

**Number: 11 /2023**

Present: Cllrs Tim Parsons (Chairman), Dave Humphreys (Vice Chairman), Jane Timmis, Billy Pither, John Williams, Natalie Crowie, Jonathan Humbert, Stephen Behr

Also present: Caroline Freer – Clerk; County Cllr Terry Douris

- 1. To receive and approve apologies:** Cllr Boothman; Cllr Wild
- 2. To receive declarations of interest on agenda items:** None
- 3. To resolve that the minutes of the Parish Council minutes of the previous meeting are a correct record.**

Proposed by: Cllr Parsons

Seconded by: Cllr Williams

It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 February 2024 having previously been circulated as a true and accurate record of the proceedings be duly signed by the Chairman. All agreed

**4. Public and press participation (15 minutes maximum)**

- a) Anjohn Shone spoke re a revised planning application for Acorn Lodge which they would like to submit. The PC objected to the former application and Anjohn explained how the issues had been addressed mainly regarding the positioning of the footpath which would now go at the back of MV Commercial rather than at the front.

**5. County Cllr Terry Douris to update the meeting:**

Permanent toad signs to be discussed in preparation for next year – Road closure timings to be clarified for Terry Douris to review for next year.

The Hert Lynx is very well used – Terry gave the PC a challenge and asked that all the councillors use the service before the next meeting.

Flooding in River Hill and Chequers Hill: Highways has excavated large ditches and installed kerbs in River Hill to assist the flow of the water; Chequers Hill has had its drains and pipework completely cleaned out which should prevent further accumulation of rain water in the road.

**Flooding on Valley Lane, Woodend Lane, Puddephats Lane to be discussed** – Terry is aware of all of these, and with unprecedented rainfall in a short space of time – the land is saturated. Terry to look at Puddephats Lane/Markyate St whether there is a drain or soak away. A kerb has been fitted so it retains the water and does not go into the pond which is off to the side. Water on the roads should drain onto the land, not the other way around.

**Trowley Bottom** has a 6 month cleaning cycle (not 3 months), on 3 Jan 3 drains were either silted up or broken. 2 require dig outs, one a repair. There is yet another drain and it is not clear where the water goes so camera equipment will be deployed. Furthermore, Trowley Bottom Farm is the lowest point of the village, so water will accumulate there and confronted with saturated land the water cannot drain away.

Wigwags on Trowley Hill Road could cost up to £10,000 for one sign to be installed.

Re the 7.5 tonne weight consultation on the Road Traffic Order (RTO) – Terry thinks it will be reviewed positively and could be installed by end of this year.

**6. Update on Preschool from Sushmita Dutta** who was unable to attend but sent a report.

Finances are still in survival mode, although they have received a small donation. 2 new trustees have come on board. The Preschool is are very keen to have more children attend the sessions – it is a much loved and appreciated facility.

## 7. Planning:

### i) To consider new Applications:

1	24/00339/FHA Hillside View London Road	Demolition of existing outbuildings. Proposed two storey front and side extension	Posted 19 March 24 The PC unanimously objects to this application.  There is apparently an enforcement order in process on this property which needs to be resolved first before any other development takes place.  From the plans, it is not clear which outbuildings were being taken down to make up for the footprint of the extension. Or have these already been used up in earlier extensions/alterations?  The dimensions were not given. The house appears to be far too large an increase in size, but with insufficient information it is not possible to make a clear comment. Object
2	24/00361/FHA  Clanellan Delmerend Lane - Demolish existing stable, store and garage buildings and construct a new garage	Posted 19 March 24 The PC objects to this application (7 objections and 1 abstention) It is far too big in size for a regular garage. There are other garages/workshop on the plot. There is concern this could be used for commercial units. The neighbouring house which is 3 metres from the boundary is not noted on the submitted plans so it gives the impression that it is more isolated than it is. The proposed ridge height of 4.06m is higher than the property next door which would have light implications and be too imposing a building for a rural garden, half of which was originally an orchard. The soffit height is also correspondingly high. Also as the building is so long it stretches downhill so to keep the building at one level it is felt that the proposed building would have to be made even higher at the sloping end. The intended footprint is 2.5 times the size of the current outbuildings so this is considered to be far too large for a rural setting especially as it is so close to the next door's property. Object	
3	24/00454/FHA 82 Trowley Hill Road	Proposed two storey side and rear extension and a single storey rear extension	Posted 19 March 24 No objections
4	24/00515/RET The Farriers River Hill	Conversion of garage to gym and office	Posted 19 March 24 No objections

### ii) Planning applications received in last 6 days - NONE

#### iii) Planning Decisions taken by DBC

1	Chad Lane conversion of agri building to dwelling - Refused	The proposed development is not permitted under Class Q of the Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (As Amended) as other agricultural buildings have been constructed on the site since the prescribed period in Q.1 (g) thereto.
2	Cheverells	Car port - withdrawn

