

HORMEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 12 January 2012 in Hormead Village Hall at 8pm

PRESENT: Cllr Robert Denham (RED), Chairman; Cllr David Ginn (DEG), Vice-Chairman; Cllr Geoff Abbey (GA); Cllr Elizabeth Collery (EC); Cllr John Kilby (JK)

Clerk: Colin Marks

County Councillor Jane Pitman, Ciaran Gold (Hertfordshire Mercury) and 12 other members of the public.

ACTION

12.001 Apologies for absence

- 1. Councillors:** Cllr E Harding, on holiday
- 2. Other Councillor absences:** Cllr D Ginn arrived late – business at Buntingford Town Council
- 3. Others:** District Councillor Rose Cheswright and PCSO Amanda Higham, both had duties at another meeting

12.002 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Collery and Cllr Kilby: personal interest in respect of the Village Hall;
Cllr Denham: personal interest in respect of the School

12.003 Formal approval of amendment to Minute 11.234.1 of Parish Council Meeting, 13 October 2011

It was **RESOLVED that the amendment to Minute 11.234.1 be agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record.**

12.004 Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 8 December 2011

It was **RESOLVED that the Minutes of 8 December 2011 be agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.**

12.005 Chairman's Announcements: The Chairman had no announcements

12.006 PCSO Report: No report was made

Adjournment for public comments

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended to allow public comments.**

Mrs Sarah Fremantle asked what steps the Parish Council was taking to produce a Neighbourhood Plan in light of the Localism Bill, and urged the Council to act swiftly so that undesirable plans could not be imposed on the Parish who, without an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, would have no control over planning decisions. The Chairman replied that there was a lot detail yet to be published about how the Localism Bill would be implemented, but assured Mrs Fremantle that a Neighbourhood Plan would be considered in the near future.

Mrs Joan Howell asked if the Village Hall would be discussed at the meeting, to which the Chairman replied that it was not on the Agenda.

12.007 Internal Administration

The Chairman reported that preparation of updated Standing Orders based the new model was still in progress.

RED

12.008 PLANNING

1. Planning Applications

3/11/1935/FP Layston Farm, Hare Street

Siting of two residential caravans

Objection

Clerk

It was agreed to object because the caravans would be highly visible from the road and completely out of keeping with the rural scene.

3/11/2128/FP Three Jolly Butchers, Hare Street

Proposed brick/flint wall to north and west boundary

Objection

Clerk

It was agreed to object because at 1.45m, the wall would be too high for its street location.

3/11/2122/FP 2 Bradbury Farm Barns, Hare Street

Proposed stable block for domestic use ancillary to main dwelling house

No objections were raised, provided it is for private family use only, not commercial; Clerk to seek clarification.

No objections, subject to clarification

Clerk

2. Decision Notices

3/11/1840/FP Great Hornead Bury

Erection of entrance gates, side walls, boundary fence and hedging

PERMISSION GRANTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

3/11/1629/FP Lilac cottage, Hare Street

New garage/parking and study, and 1.8m chain-link front boundary fence

PERMISSION GRANTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

3. Other Planning matters

The Clerk said he would keep Councillors informed of any further information regarding the Nuthampstead Shooting Range decision.

Following concerns expressed by the Environment Agency, the Committee meeting has been postponed until 28 February.

12.009 FINANCE

1. The report of the Council's finances for the period 29 November to 29 December 2011 was received (Appendix A).

Finance Summary:

Opening available balance 29/11/11: £ 11,909.52

Plus income to 29/12/11: 350.00

Less expenditure to 29/12/11: 1,202.72

Available to Council: 11,056.80

(Reconciled to bank statement 314):

It was **RESOLVED that the Accounts Statement be accepted.**

2. The list of orders for payment was presented and authorised to be signed (Appendices B1 and B2).

It was **RESOLVED to approve the invoices presented for payment.**

It was agreed to defer the signing of cheques to the end of the meeting.

Clerk

3. Update on viewing bank statements online: The Clerk report it was all arranged and he is awaiting the card and pin-sentry card-reader.

