



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY, 16 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30PM

Present: Andrew Marchant
David Oxley
Simon Bagnall
David House
Amanda Parker
Jan Pledger

Members of the Public: None

County / District Councillors: CC Jeff Jones

Police: None

Apologies: DC Peter Boylan and PC L De Bruyn

Officer present: Caroline Jones (Clerk)

47.1 Apologies : received PC De Bruyn and DC Boylan.

47.2 Personal / Prejudicial Declarations : None received.

47.3 Public Comments : None received.

47.4 County / District Councillor Comments :

CC Jones reported that both December and January were challenging months working on the **Council budget**. The proposed budget was presented to the County Council with no reduction in front-line services. Investment in corporate planning to prioritise and provide support to those with the greatest needs is complete. It was noted that HCC continue to face huge challenges with high demand and rising inflation costs. Savings of £27.3M over 2023-24 was accomplished with an impact to only a small proportion of services. A 4.99% rise in council tax with 2% of revenue raised specifically allocated for social care has been progressed. Typically, a Band D household will pay £1,605.63 – an increase of £1.47 per week.

Work continues to provide a cleaner, greener and healthier region with £38M allocated to adult care and 9.68% increase in social care provision to ensure employees earn above the minimum wage. Vulnerable residents support to cover cost of living was included, £19M in children services, £10M for homeless and school transport, £6.4M for waste disposal and new contracts (no waste will go to landfill from 2030), £4.76M to Highways to cover inflation and ensure the continuation of road maintenance. The County Council are investing in future savings, projects for residents to live unattended and early intervention schemes.

Assistance was requested with reporting **potholes**. HCC reported an increase due of snow and ice, followed by fluctuations of road surface temperature, and cold and wet weather. **Residents were asked to report potholes online**. On average, 21,000 potholes are repaired by HCC annually. Highways maintain to make potholes safe within 24-hrs for rapid attention requirements, permanent repairs are attended to within 5-20 days.

The **Herts Lynx** service has been providing an excellent service on their 16-seat vehicles. Late evening services were introduced in Dec-22 and were well used. A fourth vehicle was introduced in Nov-22 and a further electric vehicle will be added to the service later this month. From the Spring, a further service south will be introduced to Ware and Hertford. Herts Lynx is participating in the £2 capped fare funded by the Department of Transport. The services is used by students via the home to school service.

The **Litter Picking Grant** was discussed, unfortunately East Herts are withdrawing this grant from Mar-23 leaving local parish councils to cover the cost and adding it to their precept if they wish to continue with the service.

There was no further update or news with regards to **Anstey Quarry**.



Both **Cave Gate** and **Silkmead** roadworks were on the planned work schedule but timing for any repair work was yet unknown. The chairman added that they both needed a gully digging as a soak-away.

47.5 **Police Report :**

No crimes were reported in December. Since the report, rear number plates were stolen from Lincoln Hill.

47.6 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 November 2022**

The chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022.

47.7 **Planning**

47.7.1 **Dove Cottage** SG9 0DH : 3/22/1677/HH + 1678/LBC – Ext. alterations incl. refurb of existing timber cladding, insertion of D/G windows and doors – Listed Building have confirmed this has been REFUSED. Awaiting confirmation – WITHDRAWN 28/11/22.

47.7.2 **3 Cheapside** SG9 0BL : 3/22/2244/HH – removal of rear S/S projection and open pitched roof shed. Comments due by 23/11/22 – PERMISSION GRANTED 28/12/22.

47.7.3 **Elm Cottage** SG9 0DL : 3/22/1160/HH – demolition of conservatory and erection of 2-storey rear extension – parish council had no comments or objections – REFUSED 25/11/22.

47.7.4 **Church Gate Cottage SG9 0BY** : 3/22/0018/HH – REFUSED 19/10/22.

47.7.5 **Plot 64** : Ref. No: 3/20/2139/FUL – Change of use of land to Gypsy/Traveller residential – Parish council objected – APPEAL LODGED 14/01/22.

47.7.6 To discuss any new applications or decision notices not listed above.

47.7.6.1 **Granary Cottage** SG9 0BY : 3/23/0069/HH – demolition of rear extension and erection of S/S rear extension.