	House	
3	Hills and Coles	Granted
4	Valley Lane Farm	Granted
5	Acorn Lodge	Withdrawn
6	Hill Farm Trade School Refused	The principle of the development would be unacceptable as it would have significant impact on environment, character and appearance of the countryside. The development would also not provide ancillary facilities (such as playing fields and grounds) to meet the needs of students. The development would result in substantial harm to the heritage asset, and it has not been demonstrated that the public benefits of the scheme would outweigh the harm.
7	Land on Friendless Lane Refused	The application site is not in a sustainable location, thus the proposed redevelopment of the site and construction of a new dwelling is not acceptable in principle and conflicts with Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (2013) Policy CS1 and Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023), which seek to protect rural areas and avoid isolated homes in the countryside. 2. By virtue of the introduction of a domestic use within a rural area, the proposed new dwelling with associated access road, parking and landscaping would have an urbanising effect and would be harmful to the natural rural character of the site. This would have a greater visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development, which constitutes in appropriate development. In addition, the increase in reflective glazing and light spill emanating from the new dwelling would cause harm to the natural landscape character and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposed location of the dwelling would result in inadequate access and servicing. The refuse and recycling collection point would be located well in excess of 25m from the dwelling The application does not provide sufficient information to satisfy the council, as the competent authority, that the proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area for Conservation. There are no alternative solutions/mitigation or credible imperative reasons of overriding public interest why the proposed development should be permitted

- 9 Working Group Reports: Playground Inspection review: Cllr Humphreys to review inspection report and take action as required.
- 10 Affordable Housing Survey The next step in the process is to view the sites which were mentioned in the survey. Cllr Williams and Humphreys to visit sites with Giles Meredith on Wed 27<sup>th</sup> March 10-12.
- 11 Dumping of Sewage waste in the River Ver: Terry to have a meeting in April with the liaison county authority officer from Thames water regarding the dumping of raw sewage in the River Ver. Cllr Jane Timmis also sits on the Environment committee at DBC who are proposing to retract the River Gade in Hemel to its original route. Reducing the water extraction from the chalk streams has generally improved flow rates. Cllr Timmis has also joined the Ver Valley Society and they have been working on the portion of the River Ver between M1 and St Albans and here the water flows as it should. It was suggested that Markyate and Flamstead Parish Councils should tackle Thames Water together to make more of an impact and put pressure on them to prevent more outflows. PC: to invite Ver Valley Society to APM. Terry to liaise with Jane Timmis once he had spoken to TW.
- 12 Job application process for new Clerk to be agreed:  
Ideally the new applicant will have to work shadow the clerk for at least 3 months.  
Action: Clerk to update job description and put advert on GV, parish mag, HAPTC.
- 13 Review of Effectiveness of FPC's systems of internal control. Reports were circulated. Risk Assessment carried out Mar 23;

Asset Register agreed to AGAR £371,551 @ 31 March 23;  
 Clerk’s salary increase was in line with the ONS average earnings index 5.5% May/Jul 22  
 Direct debit and Standing Orders report for 23/24 approved  
 Proposed by Cllr Parsons to approve financial controls as above: Seconded: Cllr Crowie  
 All Agreed

- 14 Toad Patrol – temporary 6 week road closure for 2025 to be considered for River Hill;  
 Request for funds to buy torches – 2 @£100 each especially for Chequers Hill as more  
 visibility required. Not all patrollers want to spend this on a decent torch. Cllr Humbert  
 suggested a cheaper torch. Clerk to buy to test out.
- 15 Annual Parish Meeting on 22 April 2024 - topics for agenda –Ver Valley, A5 egress, Ramp  
 at village hall; Luton airport; Preschool, Clerk to ask if the Police can attend, talk by Dr  
 Battersby re toad patrolling .
- 16 Warden:
- 17 Finance: To consider receipts and payments reports from 13 Feb – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 as  
 circulated - To authorise payments as itemised; to consider expenditure against budget  
 report and to sign off invoices against payment report, bank reconciliations and bank  
 statements to month end @ 29 Feb 2024. To agree to payments by BACS as per report  
 presented.  
 Proposed by: Cllr Parsons  
 Seconded by: Cllr Crowie  
 All agreed
- 18 Correspondence: Letter re flooding at Trowley Bottom – see above, letter re extending  
 the green bins by up to 4 weeks; Cllr Timmis has asked for this several times and has been  
 informed that it would be too expensive
- 19 Agreed Action/By Whom

	<b>Actions from Mar meeting</b>	
CF	Update job description /place advert	
	<b>Actions from Nov meeting</b>	
JW/CF	and 2 x cupboards: 2 signs Home and Away for cricket teams; Await Honours boards to put up	
	<b>Planning Enforcement matters</b>	
JT	There is a Planning enforcement order at Newlands where all the plots of woods are sold and they have had tents and awning erected which disturbs wildlife Cllr Timmis is waiting to hear about the enforcement order re the track and they have also erected a metal gate and filled culvert to get access. All the best trees were felled before it was sold. Dog walking paddock: The second paddock is being withdrawn. Abilea Meadows – gone to appeal Cotton Spring – tbc, Woodend Lane stables: tbc; Chalkdell cottages – turned down	

Cllr Tim Parsons, Chairman 18 March 2024