LITTLE GADDESDEN *parish council*

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON Monday 20 July 2026

PLEASE NOTE THAT MINUTES ARE ALSO PUBLISHED ON THE WEB SITE
https:/littlegaddesden-pc.gov.uk

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs Allen, Baker, Hyde, Kelly and 10 Members of the Public. C/Cllr Smith-Wright, B/Cllr Terry Douris and the Clerk were in attendance.

1. FORMALITIES

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

a) To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 June 2026 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings

- The Minutes were unanimously approved and signed at the end of the meeting.

b) Declarations of Interests – To receive and consider Declarations of Interests and those in connection with items on the Agenda or consider requests for dispensation for declarable interests.

- There were no Declarations of Interest

2. OPEN SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- Members of the public raised concerns about hedges in the village and the need for contractors to cut hedges back harshly. Road signs at several points in the village including Ringshall were being obscured by over growth.
- Concern was also raised by residents about the state of repair some of the flint walls at Ringshall was raised as some appeared to be very crumbly and potentially might start to fail. The Council informed the meeting that the walls were the responsibility of the householders and that the Parish Council could write to householders to let them know that concerns had been raised and asking them to take appropriate action.
- Concerns were shared about a proposal to tarmac Hudnall Common from the Field Centre to the last house, Meadow View, before the lane narrows leading to St Margarets. There were mixed views from residents about this. Consideration had also been given to tarmac the surface all the way to St Margarets, this had now been dropped. Residents were disputing the accuracy of the official Definitive Map which showed the lane as a BOAT. Parish Council archive records demonstrate that the road from Meadow Farm to Blaines was a bridleway in 1950s not at BOAT and residents discussions continued with HCC.
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3. REPORTS AND MATTERS ARISING

a) To receive a report from Hertfordshire Constabulary – PSCO if attending, and to discuss increase in crime

- There was no report.

b) Report from County Councillor Caroline Smith Wright

C/Cllr Smith Wright

- confirmed that HCC were not supportive of linking the lane in Hudnall all the way to St Margarets and had advised against this for several reasons.
- updated the meeting on the Local Government Re-organisation: Hertfordshire had been divided into 4 Unitaries and Dacorum would be replaced by a Unitary with St Albans. Elections would take place in 2027 for a new cohort of councillors. A shadow council would run for a year to make the transition as smooth as possible. Caroline assured the meeting that all councils had moved diligently to this moment and that it was likely that they would all be under one roof.
- the SID for Hudnall Lane was planned for October / November.
- a Highways Manager had now been recruited and it was hoped that the backlog of requirements would start to be addressed.
- residents were urged to complete the Speed Management Survey on the HCC website.
- shared concerns regarding wildfires and extreme heat and asked the Parish Council to urge residents not to have bonfires or BBQs on any land, including gardens.
- informed the meeting that the HCC would be ruling is week on the Travellers Site in Flamsted and how hard and quickly every one had worked to respond to this issue.

c) Report from Borough Cllr Terry Douris

B/Cllr Douris reported that

- the Local Government Re-organisation would result in 84 Councillors in Hertfordshire North West.
- the Electoral Wards would remain the same but where there were 3 Cllrs this would go down to 2. 2 would remain 2 and 1 would remain 1.
- DBC was in special measures in respect of large planning applications “major” which could go direct to the planning inspectorate for determination if applicants wished. These restrictions felt unfair.
- Community Grants for up to £4k were available from 1 August to 30 September. Potential applicants should look at the DBC website https://eforms.dacorum.gov.uk/grants/
- the DBC Finance team had been waiting for submissions from some parish councils regarding concurrent services grant. CS&G were assessing elements which Clerks had notified them about.
- Gadebridge Park an important small memorial garden was in need of attention and was maintained in collaboration with volunteers and the SANDS charity. Resident were encouraged to visit it.
- he had facilitated and attended a meeting with Clerk and CS&G to discuss the removal and replacement of bins some of which were in poor condition. The aim was to rationalise the provision and collection of waste bins.

- the Government had instructed DBC to work on the Local Development Plan to span the period to 2041 to 2061 even though the preceding one had not been signed off.
- 1500 houses would be built north of Redbourn Road coming out of Hemel Hempstead.

d) Update on the current issues associated with the Land adjacent to Church Road and to agree associated actions and expenditure

Cllr Kelly reported that LGPC had spent money on advice. There was nothing new to report. Hoped to be able to report more in September meeting.

