

# HORMEAD PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Hormead Parish Council Meeting Thursday 17 January 2019 in the Meads Pavilion at 8pm

**PRESENT:** Cllr Jayne Denham, Chairman (JD); Cllr Robb Denham; Cllr Andrew Hazell (AH);  
Cllr John Kilby; Cllr Teresa Marks (TM); Cllr Richard White (RW)

Five members of the public, PCSO Deborah Mead, County Cllr Jeff Jones

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

**ACTION**

The Chairman welcomed everyone, wished all a Happy New Year and opened the meeting at 8pm

**19.001 Apologies for absence.** The following councillor apologies were accepted:

1. Councillors: Cllr Kevin Glogner (personal)
2. Other apologies: Sgt Duncan Wallace

**19.002 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. To consider requests for dispensations:** NONE.

**Clerk**

**19.003 To approve and sign Minutes**

**Ordinary Parish Council Meeting, 15th November 2018:** It was unanimously **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 15th November 2018 were a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

**JD/Clerk**

**19.004 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman said she had received a call from the Barkway Parish Council Chairman re concerns about a Hormead resident. There is a need for adult safeguarding. The Chairman said she would keep an eye on this and report to Herts Social Services if the problem continues.

**JC**

The Chairman said she had also received a letter from someone in Chelmsford complaining about parking problems by Moorfields. She will reply saying that the Parish Council has no jurisdiction over car parking, which is under the remit of EHDC.

**JC**

**19.005 Police Crime Report for the Parish**

The report from November 2018 to January 2019 was given by PCSO 6472 Deborah Mead:

### **Calls to Police**

17<sup>th</sup> November - Report of blocked Badger Sett at Great Hormead Park Wood. One of several ongoing reports – situation being monitored by our Rural Operations Team. No witnesses, no suspects, enquiries ongoing

3<sup>rd</sup> December - Report of domestic cat being shot by a BB gun – minor injuries. Enquiries made but we have no named offender, no CCTV and no witnesses. Crimed as criminal damage but no further action due to no further lines of enquiry.

11<sup>th</sup> December - Report of interference with a motor vehicle outside home address. Victim believes their wheel nuts had been tampered with – local enquiries made by PCSO, house to house, CCTV enquiries. No named offender and no witnesses. No further action due to no further lines of enquiry.

8<sup>th</sup> January – Report of Malicious Communications – person who normally resides in Hertfordshire reported receiving abusive text messages and threats. Reporting person and offender were both in Met area so offence has been taken over by Met Police.

### **Crimes**

Ref: 65223 17<sup>th</sup> November - Section 4 Public Order – crime recorded. Reporting person has been verbally abused on his property by animal rights activists. Investigation complete as the offender couldn't be identified (activists wearing masks). PCSO Mead said that hunts attract a lot of anti-hunting activity and consequently police are on alert on hunt days.

In order to keep the police profile as high as possible, the PCSO said she drives around the area as much as possible when on duty.

A parishioner asked if the suspicion of travellers seeking occupying a certain site in Hare Street could be confirmed. PCSO Mead said that the activity referred to was on land that was legally owned by those seen there, but she would not give any further details.

The Chairman thanked her for attending and PCSO Mead left the meeting at 8.25pm.

**19.006 District and County Councillors' reports**

District Councillor Ben Harris-Quinney was not in attendance and sent no report.

County Cllr Jeff Jones said he had no County matters to report, but he did mention that Peter Boylan has been selected to stand as the East Herts District Councillor in the May elections.

**19.007 PLANNING**

**1. New applications**

**3/19/0043/HH Box Tree Cottage, Gt Hornead:** Proposed detached double garage, with external staircase, two dormers and two rooflights, to serve first floor studio. Provision of hardsurfacing and retaining wall.

It was **RESOLVED to make no objections**

Clerk

**3/18/2570/OUT High Trees, Gt Hornead:** Outline permission to demolish one dwelling and garage and to erect 3 dwellings.

