

# HORMEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Hormead Parish Council Meeting  
Thursday 17 March 2016 at 8pm in the Meads Pavilion

**PRESENT:** Cllr Jayne Denham, Chairman (JD); Cllr Robb Denham (RED);  
Cllr Marty Kilby (MK); Cllr Teresa Marks (TM); Cllr Matthew Reeves-Hairs (MRH);  
Cllr Richard White (RW)

Four members of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

**ACTION**

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 8pm.

**16.020 Apologies for absence**

1. Councillors: Cllr John Kilby – business commitment
2. Others: County Cllr Rose Cheswright

**16.021 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

1. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Teresa Marks - a DPI as wife of the Clerk in relation to his payments, as stated on the agenda.
2. **Dispensations** (i) It was noted that Cllr Teresa Marks has a dispensation to speak and vote on Council finance business in which she has a pecuniary interest as the wife of the Clerk, as stated on the agenda; (ii) To receive requests for dispensations: NONE
3. **Requests for dispensations:** NONE.

**16.022 To approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18 February 2016**

It was noted that in the footer the pages were wrongly dated 2015. These were amended to read 2016 and it was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 18 February 2016 were a true and accurate record as amended.**  
The Chairman signed the Minutes.

**JD/Clerk**

**16.023 Police Report:** No report was provided

**16.024 Chairman's Announcements:**

The Chairman read a prepared statement and asked that it be recorded in the Minutes:

Following the accusation written in the February 2016 newsletter and the subsequent emails I received from two of the councillors, I feel that I need to put the record straight. I was accused of acting illegally and I cannot allow an accusation such as this to remain without action on my part. It needs to be addressed and a reply given to those who have accused me.

Paul Clayden states - and he is just about the highest qualified solicitor in the land when it comes to councils:

*"The council is not under an obligation to co-opt the only applicant to fill a vacancy. The council has a discretion not to appoint the applicant if the councillors think that he or she is not the right person. However the council cannot lawfully turn someone down on gender, race, religion etc. in breach of the Equality Act 2010. There is no suggestion that this has happened."*

Paul Clayden is also the Chief Executive of the Local Councils Advisory Service, he was Chief Executive of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), and is the current author/editor of Local Council Administration - the big yellow book that is the definitive authority on council legal matters, commonly called Charles Arnold-Baker after the author/editor of the first edition in 1975. Paul Clayden is also the author of a number of council legal topic books.

This is my formal response to those who have accused me.

**16.025 PLANNING**

**1. New applications:**

**3/16/0153/HH & 0154/LBC Timbers, Hare Street: Demolish rear extension; erect single storey & 1st floor extension; insert gable end window** **RESOLVED: NO OBJECTIONS**

**Clerk**

3/16/0113/HH 2 Moorfields, Hare Street: Conservatory to front of house  
**RESOLVED: NO OBJECTIONS** Clerk

3/16/0368/HH Glebe Cottage, Little Hornead: Single storey rear and side extension  
**RESOLVED: NO COMMENTS**

3/15/0993/FUL & AP/16/0009/REF Wild Acre Nursery, Hare Street: Appeal against planning refusal for 1.5storey 3 bedroom dwelling. **NO OBJECTIONS:** The Parish Council had sent a letter in support of the original application - this would have been forwarded to the Planning Inspector. The Clerk to check that it was included in the bundle. Clerk

## 2. Decision Notices

3/16/0106/FUL 3 Vine Cottages, Hare Street: Garage conversion into residential annexe.  
**DECISION AWAITED**

3/15/2581/LBC Dane End House, Conduit Lane: Internal alterations to listed building  
**GRANTED**

3/15/1689/FUL Steelcraft Works, Hare Street: Demolition of existing buildings and removal of hard standing. Erection of five detached dwellings with parking and landscaping.  
**Reconsultation DECISION AWAITED**

3/15/1235/HH Meadowlands, Little Hornead: Raising roof ridge with 3 no dormer windows, two storey rear extension, demolition and replacement of garage  
**DECISION AWAITED**

3/14/1624/CL Hillcrest, Hare Street: Certificate of Lawfulness for use as a dwelling house  
**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. Other Planning matters** Including any received too late to be included on the agenda:  
**From Royal Mail re Silkmead Farm Industrial Estate:** Erection of a new lamp pillar box (to meet Royal Mail's service obligations) **NO OBJECTIONS** Clerk

## 16.026 FINANCE

**1. Report of the Council's finances for February** was received (Appendix A)

Finance Summary from 1 to 29 February	£
<b>Opening available balance 1 February:</b>	<b>6,378.07</b>
Plus income to 29 February*:	1,356.98
Minus expenditure to 29 February:	883.11
<b>Balance available to Council 29 February</b>	<b>6,851.94</b>
Unpresented cheques as at 29 February	60.00
<b>Bank balance reconciled with statement #392, 29 February</b>	<b>6,911.94</b>

\*Including £1,256.98 VAT reclaim

It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Accounts Statements be accepted.** Clerk  
An accounts summary is published each month in the Minutes on the website.