(e) Update on Bridgewater Arms potential community purchase

- Cllr Allen updated the meeting as a member of the Steering Group acknowledging that there were 2 other people who were on the Steering Group in the room.
- two public meetings had been held which demonstrated support for the initiative to attempt to purchase the pub.
- the Steering Group were grateful to The Parish Council for once again submitting an application to get the Pub registered as an Asset of Community Value. It was hoped that this would provide the village steering group with more time to explore how best to protect the pub and the village from the loss of such an important part of the village.
- the Steering Group were formulating a questionnaire and had put together a strong project timetable of milestones it wished to achieve. The Steering Group would keep those updated who had expressed an interest in the future of the pub.

(f) Update on Speed Management Strategy

Cllr Baker updated the meeting that

- the application for the Average Speed Camera had been rejected because of concerns with the chosen company
- he had met with the PCC and advocated the case for better speed management in the village and asked if Little Gaddesden could be part of any pilots of new spee The d management technologies.
- the Grant for a Speed Indicator Device which had been successful would produce an additional SID in October November which would be installed by HCC.
- a former Councillor reminded the meeting that she had gained a grant for average speed camera several years ago and that HCC had refused to allow it on the basis that there wasn't an appropriate site on the public highway for it to be safely installed and deployed.
- a discussion followed on the amount of signs that were being obscured by hedge overgrowth in various places in the village and that this was the responsibility of land owners. Highways should be informed where there were dangers, however it was noted that it was the responsibility of the electricity companies to make sure that wire and power supplies were in an operational state.
- Residents reported that
    - the base of the post of the 40mph sign just past Hudnall Lane and before Robin Hood House was rotten and looked as if it was going to fail. Residents were urged to report such matters directly on the HCC website and to use what 3 words location and a photo if possible.

- The 30mph roundell at Ringshall had worn off

Action: The Clerk agreed to remind residents report and to remind residents to report things directly to HCC and to add the web address to the Minutes https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx

(g) Update on discussions with Dacorum regarding waste bins

The Clerk referred to B/Cllr Douris update earlier in the meeting and thanked him for arranging and attending the meeting with her.

The Clerk reported that she had carried out a review of the bins in Little Gaddesden, some provided and owned by DBC and some provided by LGPC. Many were in disrepair and the Council were recommending that some be upgraded by the respective owner.

The Council was proposing that

- the total number of bins in the village be reduced by 2
- all remaining bins (13) to be emptied by DBC Clean Safe & Green and none by Sunny Side Rural Trust, resulting in an increase of 1 for DBC to collect
- the bins on the playing fields and playground be removed, and where appropriate one bin to be sited in each car park or just inside by two of the gates.
- the wooden bins on the Green and NT Car park be replaced with modern Iroko wood bins. Cheaper municipal black metal bins had been considered but felt to be inappropriate for the green open spaces. Any new bin would be easier to use and empty than the dilapidated ones.
- the bin by the village hall to be moved to the opposite side and nearer the car park to make it more accessible for use and collection.
- LGPC and DBC needed to consider and agree who would remove and install the bins given the need for risk assessments, method statements and where there might be subterranean services, a Cat Scan.
- LGPC needed to consider the total costs were DBC to install the bins. The cost of each wooden bin was in the order of £573.99 ex VAT without fixings and the LGPC was looking to replace 5 bins with 5 modern Iroko wooden ones totalling nearly £3,000. A lower figure or circa £2,500 had been provided previously on the basis that metal instead of wooden bins might be used and the number of bins maintained.
- The Clerk and Chair to meet to review the final proposals to submit to DBC for agreement.

The Council were happy for the Clerk and Chair to go ahead with the rationalisation and replacement of bins and to purchase the higher cost bins using the firm recommended by DBC to achieve an improved aesthetic.

4. ADMINISTRATION

(i) Correspondence not already covered above and that required action by the Council.

Hedges

A resident had informed the council that they had witnessed the grounds maintenance company cause significant accidental damage to the wooden fence in Church Road. An inspection shortly afterwards that day revealed a broken horizontal, split uprights and increased instability. The owner of the grounds maintenance company was very apologetic

and had assured the Clerk that this would be sorted out. The Council was grateful to know this.

Overgrowth of hedges had been mentioned earlier and continued to be a source of concern to residents. A farmer had written to share significant concerns for himself and the safety of road users in several places in the village where land owners were not cutting back their hedges forcing him to have to drive in the middle of the road or the wrong side of the carriage way to use the road.

The Parish Council confirmed that they had

- tried to contact one of the residents on Beaney Bend but had had no response to phone calls or texts.
- had reported concerns to HCC about the overgrowth and danger to road users prior to, and post receipt of, the farmer's concerns and would follow up again

Cllr Kelly agreed to try to contact the resident on Beaney Bend.

