

HORMEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 17 May 2012 in the Meads Pavilion

PRESENT: Cllr Robb Denham (RED), Chairman; Cllr David Ginn (DEG), Vice-Chairman; Cllr Elaine Harding (EH); Cllr John Kilby (JK)

Clerk: Colin Marks

District Cllr Rose Cheswright (RC) and seven other members of the public

ACTION

12.085 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: Cllr Geoff Abbey (holiday)

2. Other Councillor absences: None

3. Others: Cllr Jane Pitman (prior engagement), PCSO Amanda Higham (on leave)

12.086 Declarations of Interest

Personal interests declared by Cllr Ginn, Cllr Kilby, Cllr Harding: Village Hall; Cllr Denham: School (Governor).

12.087 To consider the appropriateness of a Vice-Chairman

This item was moved forward to be included in the Annual Parish Council Meeting held earlier in the evening.

12.088 Appointment of Councillors/Representatives to Special Interest Groups for the ensuing year

The following were appointed:

1. Village Hall Management Committee Representative: Cllr D Ginn

2. Highways: Cllr G Abbey

3. Footpaths and byways: Cllr J Kilby

4. Website: Clerk, C Marks

5. School: Cllr R Denham

12.089 Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 19 April 2012

Cllr Kilby said the Minutes omitted that he had asked for it to be recorded that he did not approve them. Following this amendment and a vote, it was **RESOLVED that the Minutes of 19 April 2012 be accepted as a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

12.090 Chairman's Announcements: None

12.091 PCSO Report:

PCSO Higham did not send a report but, with the Chairman's permission, the Clerk read a Neighbourhood Watch report received that day warning that a number of thefts of high value items from outbuildings had been reported in neighbouring Albury and Braughing.

Cllr Ginn said that he had received reports of travellers setting up a site on the football field at Newton, just beyond Royston.

Adjournment for public comments

In view of the public discussions that had taken place earlier in the evening at the Annual Parish Meeting, the Chairman proposed to not adjourn for further public comments

12.092 Internal Administration

1. Standing Orders revision is with the Chairman, and ongoing.

RED

12.093 PLANNING

1. Planning Applications

No new planning applications had been received

2. Decision Notices

3/12/0443/FP and 0444/LB Great Hormead Bury

Replacement porch

*LISTED BUILDING CONSENT **GRANTED** SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS*

3/12/0507/LB Milburns, Conduit Lane

Listed Building alterations to window and internal layout

DECISION AWAITED

3/12/0527/MA Milburns, Conduit Lane

Minor amendments to 3/03/0835/FP: alterations to fenestration and garage

APPLICATION REFUSED

3. Other Planning matters

1. **11/02146/1CM**: Nuthampstead Shooting Range: Decision deferred to Development Control Committee meeting 22 May.

2. The Chairman noted that the wall at The Three Jolly Butchers was being built to a lower height than the rejected planning application, and although he was very much in favour of it, wondered if revised planning consent had been obtained.

3. No further applications received.

Clerk

12.094 FINANCE

1. The report of the Council's finances for the period 29 February to 31 March 2012 was received (Appendix A).

Finance Summary:

Opening available balance 29/3/12:	£ 2,818.09
Plus income to 30/4/12:	9,390.00
Less expenditure to 30/4/12:	<u>2,179.94</u>
Available to Council:	<u>10,028.15</u>

(Reconciled with bank statement to 30 April):

The Chairman pointed out that 50% of the precept and the Play area grant had now been received.

