex Council are asking for proof of residency for admittance to the recycling site in Harlow. Cllr Buckmaster now proposing a reciprocal relationship with our neighbouring counties to use Hertfordshire facilities and we use theirs. Currently Harlow is turning Hertfordshire residents away. Thanks to Cllr Buckmaster for passing Ian Hollinrake's letter for the proposed 20mph speed limit past the school in Hunsdon. The Speed and Volume and traffic past the school met the criteria for 20mph. Now, electrical design and survey work will be carried out. This will come out of Cllr Buckmaster's annual budget. Cllr Toll asked if Cllr Buckmaster agreed to making the funding available. Cllr Buckmaster agreed.

23.03.05 Finance – Clerk (Appendix 2)

1. Expenditure – maintenance of streets, grounds and equipment – administration. Expenditure noted and approved.
2. Income, including grants and VAT refunds. Received VAT of £586.34.
3. Approval of expenditure. Councillors approved this month's expenditure
4. Budget Monitoring Report and Bank Reconciliations. Councillors agreed and approved.
5. Litter Picking – Update After meeting yesterday, clerk confirmed that current smaller size bins were approved to be swapped and/or relocated as agreed with North Herts Waste department All streets, public paths, that are listed on the HCC, (boundary to boundary) will be swept, litter picked, cleaned by Name please . [Highways Gazetteer \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.arcgis.com)
There is an AAA (Adopt an Area) scheme which allows litter pickers (volunteers) to place bags with litter by their refuse bins for collection. Volunteer's home address is registered on our system and litter bags are taken on the day of collection. We provide with high a visibility vest.
Bud Carthy pointed out that the leaf clearing on the pavement was not done but East Herts and North Herts will be doing this on.



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Action: clerk to pull together a map and schedule of the proposed bin emptying, street cleaning. **Awaiting schedule from North Herts Waste** Cllr Ottolangui suggested we have a month moratorium of no litter picking to have an understanding about the needs of sweeping/litter picking going forward.

6. UK shared Prosperity Fund – Cllr Ottolangui and the clerk met with the lead from the UKSPF and RPF lead. We produced proposals on what we want to do in the village and have a sub-committee of 7 residents in the village who want to help on this project. Guestimate of the proposed project spend around £42,000. The funding is matched, but not just financial, can be labour based. Cllr O’Shea commented on the renovation of the pump area and ownership. Cllr O’Shea recommended that we understand the ownership of land like the pump area and the War Memorial triangle and car park before we spend significant sums on them. **Action: Clerk to put Village Improvement Proposal on the website. Have an updated version that will be loaded onto website after approval by committee**

23.03.06 Hunsdon Area Planning Applications (Appendix 3)

PC Responses and Decisions - See Planning Report/

1. Planning Policy Statement – Cllr O’Shea – Draft policy statement produced and circulated to the councillors. Cllr Toll proposes we accept the proposal. Cllr O’Shea seconded. All agreed. Motion carried.
3/22/2156 - Proposal to build one, four bedroom detached self-build dwelling in Church Lane was refused citing three policies from the Hunsdon Neighbourhood Plan.

23.03.08 Reports – May (annual) July Oct Jan March

1. Footpaths (Appendix 4) – nothing significant to report. Asbestos fly tipping at the entrance to the airfield, on private land. **Action: Cllr O’Shea to contact Knight Frank regarding this. Clerk to email Knight Frank to escalate the issue and also East Herts, Environmental Agency. Done, this has now been removed.**
2. Police – nothing to report. There is a police liaison meeting on the 16th April, that the clerk will attend.
3. Village Hall – financial review last month at trustees meeting. Current overheads per hour of an average hire are approx. £12.60. Effective from 1st April an estimated additional increase of £10,000 pa in overheads mainly, heating and insurance. The trustees decided to raise the rates across the board and the three organisation that have been receiving free of charge, the Church; Parish Council; Social Committee, will now pay the applicable rates.
 - Cllr O’Shea commented on the container on the tennis courts, which is land the Parish Council leases from the Diocese. The PC are the owners of the container by default, in which is stored Village Hall equipment used for outdoor events like the summer fetes. Cllr O’Shea suggested the Village Hall provides us use of the meeting room free of charge in lieu of rental for the container. **Action: Cllr O’Shea to suggest to the VHMC.**
4. Allotments – nothing to report. Cllr O’Shea advised the Parish Council can give notice now of the new charges for allotment plots, effective September 2023. **Action: Cllr Oliver to send letters of notice to the allotment holders.**
5. Playing Field (Appendix 5). Cllr O’Shea is willing to be involved in the discussions with East Herts Planning in relation to the planning application for the MUGA. Cllr Ottolangui asked if the MUGA project is still viable as the cost has increased by 44% to approximately £150,000 and what is an alternative. What can be done with the money we have? Perhaps resurface and improve the fencing. It was confirmed £14,000 of s106 money is earmarked for improvements in the tennis courts. There is still an opportunity with Sports England for a grant, but this could take potentially another year. Cllr Toll said there is a possibility of Taylor Wimpey providing some funding from Village 7. Under the lease, there is a rent free period until 2025 and PC can exercise a break clause then if there is no viable use for the former tennis courts, so we have approx. 2 years to decide what to do.



