

HORMEAD PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 12th September 2012 at 8.00 pm in Great Hormead Village Hall, Hare Street, Hertfordshire

Present: The six registered electors of the Parish who had called the meeting:
(A Cater; S E Collery; E Pickup; J Reeves-Hairs; G Robertson; L Rogers)
Robert Denham (Chairman and Chairman of Hormead Parish Council)
Joan Diales (Independent Clerk)
102 parishioners and members of the public

Attending: Ciaran Gold (Hertfordshire Mercury)

1. Reason for the Parish Meeting

The Parish Meeting was convened by six electors of the Parish notifying all residents under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 Section 9 and 13 to vote on a motion of "no confidence in the Hormead Parish Council".

2. Preliminaries

The Chairman of the Parish Council, being present at the meeting, took the Chair of the meeting in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 Section 13(1).

The Chairman stated that only those people who were registered electors in the Parish were eligible to vote. The Chairman requested that all questions and discussions should be directed through him, as Chairman, and that politeness should be shown to the independent clerk who had been asked to take the minutes and also to Colin Marks, clerk of Hormead Parish Council, who was attending the meeting as a member of the public. The Chairman said that only one question was allowed to be made by anyone. The meeting protested at this remark, and the Chairman withdrew it, saying he had suggested this because he wanted to ensure that everyone who had comments were able to make them. The Chairman then said he wanted to hear from those electors who had called the meeting, their reasons for so doing.

3. The Electors' View

The parishioners and public expressed their concerns about how the present members of the Parish Council had dealt with issues in the parish relating to the Hares (the children's football team) who, together with the Hormead Sports Association and the Cricket Club, had used the Meads playing fields for 12 years, brought it back from an overgrown site misused by casual loiterers, to an excellent playing field for both football and cricket, spending a lot of their own money in so doing. The Hares provided a football club for all the children in the villages and surrounding areas and had turned the Meads from an overgrown field into a respectable sports field. The Hares had considered that the increase in lease fees from £3,600 to £5,100 per year was excessive. The Chairman, on behalf of the Parish Council, said that they had always been prepared to negotiate with the Hares. This was vigorously disputed. During discussion it was asked that, as the parish council was delegated to keep the Meads in a condition suitable for the playing of football and cricket, how did they propose to do this now they had lost their long term regular children's football team who paid £3,600 per year towards the upkeep. The Chairman said that the parish council was in discussions with others on this question but would not elaborate.

An unsigned pamphlet regarding the Village Hall had been distributed that day by Cllr David Ginn to some of the village. It was noted that this pamphlet contained information relating to the Village Hall that was out of date, incorrect, and untrue. The Chairman was asked if this pamphlet had been distributed on behalf of the parish council. No complete answer was given. The Chairman stated that the current Parish Council had objected to the planning application for rebuilding. The meeting reminded him that the previous Parish Council had contributed £1,000 towards the cost of the planning application in support of the rebuilding.

There was intermittent discussion regarding the Village Hall throughout the evening, and the Chairman was reminded on more than one occasion that the meeting was to discuss the Parish Council's ability to represent the parish, and not the Village Hall or the Meads.

4. Conclusion and Proposal

The meeting considered that Hormead had two main assets, "The Meads" and "The Village Hall" and after considerable discussion on these and other topics including:

The Hares football team moving away from the Parish and the resulting loss of revenue

The legality of the replacement of the Village Hall and the sale of part of the site to fund the rebuilding

The behaviour of some Councillors including the Chairman in not following The Model Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils

The 9.8% increase in the Parish precept being the only increase on the 2012/13 Council Tax bill

Mr Leonard Rogers proposed a vote of no confidence in Hormead Parish Council, seconded by Mr Peter Button. A vote was taken and numbers counted by both the independent clerk, and Colin Marks, clerk to Hormead Parish Council.

Those in favour of the motion 55 and those against 15.

Resolved: That this Parish Meeting has no confidence in Hormead Parish Council

The meeting closed at 9:30pm