Councillors raised no objections to the application, clerk provided this comment to the planning portal 30/1/23.

47.8 **Finance**

47.8.1 To receive an update on finances together with the summary of funds available 2022/23.

It was noted that the EH Precept on 30th Nov-22 is detailed in the debit column, clerk to amend to credit column. The HMRC letter confirming a £100 fine for late filing has been appealed against and cleared on 21 Jan-23.

47.8.2 Councillors unanimously supported £100 donation to the Good Neighbour's Scheme.

47.8.3 The latest bank reconciliation was accepted.

47.8.4 Payments for Jan/Feb-23 were approved including a change to the Clerk's cheque to include the defibrillator pads urgent purchase and a cheque to Joe Poulton for £6,460 + £1,292 VAT = £7,752 for village hall car park works.

47.8.5 The East Herts DC Litter Picking grant will cease from 01 Apr-23 which leaves the Parish Council to decide whether to continue with this service and pay for the service directly and may cause a rise in the precept from next year. Councillors unanimously voted to retain the service and cover the cost.

47.9 There has been no update on the phone box being brought up to the necessary standard following remedial works or the road flooding which is causing disrepair to the kiosk.

47.10 **Highways / Vegetation** : An article will be included in the newsletter reminding residents to please cut back any hedges that encroach onto the village road. How to report a pothole has been included in the next issue.

47.11 **Flooding** : To note Cave Gate flooded during recent heavy rain and is being monitored. The flooded highway B1368 south of Silkmead Ind Estate is also being monitoring. A survey took place recently but unsure if that was highways or rivers. See further information from CC Jones in item 47.4.

47.12 **Playing Field** : It was noted that the bench needs replacing – costs vary between £370-£570. AVS (Howe Fencing) and a number of local providers will be contacted in due course by Cllr Bagnall and the clerk.

47.13 **Salt Bin at Snow End** : Highways to be contacted to agree a siting of a new salt bin to be placed at the junction of Snow End /Brent Pelham Road and Silver Street (there is an existing salt bin at the bottom of Snow End). Both locations are dangerous in icy conditions.

47.14 **Church** : A grant has been received for upgrading of the font.

47.15 **School / Parking** : The school have been asked if no parking signage can be put up between school and church.

47.16 **Speeding** : A petition form has been received from the police after a year of requesting – details from the first petition were not received and will be included in the new form and submitted by the clerk. The Parish Council responded to a concern raised on speeding on Lincoln Hill.

47.17 **Village Hall** : Car park works have been well received and completed by Joe Poulton in the first week of Jan-23. The width and length of the car park has been extended and sleepers replaced, together with potholes mended.



The cost totaled £6,460. The school are pleased with the additional spaces available.

The village hall heaters have failed. The original heating was installed 8 years ago and there was little time to consider providers at that time. Investigation to repair the heaters and costings / details for new installation will be carried out. This is urgent as there are film nights on 17 Feb-23 and 24 Mar-23, and the annual fundraising Quiz Night will take place on 01 Apr-23. A combination of convectors and fan heaters will be used in the interim.

47.18 Newsletter : 12 page edition being printed this week at a cost of £180. The costings for the year were discussed, together with the £1,000 grant, a donation from a Meesden resident – Meesden Parish Council have committed to a contribution of £250. There are also 6 paid advertisers amounting to £180.

47.19 Anstey Quarry : No update received.

47.20 Defibrillator : The defibrillator was used for the first time in 4 years on Tues 20 Dec-22 sadly to no avail. Replacement and spare pads were ordered and the defibrillator is now back in working order.

47.21 Correspondence Received : To receive details of correspondence for information.

47.22 Any other business

47.21.1 Verge growth between fence and road at High Trees was discussed and will be monitored; if growth continues it will infringe onto the highways.

47.22.1 Public Footpaths : correspondence had been received from a parishioner concerning the footpath at Coltsfoot. The details were discussed and it was agreed that local land owners work hard to reinstate paths close to the reinstatement target of 14 days considering modern farming methods, local heavy soil type and ground conditions. This footpath will be monitored during future harvest and ploughing seasons.

47.23 Dates of Meeting : Next meeting to be held on Monday, 20th Mar-23 in the village hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:52 pm.