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23.03.09 Correspondence

Damage to fence in the playing field. Action: clerk to check insurance to see if the cost of replacing the damaged fence is covered and get photos to see what the damage is and get a price for the replacement of the damaged fence.

23.03.10 AOB

23.03.11 **Gilston Area Update** –members of the public were excluded from this item for reasons of discretion and the Council agreed to supporting a request to the Secretary of State to Call-in the Gilston planning applications which will be managed on its behalf by the joint Neighbourhood Planning Group

23.03.12 **Date of Next Meeting:** 17th April 2023

23.03.13 **Close of meeting 9.10pm**

Appendix 1 – E Buckmaster report for Mar 2023



Gilston Villages 1-6 Outline Application approved

This was considered by the committee on 28th February. The Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group were given 12 minutes to address the committee as was I. Residents and other groups had a lesser amount of time. We had a number of concerns around affordable homes, delays in delivering infrastructure that would protect Pye Corner, cumulative impact of traffic, flood risk, air quality, health provision, education and more. Officers responded to all points but it seemed to me that whatever the concerns are that they will be addressed later. It was approved by majority, with two against and one abstention. I still have some strong concerns over the impact of around 25,000 houses across the sub region of Harlow, Gilston, Ware and Hertford and how it will be managed, monitored and enforced. Village 7 Outline will be heard on 23rd March.

County Budget approved

Over the coming financial year, the county council will spend over £1billion delivering essential services to residents and businesses.

The decision to raise council tax comes after the council had exhausted all means of protecting services. Additional grants from government have softened the scale of the challenge, but the council has also set out plans to deliver savings of £27.4m in the coming financial year, the highest for many years and utilising £19m of our reserves.

Persistently high levels of inflation have had a significant impact on the council's budget, and the council is also seeing increased demand for vital services, particularly as households see their own finances stretched.

The approved budget for the coming financial year will allow the council to protect services to those most in need while also investing in the council's Corporate Plan priorities.

Councillors have voted to increase Council Tax by 4.99 per cent (including 2 per cent for social care). This means that a typical Band D household will pay £1,605.63, an increase of £1.47 per week from April this year.

The budget for 2023/24 reflects commitments made in the council's Corporate Plan, and will see services funded to the tune of £121m extra in 2023/24, including:

- £38m to ensure adult care providers can continue to support residents – including funding to ensure our excellent care workforce is paid a fair wage for all they do, day in day out, to help those in need. This is supported by the social care precept



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- £15m is expected from the extension of the Household Support Fund to support our most vulnerable residents with the cost of living
- An extra £19m for Children's Services, including an extra £5.2m to support the children in our care
- £10m for home-to-school transport for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities to ensure they can get to school easily
- £6.4m to support waste disposal services, alongside new contracts that will mean that no waste in the county will go to landfill from 2024.
- £4.6m of extra funding into highways revenue budgets to cover inflation and ensure we can continue repairs and maintenance work on our roads - plus another £3m next year to help respond to the impact of the cold weather over the winter
- £36.4m to continue our work to improve recycling centres and make our waste infrastructure fit for the future
- Funding to continue moving forward the Brookfield Riverside and Garden Village developments in Broxbourne
- Continuing to invest in our website to enable more people to carry out transactions online.

The county council is also investing in projects that will ensure future savings. This investment will lead to projects that will help residents remain independent for longer, keep families together through early intervention schemes and save taxpayers money by transforming partnership working.

East Herts County budget

This was approved on 1st March and is an increase of £5.50 per annum for a band D, or £189 per month.

