

## LITTLE MUNDEN PARISH COUNCIL – Annual Parish Meeting 26 April 2018

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

#### Chairman

At last year's meeting I advised that I had agreed to act as Chairman of the Parish Council until the close of that meeting and that the PC would appoint a replacement Chairman at the start of the PC meeting in May. It didn't happen and I'm still here! The appointment of Chairman will again be on the agenda of the next meeting in May.

#### Council

Hannah Charvill resigned as Councillor for family reasons, having found it difficult to give proper commitment to the Council.

We advertised for a replacement councillor and were pleased that two parishioners put themselves forward for the position.

This triggered a by-election, which was held on 13 July last year, at which Tracey Harding was elected ahead of Di Cutmore.

Thanks to both candidates for standing; Tracey is already an active member of the Council and I would like to think that Di will retain her interest in local affairs and perhaps stand again at next year's local election.

#### Electoral division boundary changes

Following the new division arrangements for Hertfordshire which came into force at the local elections last May, we became part of the Hertford Rural Division. Ken Crofton was re-elected member for Hertford Rural and is now our County Councillor.

#### Lagoon

The 2016/17 parish year was dominated by the proposed storage lagoon at Home Farm, which was finally refused on Appeal.

As we knew then, the alternative to the proposed lagoon involves the use of a temporary holding tank and results in the use of more of the local road network and the greater use of agricultural vehicles and tanker lorries during the spreading periods.

#### Unauthorised development at Wheelwrights Farm

The PC objects to the unauthorised development at Wheelwrights Farm and supports the actions of the Local Planning Authority to have the enforcement notices upheld and the appeals dismissed. The PC also supports the actions of the Friends of Rowney Lane.

Our objection is on the grounds that

- Mr James Cash has not proved that he was a gypsy in April 2017.
- There is adequate provision of authorised gypsy sites in East Herts.
- The development constitutes isolated residential development in open countryside.
- The location is unsustainable.
- The development harms the character and appearance of the landscape and harms the setting of Rowney Priory, a listed building.
- The development is intentional unauthorised development.

The Appeal Hearing has been escalated to a **Public Inquiry** to be held on **15th to 17th May 2018 at 10:00am**. Friends of Rowney Lane has also obtained Rule 6 Status, which allows participation on an equal level with the Appellant, their Agents and East Herts District Council. All interested parties are invited to attend. The more people attending will demonstrate to the Inspector the strength of local feeling on this issue.

I will be reading a prepared statement at the public enquiry on behalf of the PC.

## **Neighbourhood Planning**

This part of the evening was preceded by an outline of Neighbourhood Planning within the East Herts District Plan, how you can help shape the development of the Dane End / Mundens area and how you can get involved.

We've had a useful session and all has been said that needs to be said for the time being.

## **Social media**

Not something I understand, but I'm happy that others do. Social Media is now classed as the main communication tool overtaking both letters and phone calls. This is not age specific, people as young as 13 years up to 60 years + now use it regularly.

The PC can use this tool in many ways to communicate, promote the Council and what we do. Through social media, we can reach many more people in the community who may never be able to come along to PC meetings due to lack of transportation or disability. We could also in future set up a blog or a twitter page with a weekly tweet about something that may be of interest to the parish.

If used correctly social media is a powerful tool and can benefit all parties involved.

## **Horses' Meadow**

We have a commitment from last year to repair the basket ball hoop base, but, on cost grounds alone, we have been reluctant to move forward.

If we are to spend serious money at Horses' Meadow, we think that an overall review of play equipment, particularly that available for younger children, is the better way to go and we are actively examining options, including grants available.

Dog poo is still an issue around the parish, particularly on Horses' Meadow. To encourage dog owners to be more responsible, signs have been commissioned for Horses' Meadow asking that dogs be kept on a lead, that dog mess be cleaned up and we have installed a dog poo bin at the bottom of Horses' Meadow next to the general litter bin.

## **Mobile phone mast**

Permission has been granted for the installation within a fenced compound at High View Farm of a 21m mast which hopefully will result in improvement in mobile phone reception in Dane End.

No timetable has yet been firmed up.

## **Friends of Little Munden (FoLM)**

The April newsletter included an article about the Friends of Little Munden, outlining the core values that sit at the heart of their little group – kindness, passion, community.

I encourage you to read this article and, if you are interested in joining the group, please drop them a message on their Facebook page or speak to one of the committee members.

## **Church and Parish newsletter**

Discussions between the PC, the Church and the editor are ongoing with a view to considering revisions to the format, including the possibility of paid-for ads to help fund its publication.

## **Common Land – The Old Chalk Pit**

We have met with the Carters, landowners adjacent to the Old Chalk Pit, to find out whether title was passed to them when they bought Lordship Farm or whether the common land is still registered in the name of the late HS Smith.

It seems clear that this area of common land is indeed under the control of the Carters, but they are happy to cooperate with us to turn it into something 'natural' of benefit to the community, perhaps an orchard, native trees, nature reserve, etcetera.

The Council will continue to explore possibilities with the Carters and communicate with parishioners when we have agreed suitable options.

**Rest & Welcome, Haultwick**

We understand that, following many discussions with the planners, conservation officer and others, agreement has been reached for repairing and extending the building to provide a fully refurbished village pub with a new bar and restaurant area. The proposal includes for retaining the original historic part of the building, creating a central focus around the existing brick chimney breast, and for providing level access from the street and within all internal areas. An extension at the rear will accommodate ancillary spaces - kitchen, wc's, storage etc. Externally there will be a landscaped garden and designated car parking spaces accessed from the existing driveway. The intention is to submit an application for planning and listed building consent in May, and anticipate that construction work could start on site in the autumn.

*26 April 2018*