

HORMEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Hormead Parish Council Meeting Thursday 20 December 2012, 8pm in the Meads Pavilion

PRESENT: Chairman Cllr Robb Denham (RED); Cllr David Ginn (DG); Cllr Jayne Denham (JD); Cllr John Kilby (JK);

Clerk: Colin Marks

5 members of the public and Michael Havis, Hertfordshire Mercury.

- 12.199 Apologies for absence** **ACTION**
- 1. Apologies received from Councillors:** Cllr Elaine Harding (unwell); Cllr Dave Baseley (business)
 - 2. Other Councillor absences:** None
 - 3. Other apologies:** District Councillor Rose Cheswright
- 12.200 Declarations of Interest**
- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: Cllr D Ginn declared he owns land adjacent to White Cottage, where a planning application has been made (12.207).
Non-pecuniary personal interests declared: Cllr D Ginn on Village Hall matters; Cllr R Denham, by being a school governor; Cllr J Kilby on Village Hall matters as shown on the website.
- 12.201 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, 18 October 2012**
- No comments were made and, following a vote, it was **RESOLVED by 2 votes with 2 abstentions that the Minutes of 18 October 2012 be accepted as a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes at the end of the meeting. **Clerk**
- 12.202 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, 20 November 2012**
- No comments were made and, following a vote, it was **RESOLVED by 2 votes with 2 abstentions that the Minutes of 20 November 2012 be accepted as a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes at the end of the meeting **Clerk**
- 12.203 Casual Vacancy**
- The Clerk reported that no requests had been made to EHC for an election and he had therefore posted notices on the boards and the website inviting parishioners to offer themselves for co-option. The Chairman said the notices would remain until the vacancy was filled.
- 12.204 PCSO Report:** PCSO Higham was not present and did not send in a report. The Clerk was asked to speak to Sgt Wallace to see if a PCSO could attend and/or report. **Clerk**
- 12.205 Standing Orders**
- 1.** The Chairman deferred this discussion to a later meeting, once the Standing Orders have been amended to incorporate new information on certain matters, eg Register of Interests and Staffing Committee. **RED/Clerk**
 - 2.** Regarding the Register of Interests, the Chairman explained that the original form did not include Appendix B interests and others of a non-pecuniary nature. One-off interests will need to be notified to the Monitoring Officer as and when they occur, and as declared at a PC Meeting. An updated expanded Register Form was given to members for completion and return to the Monitoring Officer, with a copy to the Clerk for the website. All sections should be completed with a Y/N clarification, and with details of the interests, eg name of each employer and nature of business for both member and spouse where applicable. **ALL MEMBERS**

12.206 Chairman's Announcements:

It was announced that, except for emergencies, the Clerk would not be available between Christmas and the New Year.

12.207 PLANNING

1. Applications

3/12/1824/FP The Chapel, Horseshoe Hill

Infill of ground-floor open space within dwelling footprint

The council made NO COMMENTS

Clerk

3/12/2027/FP White Cottage, Horseshoe Lane

Single storey side & rear extension and porch

Cllr Ginn made a statement that he had no objections to the applications concerning White Cottage, and then left the room because of his DPI due to owning adjacent land (12.200).

The council made NO COMMENTS

Clerk

3/12/2027/LC White Cottage, Horseshoe Lane

Demolition of stables

The council made NO COMMENTS

Clerk

2. Decision Notices

3/12/1520/FP 2 Layston Cottages, Hare Street

Single storey rear extension

It was noted that this application had been approved with conditions

3. Other Planning matters: NONE

12.208 FINANCE

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

Finance Summary:

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| Opening available balance 30/9/12: | £ 10,557.33 |
| Plus income to 31/10/12: | 0.00 |
| Plus stopped cheque 100961 from September (lost in post) | 417.00 |
| Less expenditure to 31/10/12: | <u>1,922.70</u> |
| Available to Council: | <u>9,051.63</u> |

(Reconciled with bank statement of 29th November)

Following a vote it was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Accounts Statement be accepted.**

2. The list of orders for payment was presented for authorisation to be signed (Appendices B1 and B2). Following a discussion it was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve all the invoices presented for payment.** It was agreed to defer the signing of cheques to the end of the meeting.

Clerk

3. Draft budget 2013-14. There was a discussion on the draft budget figures which the Chairman presented to the meeting. It was agreed that members would give further consideration to them with a view to finalising the budget and precept at the January meeting. The Clerk reminded the Council that EHC had requested a draft figure by 11th January with a finalised deadline of the end of February. He also drew councillors attention to the 2013/14 Tax Base information sent by EHC, and advised that the Secretary of State has confirmed there will be no cap on parish council precepts for 2013/14.