Concern over proposed ULEZ expansion

The Leader of Hertfordshire County Council [has written to the Mayor of London](#) outlining opposition to the planned expansion of the [London Ultra-Low Emission Zone \(ULEZ\)](#). While the county council supports the aim of the ULEZ in improving air quality, the expansion of the scheme does not properly assess the impact on the Hertfordshire towns and villages bordering London or put sufficient measures in place to mitigate the impact on the county's most vulnerable residents. Therefore, the council cannot support the ULEZ expansion, and do not accept that any signage or cameras aimed at fining drivers, potentially up to £180 if they forget to pay the £12.50 charge, should be based in Hertfordshire.

Strategic migration

The Hertfordshire Strategic Migration Steering Group continues to lead on Hertfordshire's coordinated partnership response to the arrival of and support for refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan and Ukraine. Currently there are 1277 [Ukrainians in Hertfordshire](#) on the Homes for Ukraine scheme and work to increase the number of hosts families has been successful in finding a further 58 hosts. A new support package to assist refugees who wish to stay in Hertfordshire to move into the private rental sector is planned. People continue to seek asylum in the UK and there are currently 12 hotels in Hertfordshire being used as temporary accommodation for them. The County Council observed the national minute's silence at 11am on Friday 24 February to mark the one-year anniversary of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Links to various campaigns and updates

The county council's campaign - '[here for you this winter](#)' is about making sure that residents are aware of the help and support that's on offer locally to help them throughout the winter months. Please share the [here for you this winter campaign webpage](#)

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service has teamed up with Public Health Hertfordshire to launch [Healthy Body Healthy Mind Hertfordshire](#), a new campaign to highlight the positive effect that being active can have on our physical and mental health and wellbeing.



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During the winter months there are [an increase in potholes](#) due to snow and ice. The council is encouraging residents to [report potholes found on the road network online](#) so that they can be added to the repair and maintenance programme.

Hertfordshire County Council is encouraging residents to apply now if they need to **close a road for a street party to celebrate the [Coronation](#) of His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort** from 6 to 8 May 2023. Recognising the social and community benefits of celebrating this historic event the county council will not be charging any fees should you or your neighbours wish to close your road and hold a party. [Please apply by 26 March 2023.](#)

Secondary Transfer in our local Schools

Across Hertfordshire, application numbers for Secondary Transfer were very similar to last year, with 14,972 applications compared to 14,997 for 2022, a decrease of just 25. Satisfaction rates have remained high with the percentage of Hertfordshire children offered a ranked school in 2023 almost the same as last year, 94.3% compared to 94.7%. The percentage of children offered their first ranked school is also very similar to last year, 77.8% compared to 78.6% last year.

Across Bishop's Stortford, the number of families applying for secondary school places in September 2023 increased by 12.8% to 572 compared to 507 for September 2022 entry. In Sawbridgeworth, the number of families applying for secondary school places decreased by 8%, with 109 applications received for September 2022, compared to 118 for September 2022 entry.

The opening of Avanti Grange School has increased satisfaction rates across the district and the school is full of applicants who ranked it as a preference.

In Bishop's Stortford, the percentage of families offered a ranked school is higher than last year, 99% compared with 98% in 2022. The percentage of children in Bishop's Stortford offered their first preference school also increased this year to 81%, compared to 78% in 2022.

In Sawbridgeworth, the percentage of families offered a ranked school is the same as last year at 99%. The percentage of children in Sawbridgeworth offered their first preference school has also remained the same at 93%.

Non-Ranked Allocations

There are 5 non-ranked allocations (NRAs) in Bishop's Stortford. Applicants who could not be offered one of their preferred schools have been allocated a place Birchwood High School.

In Sawbridgeworth, there was 1 NRA. This was a late application. This child has also been allocated a place at Birchwood High School.

| Parish | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|
| Bishop's Stortford | 5 | 9 | 9 |
| Sawbridgeworth | 1 | 1 | 8 |
| Total | 6 | 10 | 17 |

As of 1st March, Birchwood High School is the only school with places available in the local area. Places are also expected to become available at other schools through the continuing interest process due to places being returned and movement between schools and through the appeals process.

Children will be entitled to free transport if they are attending the nearest available school place and the distance between home and school is more than three miles. Families on low-income, the easiest measure of which is those children entitled to free school meals, have an extended entitlement; free transport is available to any one of their three nearest available schools between two and six miles from their home. Families who are entitled to free transport will be contacted in May with details of how to take up the offer of free travel.

