

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF
HIGH WYCH PARISH COUNCIL
TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17th MAY 2017
AT HIGH WYCH MEMORIAL HALL 8.30pm**

Present:

High Wych Councillors: Sam Clark (SC) : David Smith (DSM) : Tom Payne (TP) :
Bridget Parrish (BP) : Gareth Emanuel (GE) : Stephanie Glover
(SG)

East Herts District Councillor: Eric Buckmaster (EB)

Herts County Council Councillor: Ian Devonshire (ID)

In Attendance: Ali Geller (AG) - Minuting Secretary

Guest Visitors: Nancy Wojcik(NW): David Wojcik(DW): Diane Penn(DP): Chris Poole(CP)
Paul Stephenson(PS): Chris Smith (CS): James Barker (JB)

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Wendy Marks (WM) : Councillor Brian Sullivan (BS) :
PC Duncan Wallace (DW)

1. Welcome and Introduction

TP welcomed all to the meeting that he hoped would give a flavour of the year's work by the Parish Council. Priorities for the coming year would be made and responses from the floor were invited. TP acknowledged the attendance of representatives from HCC and EHC and welcomed both. TP then handed meeting over to the Secretary SC.

2. Secretary's Report (Sam Clark)

- i) Investment support for St. James Church*
Grant £2,000 of to support new kitchenette
- ii) Playground fencing*
Many positive responses received
- iii) Allens Green Hall support*
Grant of £328.00 towards AGA bid for purchase of Allens Green Village Hall – see report from Mr David Wojcik
- iv) Signed Pavilion Lease*
Attended evening hosted by HTC at the newly renovated Guide Hut.
See report from Mr Paul Stephenson
- v) SIDS UP!*
Positive support from HCC has realised the erection of a permanent SID outside the allotments. See Drive Safe Report from Mrs Linda Emanuel
- vi) Local History*
Small contribution made to Mr Theo Van De Bilt (Official High Wych Historian) with thanks for his valuable and entertaining articles relating to life in High Wych and surrounding locations.

vii) Little Link / Big Link

Phase 1: Little Link (as usual) - Monthly to subscribers

Big Link - Quarterly to entire ecclesiastical parish i.e. 8 little and 4 big

Increase amount + range of content and income

1st September target first Big Link

Build the team, comprising: Editorial & Content

Production & Publishing

Distribution

Finance & Advertising

Phase 2: 2019 Monthly Big Link to all ecclesiastical parish

viii) New Councillors (+ expressions of interest from others!)

Gareth Emanuel and Stephanie Glover welcomed as our two new Councillors following elections that saw more candidates than vacancies.

ix) David Saunders retirement

Formal thanks offered in recognition of the long and valuable service given by Councillor David Saunders, who retired from the Parish Council at the March 2017 meeting when gifts were presented.

x) Broadfields Footpath application

Application made to HCC to have the Broadfields *unofficial* footpath declared *official*.

xi) Stop Harlow North

SC the longest serving member of the group.

Meetings held under the District Plan consultation in Hunsdon & Gilston village halls

Instruct planning consultant to formal object to the District Plan

Huge number of objections to the consultation

Await public examination on the district plan

TP – concerns around the commensurate infrastructure spend required to reduce impact on surrounding area.

ID - an inspector has already been appointed and that examinations due to start in October. Any objectors to the plans could be called. Regular workshop meetings take place monthly for all comers.

EB – big issue will be infrastructure if/when plan comes to fruition. Phasing will be really important and sustainability will be crucial. Major issues such as improved rail links, roads and bridges will need to be funded by National Government .