All

Clerk

The Clerk also said he had updated information on the disclaimer signs for the play area. It was agreed to bring this item forward from 12.211.3 since it was relevant to budget considerations: Broadmead Leisure have advised that the current price for aluminium signs has gone up from £102 to £110 each. However, Broadmead were advising that a polycarbonate sign was available for £120 (plus affixing cost of less than £75), having the advantage of being more durable, more vandal and graffiti-proof, and, because the lettering is engraved into the surface, it could not be removed. The council's obligations would also be

Clerk

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| | met by having only one sign (rather than two, as originally proposed) affixed to the railings, facing inwards so it can be clearly seen by users. It was unanimously RESOLVED that the Clerk should order one polycarbonate sign, to be affixed to the railings nearest the car park, facing inwards. | Clerk |
| 12.209 | Correspondence The list of correspondence was attached as an appendix to the Agenda and there was a brief discussion, most of the matters being included on the agenda. | Clerk |
| 12.210 | Special Interest Groups Reports | |
| | 1. Village Hall. Cllr Baseley was not present and there was no report | DB |
| | 2. Highways. | |
| | 1. Winter salt: The Clerk said that he had received no notification from HCC regarding the delivery of the salt. Cllr Ginn said he would chase HCC. | DEG |
| | 2. Mr Michael Bentley had reported flooding in Hare Street and Hare Street Road in November. The Clerk had reported it to Highways, who had investigated. No remedial action had been taken and it was not thought to be due to blocked gullies, but a flood warning notice had been put in place. | Clerk |
| | Cllr Ginn reported that the heavy rain on the day of the meeting (20th December) had now caused the road surface to lift. It was agreed that the Clerk report this to Highways. | Clerk |
| | Cllr Ginn also raised the vast amount of mud on the road through Little Hormead. The Clerk reported that he had spoken at the beginning of the week to Highways, who had the work scheduled for completion on 14th January. However, having spoken to Affinity Water and their contractors, Enterprise Mouchel, he had been assured the work would be completed and all mess cleaned up by Friday 21st December. | |
| | A missing railing on the Meads bridge over the Quin had been reported to Highways, | Clerk |
| | 3. Footpaths and Byways. The Clerk drew councillors' attention to the letter from The Planning Inspectorate regarding certain parish footpaths and bridleways, and a hearing to be held on 26 March, venue as yet undecided. It was identified that information and maps of the paths affected could be accessed on the planning portal website, and at County Hall in Hertford. Cllr Ginn said he would check. | JK |
| | The Chairman said he had been contacted by Mr Grant of Covenach Estates regarding access through a hedge that has now been cleared, but that it was too wet at present to reinstate the footpath from the stile east of the B1368 south of Hare Street at the top of the hill before Mutfords turnoff. He also reported that he had not yet received a reply from Mr & Mrs Higgins regarding the Faylands footpath forming part of the Hertfordshire Way, and that enquiries had been made regarding two broken access gates to the meadows on either side of the Quin at the bottom of Worsted Lane, opposite the pumping station and also to the west of the bridge on the south side. | DEG |
| | 4. Website. Nothing to report | RED |
| | 5. School. The Chairman reported that the school is considering whether to become an academy or to remain as an independent. If it opts for academy status, it will enable it to act as a feeder to Buntingford schools, which could significantly improve its intake. | Clerk |
| 12.211 | Meads: The following matters were considered: | RED |
| | 1. The Meads generally. The Chairman reported that two fallen trees had been removed. Also that the eastern bank of the Quin had collapsed in one place resulting water flooding the adjacent field. Three of the original six warning signs are still in place, but they may need to be re-sited at some point in the future, and safety fencing along the Meads side of the bank will need to be considered. | Clerk/RED |
| | 2. Disabled Access to Pavilion. The Clerk said he had found an experienced builder for this work and had arranged a site meeting to discuss early in the New Year. It was agreed that | |