It was **RESOLVED to make objections to this application for the following reasons:**

1. It represents an over development of the site. One house is being demolished and being replaced by three houses almost certainly of a different style. The outline proposal is therefore out of keeping with the character of the existing street scene.
2. Furthermore, the proposal neither preserves nor enhances the Great Hornead Conservation Area.
3. The Parish Council is concerned that the new houses, being built on rising ground, could impact negatively on neighbouring properties.
4. It is not identified in the adopted Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan (BCANP).
5. By being inappropriate for its location, by adversely impacting the landscape, and by failing to meet the housing needs of the area, it does not meet the Housing Development Objectives established by the adopted BCANP. The Parish Council therefore considers that it is inappropriate and unsustainable development for the area.
6. Comparing this to earlier applications for this site, the Parish Council remains unconvinced that there is sufficient space for service vehicles to turn within the site and therefore bins etc would have to be left beside the B1038; the number of bins involved could not be safely accommodated at that roadside location.
7. The Parish Council remains concerned that there is insufficient parking for the number and size of vehicles that would probably be owned by occupiers of the proposed houses.
8. The Parish Council is acutely aware of the current parking issues on the B1038 immediately outside the property and further street parking would be wholly inappropriate. There are double-yellow lines on the opposite side of the road.
9. The B1038 has six points of ingress/egress from nearby properties and is very busy at school times.
10. In the event of approval being granted, the District Planning authority must confirm that the previously expressed concerns of The Environment Agency regarding flooding have been addressed and that the EA's criteria for this site have been met.

However, if permission is granted, the Parish Council requests that a conditional Section 106 agreement be imposed that would be used for the benefit of the community.

Councillor Jeff Jones agreed to ask East Herts Development Control to allow the Parish Council to make its consultee comments even though the deadline had passed due to the PC not receiving the application notification in the usual way.

Clerk

**2. Decision Notices** (for information only)

- 3/18/2532/OUT Land adj to Bradbury Bungalow, Hare Street:** Outline permission for one dwelling and double garage **REFUSED**
- 3/18/2497/HH The Willows, Hare Street:** Remove a shed and erect a garage **REFUSED**
- 3/18/2488/VAR Black Barn, North End:** Removal of conditions re change of use. Although the Parish Council had not yet received a decision notice, the applicant was present and said she had received a refusal notice. She contested that decision and discussed it with Cllr Jones.
- 3/18/0349/OUT High Trees, APPEALED** to Planning Inspectorate - **18/00140/REFUSE**  
The Planning Inspectorate's APPEAL DECISION AWAITED
- 3/18/2378/VAR Land adj to Layston House:** Variation to condition 2 **GRANTED**
- 3/18/2377/VAR Layston House:** Variation to Condition 2 **GRANTED**  
*Note: Parishioners present vigorously opposed the granting of these two variations*
- 3/18/2250/FUL The Orchard, Hall Lane:** Relocate stables, with fence and gate **GRANTED**
- 3/18/2182/HH 2 Bradbury Farm Barns, Hare Street:** Conversion of garage and outbuilding to annex and erect a double garage. **GRANTED**
- 3/18/1953/REM Hare Street Garage:** Application for reserved matters following approval of outline permission against 3/17/1862/OUT **GRANTED**
- 3/14/1624/CL Hillcrest:** *Certificate of Lawfulness for use as a dwelling.* **DECISION AWAITED**

**3. Other Planning matters** - Including any received too late to be included on the agenda:

1. A parishioner brought to the Parish Council's attention the probability of significant development at Kemps Close/The Warren in Hare Street. The Parish Council was grateful for the advance warning but said it was unable to take any action until it received East Herts' official notification of a planning application; that would then give it rights to comment as a statutory consultee.

**19.008 FINANCE**

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

Finance Summary from 1 November to 31 December:	£
<b>Opening bank balance statement 1 November</b>	<b>15,579.53</b>
Plus income 1 November to 31 December	3,247.58
Minus expenditure 1 November to 31 December	<u>2,562.56</u>
	16,264.55
Minus presented prev months' cheques 1657, 1658	768.90
Plus unpresented cheques December 1672, 1677	<u>119.20</u>
<b>Bank balance: reconciled with statement at 31 December</b>	<b><u>15,614.85</u></b>
Minus unpresented October cheques 1672, 1677	119.20
<b>Balance available to Council at 31 December (cashbook balance)</b>	<b><u>15,495.65</u></b>
Petty cash in hand	<u>50.00</u>

**Accounts/bank statement reconciliation.** It was noted that the Accounts sheet (Appendix A) and bank statement reconciled. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to accept the Accounts Statement.**

Clerk

**2. Verification of Accounts and Bank Statement.** Cllr John Kilby, as a non-signatory member, signed the accounts sheet and bank statement reconciliation.

