

HORMEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Hormead Parish Council Meeting Thursday 20 March 2014 at 8pm in The Church Room

PRESENT: Cllr Jayne Denham, Chairman (JD), Cllr Dave Baseley (DB)
Cllr Robb Denham (RED), Cllr Denis Madden (DM)

Five members of the public.

In attendance: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

- 14.042 Apologies for absence** **ACTION**
- 1. Councillors:** Cllr John Kilby: Away on a business course
 - 2. Others:** County Cllr Rose Cheswright: Attending an AGM;
PCSO Amanda Higham: Off duty
 - 3. Other Councillor absences:** None
- 14.043 Declarations of Interest**
Cllr Baseley: Chairman of Village Hall Management Committee
- 14.044 To approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 25 February 2014**
It was **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 25 February 2014 be accepted as a true and accurate record.**
The Chairman signed the Minutes at the end of the meeting. **JD/Clerk**
- 14.045 Casual Vacancy**
The Clerk reported that no one had come forward for co-option. **Clerk**
- 14.046 Police Report**
The Clerk read PCSO Higham's report that had been submitted after the February meeting. It identified two recorded crimes – shed break-ins - on the 18th and 21st of January, and that in general the area remains quiet. She also noted that she was able to return to patrolling the area on an almost daily basis when on duty. Attention was also drawn to the increasing number of reports of a phone scam when people have been receiving calls, purportedly from the police, regarding fraudulent credit card activity and asking for card or bank details.
The Parish Council wished to place on record its recognition of PCSO Higham's bravery award from the Royal Humane Society that was recently reported in the Hertfordshire Mercury. This was due to her work in helping save the life of a motorcyclist following an accident on the A507 near Buntingford in June 2013.
- 14.047 Register of Interests**
The Clerk said he had heard nothing further from the Monitoring Officer. Cllr Robb Denham said he was drafting a note to EHDC to get clarification on the details shown on its website, and that he would be circulating this to members. **Clerk**
RED
- 14.048 Chairman's Announcements**
None
- 14.049 PLANNING**
- 1. Applications:**
- 3/14/0251/FP Bradbury Farm:** *Proposed stable block for domestic use ancillary to main dwelling house: Amendments to first plan* **Clerk**
NO OBJECTIONS
- 2. Decision Notices**
- 3/1182-00 Anstey Chalk Quarry:** *To extend the working period of the quarry to 31st December 2018.* There was a consensus that the problems caused by the number of lorries working well outside the permitted hours are getting worse, particularly very early in the morning. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to send further strong objections following Charlotte Benson's documented evidence of activity outside the licenced working hours.** **Clerk**

DECISION AWAITED

3/14/0165/FP Yeznaby, Horseshoe Hill: *Two-storey front extension, single-storey side extension, add first floor & outside staircase to existing garage and remove porch*
APPLICATION WITHDRAWN

1/2146-11 Nuthampstead Shooting Ground: *Application for the variation of condition 14 (Types of Waste)*
DECISION AWAITED

3/13/0586/FP Stonebury Farm, Hare Street: *Change of use of agricultural land and buildings to open and covered storage – retrospective:*
DECISION AWAITED

3/13/0984/FP & 0985/LB Gardeners Cottage, Hare Street: *Erection of oak-framed orangery.*
UNDER APPEAL

3. Other Planning matters: Late applications

3/14/0460/FP Yeznaby, Horseshoe Hill: *Remove porch, erect single-storey front and side extensions, add first floor & outside staircase to existing garage:* **It was agreed to raise an OBJECTION since the plan would result in over-intensification of the site.** Clerk

3/14/0394/FP Quinn Rise, Mutfords Farm: *To build a garage and log store.*
NO OBJECTIONS Clerk

14.050 FINANCE

1. The report of the Council's finances for 31 January to 28 February was received (Appendix A)

Finance Summary to 28 February:	£
Opening available balance 31/1/14:	5,355.84
Plus income to 28/2/14:	0.00
Less expenditure to 28/2/14:	<u>1,578.22</u>
Balance available to Council 28/2/14	3,777.62
Unpresented cheques as at 28/2/14:	<u>1,167.00</u>
Bank balance reconciled with statement #355, 28/2/14	<u>4,944.62</u>

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

The Clerk pointed out that an accounts summary is published each month in the Minutes on the Parish Council website. Clerk

2. The list of orders for payment was presented for authorisation to be signed (Appendices B1 and B2). It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve all the invoices presented for payment.** Cheques were signed at the end of the meeting. Clerk

Cllr Robb Denham explained that the repeal of the Local Government Act 1972 Section 150(5) has created changes to the law that has restricted parish council bills having to be paid by cheque, a change that will permit electronic banking once implemented. Rigorous financial control procedures will have to be adopted to ensure good governance. The existing arrangement for signatories can remain. Clerk/
RED

He also explained that changes have been made to the criteria determining the requirement for external audit; councils with an annual turnover of less than £25k will be subject to new arrangements. However, robust internal checking procedures and financial risk assessments will have to be in place. Accounts will be subject to random audit checks. Internal Auditor arrangements as last year will be made for 2013/14. Clerk/
RED

14.051 Correspondence

The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the agenda. The Clerk drew members' attention to items not covered elsewhere on the agenda:

- HCC: The Parish Council's entry in the free community directory: it was agreed to request inclusion in the new online directory. Clerk

14.052 Special Interest Matters

1. Village Hall.

- Cllr Baseley said the demolition and groundwork is now scheduled to begin week commencing 24th March, all other issues having been resolved. DB

2. Highways.

- Cllr Madden reported that he had sent letters giving details of the DriveSafe scheme to Hare Street residents, and was looking to create a team of three with DM