Some info on Highways

- Hertfordshire has 5,100 km of busy roads and 5,600km of footways and cycleways.



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- We spend approx. £90m on maintaining the highways infrastructure, including additional investment in drainage and vegetation cut-back.
- Our approach to maintenance is well regarded nationally, ensuring we receive optimal grant funding from Government.
- Hertfordshire is in the top quartile of Authorities in being successful in bidding for funding for such things as Active Travel schemes.
- The condition of our carriageways continues to compare very well to national averages, i.e. A roads, 2% require maintenance against national 4%, B & Cs 4% against 6%, and Us 7% against 15%, the latter as a result of a specific investment of £29m.
- Two of our recent major projects, namely the New River Bridge in Hoddesdon and the A120 Little Hadham Bypass and Flood Alleviation scheme have been delivered, with the A602 upgrade due to complete by late summer, costing well in excess of £100m in total, and residents are now benefitting from the improvements..

HAPpy camps are back this Easter

Hertfordshire County Council is funding free Easter activity camps for children and young people in Hertfordshire

Fully-funded holiday activity camps return for the Easter holidays, giving eligible children and young people a chance to meet friends, learn new skills and enjoy nutritious food.

The HAPpy programme, funded by Hertfordshire County Council and the Department for Education (DfE*) via the government's Holiday Activity and Food programme and coordinated by Herts Sports Partnership and the Hertfordshire Community Foundation. The programme will be running more than 200 activity camps from 3 April – 14 April 2023 (not bank holidays).

With over 14,000 free activity camp places available, eligible families are being encouraged to get their booking code from their school and reserve a place at a camp near them as soon as possible. **Booking opens on Monday 6 March.**

As part of its commitment to help residents manage the cost of living, Hertfordshire County Council provided funding for more than 69,000 places last year for children to attend free activity camps.



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Appendix 2 – Finance Report

| Hunsdon Parish Council | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Revenue Expenditure | | | | | |
| Credit | | | | | |
| | Budget | To date | Remaining period | Year | Variance |
| B/F General | £6,695.52 | £6,055.48 | | £6,055.48 | -£640.04 |
| Precept | £21,400.00 | £21,400.00 | £0.00 | £21,400.00 | £0.00 |
| Litter Picker | £1,942.12 | £2,220.26 | £0.00 | £2,220.26 | £278.14 |
| Allotment rents | £489.00 | £488.00 | £0.00 | £488.00 | -£1.00 |
| VAT refund rev | £3,017.83 | £2,904.70 | £113.13 | £3,017.83 | £0.00 |
| Grant Neighbourhood Plan | £0.00 | £1,929.00 | £0.00 | £1,929.00 | £1,929.00 |
| Santander Interest | £0.00 | £4.44 | £0.00 | £4.44 | £4.44 |
| | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Totals | £33,544.47 | £35,001.88 | £113.13 | £35,115.01 | £1,570.54 |
| Debit | | | | | |
| Administration | £2,325.56 | £2,097.30 | £240.00 | £2,337.30 | £11.74 |
| Litter pickers | £1,600.00 | £1,560.00 | £130.00 | £1,690.00 | £90.00 |
| Salary | £5,762.12 | £5,762.16 | £480.18 | £6,242.34 | £480.22 |
| General Power of Competence | £720.00 | £576.00 | £0.00 | £576.00 | -£144.00 |
| Allotments | £340.00 | £375.46 | £0.00 | £375.46 | £35.46 |
| Playing Field | £700.63 | £834.08 | £0.00 | £834.08 | £133.45 |
| Rest of village | £1,300.00 | £671.09 | £0.00 | £671.09 | -£628.91 |
| Grounds Maintenance | £5,002.00 | £4,261.50 | £1,503.00 | £5,764.50 | £762.50 |
| Neighbourhood Plan | £5,000.00 | £6,820.83 | £0.00 | £6,820.83 | £1,820.83 |
| NP Communicator Co-ordinator | £1,000.00 | £420.00 | £135.00 | £555.00 | -£445.00 |
| Churchyard donation | £500.00 | £1,000.00 | £500.00 | £1,500.00 | £1,000.00 |
| Ukraine donation | £0.00 | £500.00 | £0.00 | £500.00 | £500.00 |
| S111 consultants | £1,000.00 | £375.00 | £0.00 | £375.00 | -£625.00 |
| Defibrillator funding | £365.00 | £0.00 | £438.00 | £438.00 | £73.00 |
| Village Event Funding | £1,000.00 | £1,000.00 | £0.00 | £1,000.00 | £0.00 |
| Totals | £26,615.31 | £26,253.42 | £3,426.18 | £29,679.60 | £3,064.29 |
| Surplus | £6,929.16 | £8,748.46 | -£3,313.05 | £5,435.41 | -£1,493.75 |
| Totals | | | | | |
| Revenue Surplus | £6,929.16 | £8,748.46 | -£3,313.05 | £5,435.41 | -£1,493.75 |
| Capital Surplus | £12,477.81 | £30,415.51 | -£17,702.03 | £12,713.48 | £235.67 |
| Total Surplus | £19,406.97 | £39,163.97 | -£21,015.08 | £18,148.89 | -£1,258.08 |