PS – impact being felt now with recent road developments for new M11 junction and long-standing plans for a hospital at Eastwick appear to have already been shelved.

xii) Challenges

Administration – including building the team

Involvement and scale

Allens Green Village Hall

The Link

Playground Equipment

Phone Box

3. Treasurer's Report

2016-2017 Main Income

Annual Precept - £7,700
New Homes Bonus - £5,728
Allotment Rents - £772.50
Pavilion Lease/Insurance - £895

2016-2017 Reserves Brought Forward

General - £2,334
Pavilion Reserve - £500
Large Projects Reserve - £5,000
Grants - £400

2016-2017 Council Expenses

Playing Fields Maintenance (Grass Cutting, Inspections, Equipment Maintenance, Bin Emptying)
Car Park Maintenance/Loan Repayments
Allotments (Water)
Administration/Membership of HAPTC
Website
Internet Café Sponsorship
Outreach Post Office Sponsorship
Grants & Donations

2016-2017 Grants

St James' Church - £2,000
Allen's Green Village Hall - £328
Outreach Post Office - £350
Stop Stansted Expansion - £100
Stop Harlow North - £100
Brownies/Rainbows - £77

2016-2017 Projects

Pavilion Development -£2,500
HW Playing Fields Play Area Fencing - £6,287

2017-2018 Grants (Budgeted)

Large Projects - £4,000. Earmarked for the purchase of Allen's Green Village Hall
Outreach Post Office - £350
Internet Café - £250
Allotments - £600. Asbestos Removal
Stop Stansted Expansion - £100
Stop Harlow North - £100
Other Small Grants - £400
Informal request from HTC for further funds to complete the work on the Pavilion

4. Councillor Reports

Councillor David Smith

Allotments:

All plots allocated: No waiting list: Asbestos being prepared for removal

Issue with parking being addressed: One formal complaint dealt with

2016-2017 Projects:

High Wych Playing Fields play area has been fenced off to improve safety at the High Wych Lane entrance and to exclude dogs from the area

The Pavilion has been formally leased to the Harlow Theatre Company who have undertaken a major renovation of the building both internally and externally

2017-2018 Projects:

Review/implementation of the requirements for Transparency by HWPC

Possible addition of new equipment in the High Wych Playing Field

Website:

The website has been updated to use the latest version of the software. Opportunity taken to make the site more attractive

Further updates will be undertaken as part of the Transparency project

Other:

A defibrillator has been installed at the High Wych Memorial Hall for community use

Internet Café has been running for 5 years and continues to be popular

A notice board has been installed at the Memorial Hall for use by the Brownies and Rainbows

Playing Fields benches have been renovated

Japanese knotweed in High Wych Lane has been treated by HCC Highways

Councillor Wendy Marks

I have been responsible for the footpaths in the High Wych area and report to Nicholas Maddex when there is a limb of a tree across any path or overgrown foliage. He calls on a firm of contractors who regularly cut back said foliage.

During the year a notice was put up on the path which runs alongside the bungalows in Broadfields. This was removed within a couple of days but reminded walkers that we do not have a legal right to walk there so we are trying to address this matter. Theo van de Bilt has been collecting signed forms by residents who use the path, and has sent them off to East Herts Council. We have been told it is a long process and not to expect it to be finalised for a couple of years.

5. Report by Hertfordshire Constabulary (Duncan Wallace)

01/04/17 – 16/05/17 There have been 7 reported crimes on our system.

2 x Theft from motor vehicle – fuel from parked vehicles

1 x Theft from a back garden

1 x Burglary, non-dwelling. Nothing taken but shed contained landscaping tools.

1 X Public order offence between neighbours

1 x Non recordable public order incident

All above relate to High Wych

1 x Damage to motor vehicle in Allens Green

01/04/16 – 16/05/16 There were 9 reported crimes entered

6 for High Wych

3 for Allens Green

Yearly totals for year ending 31/03/17

High Wych 27 offences of which 2 were non recordable leaving 25.

Allens Green 16 offences of which 3 were non recordable leaving 13.

Yearly totals for year ending 31/03/16

High Wych 32 offences

Allens Green 15 offences

The past year saw a reduction of 4 offences recorded

6. Drive Safe Report - Linda Emanuel Drive Safe Co-Ordinator

There have been 15 sessions of Drive Safe since the last AGM. Obviously cancellations due to bad weather but we also had a significant gap when the equipment we used was transferred from Ware Police Station to Hertford. During the transition, several pieces of equipment went missing and also a new booking out procedure from Hertford had to be set up.

Drive Safe has to be conducted in daylight hours and in dry weather, so in the winter months we cannot be out as much as we would like to.