JK/Clerk

*An accounts summary is published each month in the Minutes on the website.*

**3. Budget vs performance to 31 December and year-end forecast**

The Clerk presented an itemised performance report against the budget. Against the anticipated year-end bank balance of £8,367, the projected balance now stands at £10,346, subject to any expenditure or income that cannot be anticipated at this time. It was unanimously **RESOLVED to accept the report as presented.**

Clerk

**4. Budget and Precept 2019/2020.**

The Clerk submitted to the Council revised Budget and Precept guidance. He said he had received information and advice from the EHC Interim Democratic Services Manager, Philip Hardy, that

had been sent to all East Herts parish and town clerks. Although the communication covered the spectrum of issues raised by the forthcoming May elections, the Clerk drew the Council's attention to the section that was concerned with the **recharge of contested election costs**. This advice may impact the Parish Council's budget and precept decision.

The Clerk emphasised that a **recharge** is only applied in the event of a **contested** election and he explained what a contested election is and under what circumstances one might occur: Parish Council elections are held every four years. If more candidates stand for election than the number of seats on the Council to be filled, a poll is triggered and the election cost is recharged to the Parish. If the same number of candidates, or fewer, stand for election, there is no poll, all candidates are returned uncontested and therefore no election costs are incurred. The Clerk further explained that if a councillor resigns during their 4-year term of office, their seat becomes vacant and before the Parish Council is free to co-opt a replacement, the law requires that a poll is offered to the parish. Ten registered electors can then request an election to fill the vacancy and if more candidates stand than the number of seats vacant, a by-election would be called, the full cost of which would be recharged to the Parish Council. This process must be observed whenever a casual vacancy occurs, no matter how many times that might happen. Therefore, the Council should always hold in its budgeted reserves a contingency against the full cost of an election.

The Clerk quoted from the advice from EHC Electoral Services which said, "**You need to make sure that you include provision within your parish precept or from any reserves accordingly for any recharge. Costs are difficult to estimate, but an example of possible costs is a by-election held in 2017 with an electorate of 750 – standalone election cost £3,500. If this was a combined poll the recharge would be nearer half of this...**" The main factors are the size of the electorate and the number of polling stations. A combined poll is one shared with another local authority, such as for District Council elections where the polling station and staffing costs are shared, although the ballot paper costs are recharged 100%. The Clerk said he did not know when there had last been a contested election in Hormead and that they were not common among parishes.

Hormead's current electorate is 591 and on the basis of East Herts' example, a standalone election could cost £2,750 (or approximately £1,400 if combined).

In light of these facts, the Clerk advised that in his opinion: 1) The earlier budget outline did not include adequate funding for a worst-case recharge scenario; that the Parish Council take that into consideration and should therefore make provision within its budget for any recharge costs as set out by EHC. 2) The Clerk further advised that a realistic sum for election costs be held in reserve as an ongoing contingency should ever a by-election be called as the consequence of a contested casual vacancy occurring. Furthermore, the Clerk said that as the Parish Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), he would be failing in his duty if he did not recommend that the Council take the advice given by East Herts' Democratic Services Manager.

With regard to the impact of the precept on parish council tax costs, East Herts has set a Tax Base for 2019/20 that will see a Band D household paying £3.06 per £1,000 precepted. Therefore, a precept of £20,500 would be recovered through council tax at £62.83 for Band D, (ie £1.21 per week) against £62.25 in the current year. Band A will be recovered at 6/9ths of Band D, and Band H at 18/9ths (ie double) Band D and so on.

After taking full account of the implications of this information, it was unanimously **RESOLVED to increase the 2019/20 precept by £3,000, thereby setting it at £23,500 for the ensuing financial year**. The Chairman, the Clerk, and two councillors signed the precept levy form at the end of the meeting.