<p>three reserves. He had also met with CC Rose Cheswright and discussed the possibility of a 20mph speed limit through the village and he would be following the matter up with a Highways contact. He was further looking into the possibility of moving the speed restriction sign further south along the B1368 to the brow of the hill, and exploring whether speed could be limited to 40mph between Dassels and Hare Street, all in the interests of safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Madden said he would be taking up with Sgt Duncan Wallace the possibility of imposing a 40mph speed restriction on the B1038 between the Quin bridge and Great Hormead, again for safety reasons. • Large hole in the B1038 west of the kennels: Despite being scheduled for early March, this had worryingly not been resolved by Highways. A new reference number had been allocated following the latest report. Action would be chased. 	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>
<p>3. Footpaths and Byways</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Denham reported that footpath surfaces damaged by horses during the winter are slowly returning to their proper state. 	<p>RED</p>
<p>4. Website</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the Neighbourhood Plan and Forum is being updated as it is received. Once it is finalised, a pdf version of the questionnaire will appear on the website for residents to download and complete if they so wish. 	<p>Clerk/ RED</p>
<p>5. Parishioners' concerns.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hillcrest: Hazel Morgan and Den Wright asked whether the Parish Council had received notification of any plans and asked the PC to pursue with Planning if no application had been submitted. After some discussion, where concerns were acknowledged, it was agreed to take no further action since the latest correspondence from EHDC indicated Development Control and the Environmental Health Service are well aware of the issues and are monitoring the situation there. • Mrs Christina Blake had expressed concerns about safety due to the Meads car park being locked, causing mothers with children using the play area to park on the road. After some discussion it was agreed that Cllr Robb Denham and Cllr Madden would organise a rota whereby, Monday to Friday, they would open the gate mid-morning and close it again at 6pm. Cllr Basely offered to produce a sign giving opening times to be located at the gate. The Clerk was asked to see whether Stephen Ruff would be prepared to be included on the rota. 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>RED/ DM</p> <p>DB</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>14.053 The Meads and Pavilion</p>	
<p>1. & 3. The Meads generally and flood consequences: The Clerk gave an update on the state of the pavilion: The dryers had been working for 10 days and were due to be checked and switched off Monday 24th March. A week later the building will be checked for residual damp and, given an all clear, reinstatement and redecoration will commence. However, the insurer's damage restoration inspector had identified two places where there was an ingress of water that was damaging the building: at the southern end of the pavilion roof, the roofing was not overhanging the wall, allowing water to seep inside, and at the rear of the showers, the guttering was collapsing, causing water damage to the shower ceiling and the external wall. It was also doubtful whether the guttering was sufficiently large. The inspector said the pavilion would not be redecorated and the building cleared for use until these had been rectified. On the positive side, following the sanitisation of the whole building, tests for the presence of E.coli and other bugs had been negative and the building is declared clear. A builder was being sought to urgently undertake the necessary remedial works.</p>	
<p>Stephen Ruff had reported a tree in the river wedged beneath the footpath bridge from the Meads. He had sawn off the branches but been unable to deal with the trunk. It had been reported to the Environment Agency who said they would take no action, despite being told of the pavilion flood and the consequences of the Quin's flow being impeded. Mr Coxall said from the floor that the tree had now been cut up and removed.</p>	
<p>2. Car Park repairs: These will be completed by the end of the month and the grant money applied for.</p>	
	<p>Clerk</p>

- 4. Air Ambulance clothing bank: This was being delivered on 26th March and it was agreed to site it in the car park, by the gate and behind the notice board. Clerk
- 14.054 **Risk Assessments**
These remain ongoing RED/Clerk
- 14.055 **Asset register**
Still in progress RED/Clerk
- 14.056 **Neighbourhood Plan**
Cllr R Denham reported that the Questionnaire was now finalised and would be delivered to every household during the coming week with the intention of collecting them all between the 5th and 12th of April. Each household may have additional copies if needed. The questionnaire will also be available for downloading from on the Parish Council's website. RED/
Clerk
- 14.057 **Centenary Poppy Campaign (HCC)**
The Clerk said poppy seeds were being purchased and it was agreed to ask Stephen Ruff to broadcast them around the parish as he does his litterpicking round. Cllr Robb Denham said he would do the Worsted Lane area. The Clerk to co-ordinate. RED/
Clerk
- 14.058 **Gypsy & Traveller Needs Assessment Consultation**
The Clerk reported that, in the absence of any written suggestions received from councillors by the deadline, he had returned the consultation form, having completed it to convey concerns discussed at the February PC meeting.
- 14.059 **Urgent matters received too late for inclusion on the agenda**
None
- 14.060 **Items for future agendas**
None Clerk

Adjournment for public comments

Following a vote at 9.30pm it was **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended to allow public comments.**

- Mrs Teresa Marks said that, although she was not a parishioner, she endorsed the comments regarding the danger to mums with children having to park on the B1038 and supported the car park being opened at appropriate times.
- Mr Roland Coxall said the straw bales that had blocked the ditch (by FP12) have been removed. He also reported a sewage overflow into the river near that location. He further reported that there were a large number of Lucozade and energy drinks bottles in the river and along its banks.
- Mrs Christine Fisher said she had concerns that if the Meads car park gate was to be left open it would allow the drugs problem - both users and dealers - to return with the attendant problems of discarded needles etc. The Chairman said she understood these concerns and gave an assurance that the gate would only be open weekdays within the daylight hours as agreed in the meeting.

The Parish Council Meeting resumed at 9.38pm.

- 14.061 **Date of next Parish Council meeting**
Tuesday 15 April 2014 at 8pm: venue to be confirmed since the Church Room may not be available, and subject to the pavilion reinstatement being completed. Clerk

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.40 pm.

Signed Dated