C/Cllr Smith Wright had shared her concerns on this matter and agreed to chase HCC to see what action they could take to assist with road safety issues. Once again the Parish Council implored residents to maintain their boundaries, to ensure their hedges and foliage did not encroach on footpaths, pavements, highways and did not obliterate road signs. The Parish Council agreed that they would deliver letters asking residents who had not already cut their hedges to cut them back significantly. Trims were not sufficient.

(ii) <u>Finance:</u>

- The Council approved the Clerk's Salary, PAYE and Pension.
- The schedule of payments was approved together with the report on expenditure for the previous month which detailed the statutory powers used for expenditure.
- The monthly financial report against budget and bank reconciliation was approved.

(iii) <u>Health and Safety</u>

- The weekly reports did not show any changes to the status of the equipment.
- It was noted that the ground was still too hard to undertake the recommended maintenance and that this would be undertaken as soon as possible. Signage for the playground would be done at the same time as other signage in the village.

(iv) <u>Planning Schedule</u>

- The Public were invited to make responses to the applications received since the last meeting.
- The Parish Council discussed and agreed the wording of the consultation responses to DBC in respect of the applications received.
- Decisions agreed by the Council are documented on the attached Planning Schedule 4 (iv), some of the comments made are featured below.

A resident shared concerns on the impact of the proposed build at number 58/59. In particular the fact that it was proposed to go right up to the boundary and her mature

hedge, and that it was proposed that the hedge be cut back. The resident was concerned that a building so proximate to the hedge and significant works to the hedge would severely damage the hedge. The resident had no objections to a shed being erected but did object to it going up to the boundary and the works to the hedge. The Parish Council shared the resident's concerns and agreed to note these in their response to the consultation whilst submitting a Neutral response overall. The Chair undertook to speak to the applicant to share concerns.
Action: Chair

It was noted that the Parish Council had not heard anything further from DBC Planning subsequent to the Parish Council's objection to the proposed plans. It was the Council's understanding that as the application was /FUL that it would go to Development Management Committee (DMC).

6. COUNCILLOR UPDATE/ Agenda Items for next meeting
Items raised are for discussion only. No resolutions can be made on items that did not form part of the agenda but new matters can by agreement of the Council be added to the agenda of the next Parish meeting**.**

Cllr Hyde noted that a quotation had been received for the cleaning of memorials and that explorations were still underway regarding what else needed to be done and if Ashridge's cherry picker could be used.

The meeting was reminded that there was no meeting in August and that the next meeting was 7 September.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
7 September at 19:30

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS 2026

No meeting August September 7th	October 19th November 16th December 7th

The meeting closed at c20.40

20 July 2026 LGPC Council Meeting Item 4 (ii) Finance – Schedule

To approve the appended schedule of payments for July

Payee	Purpose	Expenditure ex vat£	Vat£	Expenditure inc vat£	Power to
Reimbursement Clerk	Expenses-LGPC monthly phone fees	14.04		14.04	provide & equip office
Reimbursement Clerk	Expenses-Microsoft-Cllr Emails monthly charge credit of 0.51p and	22.82	4.56	27.38	provide & equip office
Reimbursement Clerk	Expenses-Microsoft-LGPC MSO & Email monthly charge	10.08	2.02	12.10	provide & equip office
Scottish Power	Electricity on the Green monthly charge	17.07	2.60	19.67	provide Lighting
Village Hall	LGPC Official Monthly Meetings - Room Hire (in arrears)	66.00		66.00	provide & equip office
MW Agri	Grounds maintenance monthly charge	852.92	170.58	1023.50	acquire/maintain open spaces
SRT Warden Service	Warden Services monthly charge	279.84	46.64	279.84	provide warden services
Wilson	Tree stump grinding	440	88	528	acquire/maintain open spaces
Buxton	Balance of fees total (£1200 plus £240 Vat £750 already paid)	690		690	professional services
Cllr Kelly	Materials for the playground	395.40		395.40	acquire/maintain open spaces

- Costs for additional signage on The Green and on the Playground would be presented shortly as would an invoice regarding car park repairs and repairs to Village Memorials and stationery for the Clerk. It was noted that Cllr Kelly was to be reimbursed for materials for the playground and had submitted and invoice for £395.40 which was agreed.

Item 4 (iv) Planning– Schedule - Applications received since the last meeting. For public comment before decision by Parish Council

No formal notification received by LGPC regarding Beaney Farm/Stables Nettleden Road North prior or following the granting of extension to consultation

Date	Address	Post Code	Proposal	Application number	LGPC Decision
06/07/2026	The Pines , Alderton Drive,	HP4 1NA	Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of new dwelling	26/01368/FUL	Neutral
13/07/2026	58 - 59 Nettleden Road North LG	HP4 1PL	Removal of existing garden shed and 5 low quality trees for the installation of new timber clad art store	26/01544/FHA	Neutral with comments in support of neighbour