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| Bank Reconciliation | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| | | | |
| 16th March 2023 | | | £1,556.65 |
| Santander bank | | | £38,321.00 |
| Litter picker money | | | £23.00 |
| | | Total | £ 39,900.65 |
| Payments agreed but not cleared bank | | | |
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| | | | |
| Payments to be agreed | | | |
| C Page | Salary for March 2023 | Salary | £384.18 |
| C Sanderson | Salary for March 2023 | Litter Pickers | £130.00 |
| HMRC Cumerbaud | PAYE for Clerk | Salary | £96.00 |
| M Nissim | February hours for PC | NP Communicator | £20.00 |
| C Page | Printing paper | Administration | £6.50 |
| Hunston PCC | Village News annual | Administration | £100.00 |
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| | | | £ 736.68 |
| | | Balance at Bank | £ 39,163.97 |



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Appendix 3 – Planning Report

| Planning Applications https://publicaccess.eastherts.gov.uk | HPC Response |
|--|--------------|
| 3/23/0448/HH PROPOSAL: Demolition of garage and store and erection of single storey detached outbuilding comprising of a double garage, bike workshop, garden store and office. AT: Old Wall House Hunsdonbury Lane CONSULTATION Deadline: comments to EHC by: 29/03/2023 | Neutral |
| Planning Application Decisions | |
| 3/22/2156/FUL PROPOSAL: Erection of one, four bedroom detached self-build dwelling with detached garage/car port; installation of air source heat pump and solar panels; creation of new vehicular access way and associated landscaping for Land At Church Lane Hunsdon Decision: Refuse Planning Permission | |
| 3/21/2936/FUL PROPOSAL: Change of use of two grain store buildings (A and B) to Class B8 storage and distribution use at Halfway House Farm Stanstead Road Decision: Grant Planning Permission subject to Conditions | |
| 3/21/2935/FUL PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing grain plant/storage building and 4 silos/hoppers and erection of new replacement building containing 4 business units with associated parking and servicing at Halfway House Farm Stanstead Road Decision: Grant Planning Permission subject to Conditions | |

Appendix 4 – Playground Report

Playground

We have an action plan to address some of the issues noted in the 2022 inspection. One of the issues was loose fence posts, which now seem to have firmed up. Carol and I wrote to Kompan challenging some of the issues which had appeared in equipment which was less than 2 years old at the time, but to no avail.

We also have also asked for quotes to replace the combination gate, which was found to have multiple issues so really needs replacing. So far, I have only had 1 quote, which was for a total of £3504.33 including VAT. The installation portion was £1367.74, which is far too much. Carole has been trying find someone who could do the install for us ,

MUGA

I have asked for the 3 quotations I have to be updated. One has come back with a 44% increase from the original quote. Depressing, but not unexpected. I have sent an initial application to Cadent several months ago, and to Sport England, but have heard nothing back.. We also started the process of obtaining planning permission, which we will need to complete the application to Sport England. Both Mike Newman and Frank have expressed surprise that we would need to apply for planning permission as there is essentially no change of use. I will check again with East Herts.

Jackie Carthy



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Appendix 5 – Footpaths

1 Footpaths

Nothing significant to report.

2 The Stile on FP 24.

The state of the fence and stile on H24 was recorded in our previous report. Since then, a significant number of posts have been replaced in the fencing containing the stile, removing the negative impact on the adjacent pavement. No work was done on the stile. We will monitor this situation and involve the county council footpath group as needed.

3 Fly tipping on Hunsdon Airfield. Asbestos potential hazard

It is 3 months now since this issue was highlighted and no action has yet been taken. It is still present.