Clerk

4. Budget and Precept for 2012/13. Cllr Kilby referred to the budget proposal that he had emailed to councillors and proposed that in view of the prevailing economic climate, and a letter received from parishioner Caroline Jones expressing similar views, the Council live within its means and hold the precept at its present level of £15,000. Cllr Kilby also remarked that Hornead already has probably the largest precept among the small East Herts villages. The Chairman responded that since the new agreement with Hornead Hares had yet to be negotiated and the consequential uncertainty as to what next year's income and related expenditure might be, it would be imprudent to leave the Parish Council's finances vulnerable to a shortfall. Hornead could not be compared to any of the district's other small villages because it facilitates a uniquely high number of football teams and cricket clubs.

Cllr Collery expressed a desire to retain the present precept level, but was also concerned that the Parish Council could run out of money in the event of unanticipated expenditure.

Cllr Abbey argued that in context, a £1500 increase was in the order of 18 pence a week per household, which he considered neither unreasonable nor unacceptable in order to maintain existing facilities.

Cllr Ginn arrived at 8.33pm, apologising that business had delayed him longer than anticipated.

Cllr Kilby moved that the precept for 2012/13 remain at £15,000. An amendment to increase the precept to £16,500 was moved by the Chairman. The original motion was put to the vote and was defeated by 4 votes to 1. The amendment was then voted on, and by 4 votes to 1 it was **RESOLVED to increase the precept for 2012/13 by £1,500 to £16,500.**

Clerk

12.010 Correspondence

The list of correspondence was received (Appendix C). Items arising:

1. EHC: Salt distribution – Cllr Abbey agreed to put a disclaimer notice on the salt bin to warn users.

GA

2. Mr Bill Holder: re allotment provision. The Clerk reported that Mr Holder was now looking at the existing allotments in Horseshoe Lane.

Clerk

3. QEII Fields: The Meads has received the QEII Award.

4. Victim Support: Request for donations. It was agreed to decline the request.

5. Cllr Collery: email sent to the Chairman requesting that contentious comments in the Parish Council section of the Newsletter state that they are the Chairman's views and not necessarily those of the whole council.

- 12.011 Special Interest Groups Reports**
- 1. Village Hall.** Cllr Collery reported that a meeting will be called shortly to progress the VH plans, and that fundraising, grant applications and building regs approval will be moving forward. VHMC are to appeal against the EHC imposed condition that the new hall be completed before any house on the land is occupied. The Committee is seeking to meet the Charity Commission for advice on updating the 1962 management document, and to verify that they are compliant with charitable trust requirements. It was reported that the Charity Commission had vested itself as custodian trustee and the land had now been registered in their name. In answer to a question posed in December, Cllr Collery said that she did not know the date she was registered as a trustee, but she had been voted onto the Committee at the AGM on 9 November 2011. She also gave assurances that, contrary to some suggestions, the VHMC have no hidden agenda to sell off the site, to abscond with the funds, or to move the hall to another location. She appealed for bridge building between VHMC and HPC. EC
- In response, Cllr Ginn said that no one had seen a notice of the AGM, either on the notice boards or in the Newsletter, and asked whether one had been posted. He questioned the assurance that proper notice had been given.
- 2. Highways.** Cllr Abbey reported that due to bad weather, he had not been able to arrange a meeting with Ian Bishop regarding the footpath in the area of the school, or to progress the issue of the missing Gt Hormead sign. The updated position on winter salt supplies had been given under agenda item 12.010.1 above GA
- 3. Footpaths and Byways.** No report.
- 4. Website.** The Clerk said the new website is now fully functioning and under his control. Clerk
- 5. School.** Nothing to report
- 6. Meads.** The Chairman said there was nothing to report under this item that had not been dealt with already under Finance, or that would be considered under agenda items 12.012 and 12.013
- 12.012 Hormead Hares Football Club** ALL
A meeting between HHFC and HPC has been arranged for Monday 16 January at 7.30pm in the pavilion.
- 12.013 Meads:** The following issues were considered
1. Play Area Repairs (Appendix D). Following discussion, it was unanimously **RESOLVED to award the repairs contract to Broadmead Leisure.** Work to be completed early February. Clerk
2. Pavilion electrics (Appendix E). Following discussion, it was unanimously **RESOLVED to award the lighting and wiring contract to Dry Electrical.** Work to be completed this financial year. Clerk