I would say currently we have half a dozen volunteers and two leaders who regularly attend our sessions and this is mainly due to when I am available and the hours/days that are easiest for me. Accessing the equipment from Hertford has had its problems. Car parking is difficult. Where the equipment is stored involves several trips to and from the car.

More recently equipment has gone missing again. Two sessions had to be cancelled.

On a more positive note we now have a permanent SID located outside the allotments at the junction opposite Broadfields. This has been welcomed by locals and I hope is the start of tackling speeding along High Wych Road.

The top speed recorded this year was 61mph. Obviously the driver was not concerned about the high-vis jackets and the SID displaying the speed. This was on a Friday evening at 7pm. Where possible, in terms of number of volunteers, we have counted the number of cars in an hour that have been speeding in the 31-35 mph bracket as we only report to the police those doing 36mph and above. We had 125 cars on one of these sessions at midday on a Thursday. High Wych Road is getting increasingly busier – for example on a Saturday late morning in one hour we had 260 cars, 46 were speeding over 36mph (18%). On another Saturday we had 350 cars and over 100 were in the 31-35mph bracket. All these figures are counting cars in one direction (towards the SID).

Last but not least I would personally like to thank all our volunteers for their help and support this past year. I believe it is important for Drive Safe to continue in High Wych in order to provide sufficient data for further action to be taken to combat speeding drivers.

7. Allens Green Hall update from Mr David Wojcik

Allens Green Village Hall was been offered for sale September 2016 with a closing date for offers on 10th December 2016. AGA (Allens Green Association) obtained a moratorium that sale would not take place till February 2017. Assurance was given that the offer made by AGA still stands. Support from HCC and local MP Mark Prisk, who sent a recommendation to Chris Hayward that Allens Green Hall be sold to AGA. Since this time AGA has been registered as the charity 'The Hall on The Green'.

EB – general consent has been given and matter now being dealt with. An executive decision in favour of The Hall on The Green unlikely to be countered.

DW - new energy will be generated and THOTG would like to merge with the HWMH website. Thanks given to all who have supported – and continue to support – this project.

8. The Link proposal

See 2.vii

9. Harlow Theatre Company – report by Mr Paul Stephenson

Securing the lease from the Parish Council for the Pavilion (formerly known as The Guide Hut) has enabled the HTC to grow and flourish.

The space offered is used for rehearsal, set building and costume storage.

Repairs to the structure so far include:

- roof repairs
- replacement of back wall to include insulation
- installation of two new toilets
- new cladding
- replacement of some rotting windows
- the fitting of an alarm system

The aim in 2017 is to replace further rotten window and insulate the inside.

PS thanked all who have helped throughout the project – including HCC and PC who have provide grants and especially their very generous sponsors – and offered the facility for use at community events such as the village fete. Additionally, HTC would be willing on occasion to stage productions at High Wych Memorial Hall and even The Hall on The Green at Allens Green.

10. Community Views and News

Rainbows and Brownies – Mrs Diane Penn

The move from the old Guide Hut (now the Pavilion) was of great help to these two organisations and DP thanked the High Wych Memorial Hall Trustees for sharing the space at the hall. Both Rainbows and Brownies now run at near full capacity (approx.20 members each). There is no Guide company as yet due to a shortage of leaders.

High Wych Memorial Hall – Mr Chris Poole

High Wych Memorial Hall bookings are currently running at around 90% capacity. A highly successful Race Night earlier this year boosted funds, and a Bingo Night in July and Quiz Night in October are planned. The main focus for the coming year is to replace the flat roof, for which major lottery funding will be required. CP reported that Mrs Penny Chapman recently joined the Committee and he welcomed news that Councillor Stephanie Glover will be representing the Parish Council on the Committee.

Broadband Connectivity

It appears GigaClear have pulled out completely from scheme to lay cable for improved broadband connection. BT OpenReach have allegedly taken up the slack and are purported to be laying fibre cable around the Broadfields area in High Wych. Fibre-to-cabinet has been promised before but now BT OpenReach are (allegedly) promising cabinet-to-house connection too.

SC thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at 10.05pm.

Next Annual Parish Meeting: **Wednesday May 16th 2018**

Signed by Chair:.....Date:.....