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

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

	<p>2.2 Cllr Harding was organising the buffet and hot drinks for the Jubilee Party, which she estimated would cost approximately £200. It was RESOLVED unanimously that Cllr Harding be given a float of £200 from the budget to buy the buffet food and drink, and that she would give receipts of all expenditure to the clerk.</p> <p>Commenting on the donation to the school, Cllr Kilby said he thought it been agreed to donate £200 for the Jubilee, not £150. The Clerk and Chairman said the £150 was in lieu of the mugs that were to have been presented, the cost of which would have been £148.</p> <p>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.</p>	EH/Clerk
	<p>3. The Clerk had submitted a request for the Parish Council to consider contributing 50% of the cost of upgrading the RAM on his computer (£76.71), the memory having become full since he became clerk. Cllr Kilby did not agree, saying the job application required the clerk to provide his own computer. The Chairman said it was a perfectly reasonable request because of the amount of Parish Council work involved, for which the Council could provide a computer. It was RESOLVED by 3:1 that the Parish Council contribute 50% towards the cost of the Clerk's RAM upgrade. Cllr Kilby opposed the motion. Cllr Kilby then asked the Chairman if he had submitted the Council's P35 to HMRC, which Chairman affirmed.</p>	Clerk
	<p>4. Internal Audit: The Chairman reported that although the internal auditor had approved the accounts, he had done so on a cash basis rather than income and expenditure, the Parish Council's preferred way. The main items affected, relating to the y/e 2012, were staff costs (paid in a month in arrears) and play equipment repairs completed in March for which the grant was not received until early April. He had spoken to the auditor and agreed the changes. The internal annual return will be signed off next month once formal approval has been received. The Chairman reminded Council that the BDO deadline for completion was 13 July.</p>	Clerk
<p>12.095</p>	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>The list of correspondence was received (Appendix). Cllr Kilby queried the Chairman's responses to emails sent him by Mr Rogers and Mr Northover, and said the Chairman appeared to be keeping things to himself. The Chairman said that was not the case, but would copy every one in.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that a request had been received from Harlow Town Cricket Club to use the Meads this summer. The bookings were being arranged.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the broken blind fixing had been repaired, but suggested the fixings be inspected regularly to ensure they remain safe.</p>	<p>RED</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>12.096</p>	<p>Special Interest Groups Reports</p> <p>1. Village Hall. Nothing to report.</p> <p>2. Highways. The Clerk reported that he was awaiting costings from Raj Goutam of Herts for a Welcome to Gt Hormead sign.</p>	<p>DEG</p> <p>GA/Clerk</p>

	3. Footpaths and Byways. No report. Cllr Kilby, when asked by the Chairman about reinstatement of footpaths by farmers and landowners under the rules, stated that it was a waste of time to write to them as they would only respond negatively.	JK
	4. Website. The Clerk reported there had been some issues with the site and its contents since Style Cymru had updated it. These were being resolved with the company.	Clerk
	5. School. The Chairman reported that he was unable to attend the last Governors meeting, but understood the school was considering a Summer Fayre. The Ofsted review had been successfully completed.	RED
12.097	Meads: The following matters were considered: 1. Disabled Access to pavilion. The Clerk said that CC Jane Pitman could not support the funding request for this because she had already granted £1600 to the Hares this year (the ramp upgrade is at the request of the Hares). 2. Warning and Disclaimer Signs. The Clerk reported that the Play area and Pavilion signs are still to be done. The Chairman said signs at Mr Northover and his neighbours' property would also have to be provided. 3. Contract renewals: The Chairman said that he and the Clerk were working on contracts for the Hares and the cricket clubs in order to minimise the solicitor's involvement.	Clerk RED/Clerk RED/Clerk
12.098	Hormead Hares Football Club 1. The Chairman said he understood the Hares had received no further news on the Sport England grant due to its funds having been depleted because of the Olympics. 2. There had been correspondence on various matters with Michelle and Eileen. 3. The Chairman emphasised the importance of getting a licence agreed by 30 June, when the current agreement expires. 4. Cllr Kilby asked about the cleaning rebate; the Chairman answered that the annual fee was for the use of the facility and should not be broken down into individual elements of cost. 5. Cllr Harding said that, having cleaned the pavilion since April (at her own expense) it required more than one day a week to keep it in good order. New cleaning arrangements are to be investigated. 6. A licence is being drawn up as reported in 12.096.3 above.	RED/Clerk Clerk
12.099	Queen's Diamond Jubilee 1. Celebration update: Cllr Ginn reported that all the plans are coming together for 4 June and although the budget is tight, any profit will go into the community. He appealed for helpers for organising and helping at the event. 2. QEII Fields Award: The Clerk reported that it had been hoped the plaque would have been ready by now, but the registration process had not yet been completed by QEII Fields in Trust. 3. Grants update: The EHC grant had been received. CC Jane Pitman's grant was promised but had not yet been received.	DEG Clerk Clerk
12.100	Councillor Training evenings 1. Carina Helmn on Councillor Training: Not progressed.	Clerk