Clerk

**5. Payments.** It was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve the signing of all orders for payment: (Appendices B1 and B2)**

Date	Payee	Item	£	Chq	Power
30/11	Clerk	Salary November	468.90	1670	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
6/12	SC Ruff	Litterpick to 30/11	260.00	1671	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
6/12	HAPTC	Councillor training	40.00	1672	LGA 1972 s111
6/12	Clerk reimburse	SLCC subs 1/4th	57.00	1673	LGA 1972 s111
6/12	E.ON	Electric Aug - Nov	89.24	1674	LG(MP)A 1976 s19

6/12	Petty cash	Chair expenses	160.00	1675	LGA 1972 s15(5)
18/12	Clerk	Salary December	462.80	1676	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
18/12	HMRC	PAYE 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter, Oct-December	79.20	1677	LGA 1972 s112(1), (2A), & s151; LA 2011 s41
17/1	Clerk	Expenses Dec	41.80	1678	LGA 1972 s111
17/1	Petty cash	Expenses Nov-Dec	8.08	1679	LGA 1972 s111, s114, s140
17/1	SC Ruff	Litterpick to 28/12	260.00	1680	OSA 1906 s9 & s10
17/1	Clerk reimburse	Printer ink	139.80	1681	LGA 1972 s111
	cancelled	cancelled		1682	
17/1	Landscape Concept	Meads bench, keys	704.98	1683	LG(MP)A 1976 s19
17/1	Clerk reimburse	Filing drawers	8.00	1684	LGA 1972 s111
<b>Recoverable VAT included:</b>			<b>£ 145.05</b>		

Cheques were signed after the meeting.

Clerk

**19.009 Correspondence** (As per the Agenda - noted for information)

Parishioners: Complaints about development work at Layston House site contrary to planning conditions (19.007.2)

Parishioner: Concerns about future potential development in Hare Street (19.007.3)

Cricket Club: Issues re 2019 season (19.011.7)

**19.010 Special Interest Matters**

1. **Highways:** Temporary road closures TRO12502, 12526, 12532 were noted.
2. **Public Rights of Way (PRoW) - footpaths and byways:** The PRoW Countryside Officer's December report was received and noted. A copy is on the PC website.
3. **Parishioners' concerns and other matters:** None reported

**19.011 Meads field and buildings**

1. **Pavilion** shower room ceiling: In hand. The Clerk asked that the roof above the shower room be checked because water is leaking in from somewhere.

RW

2. **Gate security** - improved arrangements: In hand.

RW

3. **Vandalised pavilion PIR:** Repair/replacement in hand

KG

4. **Benches:** Two new benches installed. Thanks recorded to Cllr Kevin Glogner.

5. **Tree management** update: In hand with Tim Fuller

Clerk

6. **Meads maintenance contract review:** A discussion took into account possible changes that might result from the outcome of item 7 below. The Clerk reported that Earthworms had already said they would hold their price for 2019 against the current maintenance specification. There were two matters of concern: 1) Whether Earthworms would be interested in continuing if there was no cricket element to their contract. 2) Whether a better deal could be secured that would improve the overall appearance of the Meads, play area, and surrounds. The Clerk noted that in the last round of tendering, Earthworms were by far the cheapest. However, the often criticised quality of maintenance of the overall field was a reflection of the budget that allowed for only one cut every two weeks; this was often inadequate in a vigorous growing season. It was agreed that the contract should be put out to tender once the cricket question in item 7 is known.

Clerk

7. **Cricket Club hire fees for 2019:** An email from Hare Street and the Hormeads Cricket Club was considered. The Club had received an offer from Buntingford Cricket Club to use its facilities in 2019 for the same price as charged by the Parish Council. HHCC recognised that if they took up BCC's offer and the Parish Council let the square go, it might not be possible to recover it again for future seasons. After considerable discussion and by a vote of 4:2 it was **RESOLVED to offer to hold the hire fee for HHCC unchanged for the coming season, but to state that the Parish Council will neither undertake nor underwrite the cost of any maintenance work on the field over and above that which is included within the present maintenance contract.**

Clerk

The Council then discussed the deteriorating state of the outside of the pavilion and it was agreed to form a working party in the Spring to undertake cleaning and painting. Date to be agreed.

ALL

**19.012 Late items and items for future agendas**

1. Late items: None

2. Items for future agendas:

- Pavilion Working Party (March)

At 10.10pm it was **RESOLVED to suspend the meeting for public comments**

A question was raised about a blocked drain leading into the river that is causing flooding on Worsted Lane. The Clerk agreed to get it investigated.

**Clerk**

The meeting was restored to order at 10.13pm

**19.013 Date of next Parish Council Meeting:** Thursday 21st February at 8pm in the Meads Pavilion

**Clerk/JD**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.15pm.

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