**2. Accounts/bank statement reconciliation.** A copy of bank statement 392 was presented to the Council and noted to reconcile with Accounts appendix A, but was not signed by a non-signatory member.

### **3. Financial position against 2015/16 Budget**

The Clerk reported that known payments to date for March are £1,554 and a further possible £1,390 is budgeted, subject to receipt of invoices and the extent of mowing that can be undertaken by Earthworms before Easter. Anticipated income for March is £100, giving a projected available balance of £4,008 at 31st March. Clerk

### **4. Transparency Fund update report**

The Clerk presented a spreadsheet of grant amounts awarded and the actual amounts spent on the various items. Grants received totalled £781 and the expenditure to date is £512. The remaining balance is £270. £217 included in grants to cover admin costs. Clerk

**5. List of payments.** It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve all the invoices presented for payment:**

Date	Payee	Item	£	Chq	Power
11/3	Clerk	Salary February	409.80	1359	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
17/3	Clerk	Travel etc Feb	39.29	1360	LGA 1972 s111
17/3	Clerk cash	Petty cash Feb	22.49	1361	LGA 1972 s111
17/3	EHDC	Dog bin contract	46.97	1362	OSA 1906 s10(b)
17/3	SC Ruff	Litterpicking Feb	260.00	1363	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
17/3	iNtrol	Meads contact	278.00	1364	LG(MP)A 1976 s19
17/3	Clerk reimburse	Printer & ink	116.46	1365	LGA 1972 s111
17/3	Clerk reimburse	Laptop computer	349.99	1366	LGA 1972 s111
17/3	Clerk reimburse	Office software	31.49	1367	LGA 1972 s111
17/3	NALC	LCR subs (1/3 <sup>rd</sup> )	17.00	1368	LGA 1972 s111
Recoverable VAT			14.24		

Cheques were signed at the end of the meeting.

Clerk

**16.027 Standing orders**

Revised wording was considered for SO 3.1, which sets out the procedure for voting on co-option applications. The proposal was that all councillors must be in attendance when an application is on the agenda to be discussed and voted upon. There was an objection on the basis that it is unwise to include in Standing Orders a condition over which the Council has no control and which could stall a co-option decision indefinitely. This was countered by the argument that when it comes to the important consideration as to whether a candidate is suitable, it is better to have all members participating openly in making the decision. Following a vote of 5:1 it was **RESOLVED to include in Standing Order 3.1 the requirement that all members are to be in attendance when co-option applications are discussed and voted upon.**

It was noted that the final sentence of SO 3.1 should not be in bold, nor should the final phrase in SO 11.16, since they are not statutory requirements.

**16.028 Correspondence**

Seven items of correspondence were noted as appeared on the agenda:

- EHC/Groundwork: Community buildings refurbishment offer
- UK Power Networks: Priority Services Register offer, with possible funding
- Royal Mail: Installation of new lamp pillar box at Silkmead Farm (16.025.3)
- Fields in Trust: Community Day package offer (QEII birthday) (16.032)
- Mr Hole: Damage to bank, verge, salt bin and road at entrance to Willow Close by War Memorial (16.029.2)
- Hertfordshire Police & Crime Panel: 28 Jan Minutes and notice of 17 March meeting

**16.029 Special Interest Matters:**

**1. Village Hall:** Cllr Reeves-Hairs reported that following the February meeting, parking signs and cones have been purchased by the VHMC which will be positioned between the VH and the lane during events. The reported problem of cones blowing into the road in high winds will be checked.

MRH

**2. Highways.** The Clerk reported:

**1.** Safety concerns raised by the public in the February meeting regarding cars being dangerously parked along the B1038 by Andersons Lane and on the B1368 at its junction with Worsted Lane were raised with the police. They have advised that they can only take action if they are on the scene at the time, therefore any such incidents should be reported via 101 immediately so that officers can attend. In any case it is an offence to park a vehicle next to a junction and appropriate action will be taken by police officers.

**2.** White lines that have worn away at the Worsted Lane/The Street junction have been discussed with a County Councillor. The problem is finance, the cost of Highways pre-works admin being something like 10 times the cost of actually doing the job.

Clerk

3. Again following comments made at the February meeting, the East Herts gully cleaning schedule was considered by the Council. The gullies in this area are scheduled for jetting in July/August this year. The advice is that any imminent flooding concerns due to blocked gullies should be reported via the online highways fault system.

4. A resident has (again) raised concerns about serious and ongoing damage being caused by large lorries to the bank and verge at the junction of Horseshoe Hill and Willow Close. This has affected the stability of the salt bin on the bank. It was further noted that cars parked at the junction had prevented a fire engine gaining access to Willow Close.

Clerk

5. A further incident was reported of a bollard being knocked out south of the B1368/Buntingford Road Junction where there had also been a water leak – the leak has now been fixed.