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| | remedial work on the car park to alleviate the problem of large puddles would be discussed and reported back to Council | Clerk |
| | <u>3. Warning and Disclaimer Signs.</u> The play-area signs were discussed at 12.208.3 above. | Clerk |
| 12.212 | Hare Street and Hormeads CC There was a discussion on the request of the cricket club to place a memorial bench to Bob Hammond on the Meads. Everyone was in agreement, the clerk to pass this on to the Club and liaise on the siting. It was suggested the Council make a donation; this to be added as a future agenda item | Clerk |
| 12.213 | Concerns about drugs abuse Cllr Jayne Denham presented a report about concerns about possible drug use in the Higgins' car park. She said the police always took drugs matters very seriously. If anything suspicious is seen, a vehicle registration should be obtained if possible and a call made to Hertfordshire Crime Stoppers (which are always treated as anonymous). It was noted that although the landowner and HHFC had to clean up a lot of rubbish, they had not reported any evidence of drug use. It was agreed the Clerk contact Sgt Wallace with a view to getting an officer to attend a Council meeting to hear concerns, to encourage PCSO visibility in the parish, and to report on how the police are handling drugs related issues locally. <i>Clerk's note following the meeting: Crime Stoppers and other police contact information is given on the Parish Council website, www.hormead.org.uk. A copy of Cllr J Denham's report is also attached to these Minutes for information.</i> | ALL Clerk |
| 12.214 | Queen's Diamond Jubilee recognition: QEII Award 1. The Trust Deed and Land Registry forms are being sent to Land Registry. The plaque is at the foundry. 2. The Clerk showed the meeting a photograph of a plaque. There was a discussion on where to site it, and it was agreed to put it on the pavilion wall. The precise location to be agreed once the plaque has been delivered. The Mercury reporter present was asked if they would cover the event. 3. There was a discussion on ordering a royal oak sapling. It was agreed to order one for planting on the Meads, providing it is supplied free. | Clerk ALL Clerk Clerk |
| 12.215 | Neighbourhood Plan The Chairman again expressed concerns that only two residents have shown a willingness to be involved, which may stem from a lack of information on what is required. More information about this will therefore be put onto the website. He reiterated his doubt as to whether 50% of parishioners would register approval of a plan, which would make the exercise futile. It was agreed to continue advertising on the website until the end of March and to review it again then. The Chairman again said it would be good to hear from a cross section of the community and he hoped interest would be shown. | RED Clerk |
| 12.216 | Dates for 2013 Parish Council meetings Following a discussion where various options were considered, it was agreed to continue meeting on the third Thursday of the month, following the pattern of 2012. It was agreed to review the arrangement during the year. Following a vote, it was unanimously RESOLVED that Parish Council meetings for 2013 be held on the third Thursday of each month, beginning in January; that this be reviewed periodically, and that they be held in the Pavilion at 8pm, following the 2012 pattern. | Clerk |
| 12.217 | Village Hall: 1. Cllr Baseley has been accepted as a trustee, although Cllr Kilby noted he had not yet attended a meeting. | DB |

2. The Chairman asked Cllr Kilby if the VHMC trustees had formed an opinion as to whether the idea of a working party, comprising councillors and trustees, was a viable proposition. Cllr Jayne Denham said she hoped it might help develop some harmony between the two parties. Cllr Kilby said he would raise it at the next VHMC meeting to see how people felt about it. The Chairman said that if there was interest in developing the idea, then terms of reference could be discussed.

JK

12.218 Staffing Committee

The Chairman advised that, following Carina Helm's training session in the autumn, it was essential that the Council have a Staffing Committee comprising of three councillors, who would deal with all employment related issues. Cllr Ginn, Cllr Jayne Denham and the Chairman volunteered to be members of the Committee. Terms of reference would be drawn up for approval at the next meeting. Following a vote it was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Councillors David Ginn, Jayne Denham and Robb Denham comprise the membership of the Staffing Committee.**

RED/
DEG/
JD

12.219 Newsletter

The Chairman said this item had been included on the agenda to minute the fact that, whereas in recent issues other parish groups seemingly have had a right of reply in the HH Newsletter, that right has not been extended to the Parish Council.

12.220 Items for future agendas

1. A new Meads maintenance contract to be discussed in January (expires February 2013). The Clerk to draw up a specification after consulting with Neil Gardner as to what, in his view might be necessary with no football being played there at the moment.
2. The possible need for a dog-waste bin for Hare Street was discussed. Location to be considered. The Clerk to investigate cost and availability from EHC and report to the January meeting.
3. Risk assessments to be done in the New Year
4. Danger signs and safety fencing along the river bank (12.211.1)
5. Possible donation to HHCC memorial bench (12.212)
6. Other items for consideration: *No other items were suggested.*

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk/RED
ALL
ALL

Adjournment for public comments

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

No comments were received from the public.
The meeting was resumed.

12.221 Date of next Parish Council meeting:

Thursday 17 January 2013 at 8pm in the Meads Pavilion.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending, wished everyone a Happy Christmas and, there being no further business, closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

Signed Dated.....

Report on drugs abuse concerns

Following on from our last council meeting and Councillor Kilby's statement that drug taking and dealing is going on in the village; mainly the Mead's and the car park that the Hares use, I spoke with the Police Officer who I work with at the Youth Offending Team.

She assured me that the police take matters like this very seriously indeed and are interested in any information given.

Any parishioners or councillors who see anything suspicious are asked where possible to get the make and registration number of the vehicles and telephone Hertfordshire Crime Stoppers.

Their number is 0800 555 111 or you can use an online secure form, <http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org>, or if you prefer, contact the police on 101 and report the matter to them.

This will be done anonymously, names are not asked for and your call will not be recorded, you will not have to make a statement or attend court if an arrest is made. This is done so that it makes it easier for people to come forward, breaking the silence around criminal activity.

As you all can see this is a serious matter and one not to be taken lightly.

Cllr Jayne Denham
December 2012