	<u>3. Car parking on the B1038 and B1368.</u> This will be raised at the meeting with the Hares on 16 January. Michelle Cavill said it was once the agreement that parishioners should have the padlock code. However, the point was made that there is no longer a volunteer to open and lock the gate each day and it is important that responsibility is taken for the gate to be kept locked when not in use.	ALL
	<u>4. Fencing.</u> To be reviewed later in the year	Clerk
	<u>5. Disclaimer Signage.</u> Additional signs to those that will be at the play area, could be expensive, and consideration would have to be given as to how many and where to site them. To be reviewed.	Clerk
	<u>6. Pest Control.</u> Following concerns that rabbit scrapes create a safety risk for Meads users, there was a discussion on Roy Jarman's report on rabbit control, where it was considered that, 1) it is not possible to get rid of rabbits from the Meads, only to control them to some degree; 2) being a public place, there should never be any night shoots there; 3) this is a rural area of which wildlife is an integral part and it would not be appropriate to attempt to eradicate the rabbits; 4) other means of reducing the risk to public safety should be employed; 5) on a related theme, it was agreed to review the mole contract in August. Cllr Kilby moved that Roy Jarman be engaged to deal with the rabbits along agreed lines. By a vote 2 in favour and 3 opposed it was RESOLVED to take no action to reduce the number of rabbits on the Meads. In answer to a question by Cllr Kilby, it was clarified that the decision was both to save money and to protect rabbits in a rural area.	Clerk
	<u>7. Locks:</u> Discussed with in 12.013.3 above.	
	<u>8. Other matters:</u> None	
12.014	Insurance Further to the discussions above, the Insurer requires a risk assessment to be carried out on both the Play area and on the Meads, specifically relating to rabbit and mole activity. The previous Clerk, Caroline Jones, had carried out a risk assessment last year for the Play area, to which the Council should refer. The Meads is more difficult to assess due to the number of sporting activities taking place there. The Chairman and Clerk will progress and report back to Council.	RED/ Clerk
12.015	Keys and keyholders: To be discussed with HHFC at Monday's meeting.	ALL
12.016	Queen's Diamond Jubilee 1. Cllr Ginn reported that a site at the Bury had been secured for the location of the beacon. He would also put a piece in the Newsletter to update parishioners and to advertise the event. The possibility of sponsorship is being progressed.	DEG
12.017	Councillor Training evenings 1. Simon Drinkwater on the Code of Conduct: Thursday 23 February at 7.30pm in the pavilion. 2. Carina Helmn on Councillor Training: to be arranged following Simon Drinkwater's training evening.	ALL Clerk ALL Clerk

- 12.018 Village Hall Representative**
 The Chairman said that when Cllr Collery was voted in November to be the Parish Council's Representative on the Village Hall Management Committee, it had not been made clear that she was a Trustee representing two other organisations on the VHMC. In light of that fact, he proposed that Cllr Ginn replace her as the Parish Council's representative with no existing connections to the VHMC apart from the Parish Council. There was considerable discussion, during which Cllr Kilby stated that Cllr Ginn would not be acceptable and Cllr Collery disagreed with the need for change, and, following a vote on the Chairman's proposal, it was **RESOLVED that Cllr Ginn be the Parish Council representative on the VHMC.** **DEG**

- 12.019 Casual Vacancy**
 The Clerk reported that no applications had been received to date. **Clerk**

- 12.020 Items for future agendas**

 - 1. To consider joining the new standards regime once EHC have submitted their proposal. **Clerk**
 - 2. Provision of allotments: To consider if another formal request is submitted (see 12.010.2 above). **Clerk**
 - 3. To consider producing a Neighbourhood Plan (see *Public Comments* following 12.006 above). **Clerk/RED**
 - 4. Meads disclaimer signs **Clerk**
 - 5. Meads fencing **Clerk**
 - 6. Mole contract (August) **Clerk**

- 12.021 Date of next meeting**
Thursday 16 February at 8pm in the Village Hall (or 7.30pm if a significant number of planning applications have been received). **Clerk**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.38 pm.

Signed **Dated**