**3. Footpaths and byways:** These are slowly drying out. Issues will be raised with the Rights of Way Officer.

RED

**4. Website:** Although there are still some uploading issues, it is working better with the new laptop.

Clerk

**5. Parishioners concerns:** those raised dealt with above.

#### 16.030 Meads field and buildings

##### 1. The Meads generally

1. The leaking taps in the pavilion toilets have now been replaced.

RW/Clerk

##### 2. Meads maintenance

1. Dog-waste bin, mid-Meads: East Herts have yet to provide an emptying solution. Appreciation was expressed to the parishioner who is weekly ferrying the contents of the mid-Meads bin to the gate bin that is emptied by EHC.

Clerk

2. The damaged danger sign will be repaired when the dog bin situation is resolved.

##### 3. Play area

TM

1. Funding update: The Tesco grant application was unsuccessful (massive response nationally). Further option being explored.

2. The request from a parishioner for an outdoor table tennis table was considered. The Clerk reported that Sovereign Play has recently installed two such stainless steel table at Hunsdon VP school. Photographs and approximate costs were provided (approx £850 ex VAT). Sovereign Play gave their opinion that such a table would be unsuitable in the confined space of the play area since it would introduce a much older group into the space that is set aside for young children and toddlers. Furthermore, the height of the tables could be a dangerous head-height for young children. A table would need to be sited outside the play area. It was also questioned whether it would meet a need for young people in the community. It was agreed that the table was a good idea, but due to the concerns and practical issues raised it was agreed to add it for consideration at a future meeting. The priority is to get funding for the replacement item still needed for the play area.

Clerk

##### 4. Hire enquiries

Nothing further from Buntingford Cougars. The others are being dealt with on an ongoing basis.

#### 16.031 Neighbourhood Plan:

The BCAN Plan is still between BTC and EHC. No parish members of the Working Group have received an update as to what is happening.

#### 16.032 QEII 90th Birthday celebration, 11th June

- The Braughing choir and the jazz trio have both agreed to do a set.
- There was a discussion on providing commemorative medals for children at the school, though to be 33, and at leapfrogs – number to be confirmed. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to order 50 medals at £1.99, or as many as needed if Leapfrogs took the number over 50.**

JD  
Clerk

*Clerk's note: It was subsequently confirmed that there are 36 children at the school and a further 36 at Leapfrogs, making a total of 72.*

**16.033 Hare Street phone box**

A data report from BT showed that only one call was made in a 12 month period. Following a discussion whether to seek parishioners' views via the newsletter, it was felt the kiosk should be retained because it could still be important in an emergency and also it is an iconic item of street furniture. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to keep the Hare Street phone box under the present contract.** It was agreed to consider repainting it.

Clerk

**16.034 Late items and items for future agendas**

- The Clerk said the Council was presently borrowing a table each month from the church and requested that the PC bought its own. This was agreed for a cost of about £120. **Clerk**
- It was discussed that the PC should pay no more than £10 an hour for cleaning the pavilion, which was understood to be the going rate. It was therefore agreed to advertise for a pavilion cleaner at £10 per hour as required. **Clerk**
- Danger sign repair (Meads Hertfordshire Way FP area) **RW**
- Meads Car park: gate and access **TM**

**Adjournment for public comments**

Following a vote at 9.40pm it was **RESOLVED that the meeting be suspended to allow public comments.**

- Further to the previously discussed damage to the bank and verge at the junction of Willow Close and Horseshoe Hill, a parishioner said that the Willow Close road was scheduled for resurfacing the following week. The situation could be reviewed afterwards to see whether any action had been taken to deal with the problem. The potholes had been reported. **Clerk**
- A parishioner raised the rumour that the Owles Farm Track is being opened up for lorry traffic, which is not considered very desirable.
- It was reported that straw being moved from Mutfords Farm is creating a lot of mess along the road and is clogging up the gullies.

***The Parish Council Meeting resumed at 9.50pm***

**16.035 Date of next Parish Council Meeting:**

- Ordinary Council: Thursday 21st April 2016, 8pm in the Pavilion **JD/Clerk**
- It was proposed to hold the Annual Council Meeting on 12th May, subject to councillors confirming their availability. **ALL**
- It was proposed to hold the Annual Meeting of the Parish, followed by the May Ordinary Parish Council Meeting on 19th May. **Clerk**

***Exclusion of Press and Public***

At 9.55pm it was unanimously **RESOLVED that under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded during item 16.036 of the agenda due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. The public left the room.**

**16.036 Staffing Committee**

At a closed session, the Staffing Committee reported its decision on a grievance made by the Clerk concerning the excessive amount of correspondence by a councillor that he had received or been copied into, its length, its timing, and the inference that he felt could be drawn from emails by two councillors concerning his integrity. The councillor present offered an apology. **Staffing Cmttee**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.35pm

Signed.....Dated.....