

Minutes of the Special Parish Council Meeting held at 2.30 p.m.
Wednesday 24th April 2002 in the Function Room of the Fenn Bell
Inn St Mary Hoo

Attendance Those present were as follows;- Mrs M D Stanney
(Chairman); D F Sinclair; Mrs M L Sinclair; J W Nettleton and the
Clerk/RFO E C Woodards

An apology for non-attendance due to employment was received from
Councillor M E Budd

Adoption of The Model Code of Conduct - Parish Councils The
Clerk referred to the Local Government Act 2000 and the resulting
"Code of Conduct - Parish Councils" contained within Statutory
Instrument 2001 No 3576. This had come into effect from the 5th
November 2001 and had to be adopted by the 5th May 2002. Copies
had been distributed and Members briefed. It was agreed that The
Code be adopted immediately and without modification. Members
provided signed copies of the Register of Members Interests forms
and signed copies of Members Written Undertakings which were then
witnessed by the Clerk. Reference was also made to Gifts and
Hospitality valued over £25 and the need to update the Register
of Members Interests from time to time.

The Clerk reported that Councillor Budd would be providing his
Register of Interests form and his Written Undertaking at the
next Meeting, as he had informed the Clerk of his interest and
support for The Code.

Finance - Audit

1. **Auditors Certificate and Opinion for 2000/2001** The Clerk
produced a satisfactory Auditors Certificate and Opinion for
the Parish Council's Accounts for the Year 2000/2001
2. **New Audit Regime** The Clerk reported on a new "lighter touch"
Audit regime starting with the Year 2001/2002, resulting in a
fixed reduced fee for St Mary Hoo of £50.00 + VAT. In future,
an Annual Return consisting of a set of signed Statements
would have to be submitted to the Auditors without the need
for the submission of the actual accounts.
3. **New Auditors for the Annual Audit** The District Audit had
been appointed as Auditors for the next five years.
4. **Appointment of Internal Auditor and the Adoption of Standing
Orders and Financial Regulations** The Clerk reported that
under the new Audit regime it would be necessary for the
Parish Council to comply with the 1996 Accounts and Audit
Regulations and appoint an Internal Auditor. It also appeared
advantageous for Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to
be adopted. After lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the
matter be further investigated with a view to complying with
the new requirements. The Chairman and Councillor Nettleton
be authorised to approach various individuals to enquire as
to whether anyone would be willing to become an internal
auditor to the Parish Council.

Signed..M.D. Stanney.....
Chairman of the Parish Council

Dated...14th...May...2002.....