- 12.101 Casual Vacancy**
The Clerk reported that no applications for the co-option vacancy had been received. **Clerk**
- 12.102 Items for future agendas**
- 1.** Joining the New Standards regime: To be considered once details of the proposal are published by EHC. **Clerk**
 - 2.** Insurance: The Chairman and Cllr Ginn had reviewed the policy, including chain link fencing by the riverside. A £100 increase in the premium is due to the Insurance Premium Tax having increased to 6%. **RED/Clerk**
 - 3.** Other items for consideration: No other items suggested.
- 12.103 Village Hall**
Before this item was discussed, the Clerk advised Councillors that in considering the motion, they should take into account two questions: whether such a course of action would be considered by the electorate to be an appropriate use of public funds, and whether all other avenues to get the answers had been exhausted.
Cllr Ginn asked the Parish Council to consider a budget of up to £600 to engage a solicitor to investigate
1) the VHM in its non-compliance of accepting him as the Parish Council's representative, and
2) to investigate the ownership of the Village Hall.
He said the solicitor he had in mind was a specialist in charity law who, given access to the files, could, for a maximum of £600, quickly establish the legal position and whether there is a case.
Cllr Ginn asked Cllr Kilby to confirm whether he had declared a personal or prejudicial interest in Village Hall matters, to which Cllr Kilby replied personal, and he then reminded Cllr Ginn of his own prejudicial interest. VHM Secretary Mrs Kilby, interrupting from the floor, reminded the Council that she had some months previously sent it a report, which had not been accepted by the Parish Council.
Proceedings were interrupted again by parishioner Shane Collery, who introduced himself as a barrister and who passed out a document to members and to the public, asking Councillors to first consider the questions it posed before continuing with their discussion. Within it, he said, was an extract of the 10 principles of public office and charity trustee requirements. The Council, who had not been given an opportunity to examine its contents before the meeting, did not discuss the document.
Mr Collery disputed as inadequate Cllr Ginn's estimate of £600, asking what advice he had been given. Cllr Ginn asked Mr Collery if he, like the solicitor he has approached, specialised in charity law, to which Mr Collery replied that he did not.
The Chairman said it could cost the Parish a lot more to lose the Village Hall, which is an asset that appears on the Parish Council's Asset Register. Cllr Harding said parishioners wanted to know what was happening at the Village Hall; Councillors have been asked questions and are expected to know or to be able to get answers.
The Chairman said that answers have not been given by the VHM for some considerable time and cited a series of questions posed by former Chairman John Haselden to which there had never been a proper response. **Clerk**

Cllr Kilby said spending £600 could not be considered a reasonable use of public money.

Cllr Ginn moved that a budget of up to £600 be used to engage a specialist charity solicitor to investigate the legality of the VHMC's actions. Cllr Kilby requested a recorded vote. Cllrs Ginn and Harding voted for the motion; Cllrs Kilby and Denham opposed it. The Chairman used his casting vote and it was ***RESOLVED to not engage the solicitor.***

12.104 Date of next Parish Council meeting

Thursday 21 June in the Church Room, due to the Pavilion being used by the cricket club.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Signed **Dated**