

**THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Monday 15 May 2023 at 10.00 a.m.**  
**Salvation Army Hall**  
**MINUTES**

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1. **Present**

Jeff Phillips (JP), Ron Taylor (RT), John Lowe (JL), Paul Gardiner (PG), Paul Gloess (PGs), Alan Bunting (AB), Harry Downie (HD), Ian Barrison (IB).and Bob Fletcher (RF).

2. **Apologies for absence**

These were received from Karl Wingfield (KW).

3. **Past Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting on 13 March 2023, previously circulated, were approved as a true record.

4. **Matters Arising from Minutes**

None

5. **Treasurer's Report**

(a) The Treasurer's Report had been circulated by HD prior to the meeting. HD reported that most of the 2023 income has now been received and reminders have been included in the Spring newsletter for those members who have not paid their 2023 subscription.

(b) The Treasurer was asked to investigate the viability of opening a building society account to generate more interest for the Society's reserves. **Action:HD**

6. **Secretary's Items.**

(c) RF reported that the AGM was successfully held on the 27<sup>th</sup> April and the required financial information has now been sent to the Charity Commission.

(d) Topics for new public meetings were discussed. The following are still being progressed as topics for future public meetings:

I. Meeting on the Harpenden Health PCN - arranged for the 19<sup>th</sup> October.

II. Meeting on pedestrianisation, parking and traffic flows in Harpenden, maybe late Spring 2023.

III. Conservation Area, maybe a 2024 topic

IV. Luton Airport – focussing on the flight path issues, maybe late 2023.

V. Greenbelt development in Harpenden, preparing for any enquiry that may taking place, Local Plan etc – possibly Sept 23.

VI. Water/Sewage situation in Harpenden **Action:** JP to contact the University Hertfordshire Life Sciences dept to explore whether there is any scope for a joint project leading to a public meeting.

(e) It was agreed that committee members would look at the parts of the website that relate to their activities and provide proposed updates before each committee meeting. **Action All.**

7. **Chairman's Items.**

(a) JP reported that the traffic/pedestrianisation study for central Harpenden is still progressing **Action JP** to discuss timetable with University of Hertfordshire.

(b) Many of the chairman's items were covered in paragraph 6 above.

8. **Membership Secretary's Items**

(a) The Membership Secretary's report had been circulated by PGs prior to the meeting.

## 9. Newsletter Editor's Items

- (a) AB reported that the Spring issue is now with the printers. The Summer issue will include a feature on the new Town Council and the new mayor.
- (b) A discussion took place about the desirability of including advertising in the Society newsletter. There was a division of opinion about the desirability of this. One opinion was that although the Society financial position was currently satisfactory this may not be the case in the future and building up a stream of new income would make the Society more secure and allow it to take part in more activities. The other opinion was that advertising may lead residents to question the independence of the Society.

## 10. Publicity

- (a) The publicity report had been circulated by RT prior to the meeting.

## 11. Awards

- (a) Nothing to report due to PA's illness. RT has offered to take over the Awards work for the 2023 year.

## 12. Working Group Reports

- (a) Community Safety: The Community Safety report had been circulated by PG prior to the meeting.
- (b) Environment: Nothing to report.
- (c) Transport: The Transport report had been circulated by KW prior to the meeting. KW included the statement in his report that the Planning Inspectorate has now accepted the DCO for examination and the applicant's (Luton Rising, the airport company owned by Luton Borough Council) submission and this is now available on the Planning Inspectorate website for public view
- (d) Health & Social Welfare: The Health Report has been circulated by IB prior to the meeting. IB had previously circulated a letter from the New Hospital Campaign to the Herts and West Essex ICB outlining some views on the state of the proposed development of the new hospital in Watford. A new hospital in Watford seems many years ahead, even if the proposal to build on this site is confirmed. In the meantime there are proposals to improve the St Albans site but a major issue here is the availability of adequate parking.
- (e) Built Environment: The Built Environment full report has been circulated by JL prior to the meeting. JL reported on three applications:
  - I. **Cross Lane Fields** – 5/2023/0317 - This application is still Pending. A very large number of Objections have been submitted.
  - II. **Harpenden Public Halls, Southdown Rd.** – No further news since the council decided to pull the application following their decision to sell the site.
  - III. **Care Home, at Former Pan Autos, Grove Road** – 5/2022/2735 - The building of a 75-bed care home is still under consideration.
  - IV. **6 High Street** – 5/2023/0254 – Still under consideration. The Town Council have recommended refusal due to impact of the redesigned second floor addition. An interesting point made by one Objector was that Harpenden does not need another large capacity gastro pub type of establishment – but rather a genuinely high-quality restaurant.
  - V. **North West Harpenden (L & G Proposals) 5/2023/0327** – Still under consideration. It has attracted a huge number of Objections.
  - VI. **Land to the north of Wheathampstead Road** – 5/2022/2748 – The application for up to 40 houses is still under consideration. A large number of Objection have been lodged.
  - VII. **Land to the West of Piggottshill Lane** – 5/2022/2616 – This application was lodged in Nov 2022. It proposed 6 detached dwellings on vacant land near Waldergrave Park with access on to Piggottshill Lane near the Aldwickbury Golf Club. The land is owned by the same company who

have applied for consent on the above application. The application was REFUSED this week by the District Council. The grounds for the decision were – It is an inappropriate use by reason of the number and position of the proposed dwellings and would be detrimental to the openness, character and visual amenity of the Metropolitan Green Belt landscape. There are no exceptional circumstances to justify this development.

(f) Economic Activity: The Publicity report had been circulated by RT prior to the meeting. The Society discussed making a contribution to the proposed new skate park but more information is required about where the overall funding is coming from and the viability of the project before this can be progressed.

(g) Arts, Leisure, Entertainment (ALE): Nothing to report.

(h) Sports: Nothing to report.

13. **AOB**

None.

14. **Dates of the next meetings:** 10 July 23, 18 Sept 23, 13 Nov 23

**Public Meetings:** 19<sup>th</sup> October (Harpenden Health Network).

The meeting closed at 11.50.