

## Minutes of the Easton on the Hill Parish Council meeting

held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 at 7pm in the Village Hall, Easton on the Hill

Present: Cllr Bates, Cllr Green, Cllr Holwell, Cllr Lawson, Cllr Mountain, Cllr Nicol (Chairman), Cllr Watson (Vice-Chairman) and Cllr Woodman.

Clerk: J Rice and 1 member of the public, Mr K Cox

23/132	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. To receive apologies sent to the Clerk.</b> There were apologies received by the Clerk from Cllr McAllister. Cllr Ford was not present.
23/133	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> <b>To receive all declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda. Reminder to members to update their register if necessary.</b> (Members should disclose any interests in the business to be discussed and are reminded that the disclosure of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest will require that the member withdraws from the meeting room during the transaction of that item of business). There were no new declarations of interest made. Cllr Woodman stated his involvement on the committee at Wittering Premier Football Club but did not declare any interest.
23/134	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b> <b>Arrangements will be made for the public to join the meeting. A max of 15 minutes will be permitted for members of the public to address the meeting on any item on the agenda.</b> <b>Chairman to remind Councillors of one of the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life.</b> The Chairman reminded members of the principle of openness and transparency and the importance of this in all work of the Council. The member of public present stated they would input at the relevant items on the agenda if invited.
23/135	<b>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (previously circulated)</b> <b>To confirm as correct the record of the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023, previously circulated and herewith. Chairman to sign.</b> The minutes of the last meeting did not include a thank you to K Cox for helping sorting out a water issue on the playing field and so this was stated again and the minutes were then agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.
23/136	<b>MATTERS ARISING from previous meeting.</b> There were none.
23/137	<b>GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND TRAINING</b>
137.1	<b>To receive finance report and internal checks feedback up to the end of December and resolve any queries, herewith.</b> The finance report was received and noted. Basic budget 72% spent 75% through the year. Projects are 51% spent - mainly due to underspent playing field budget at the moment. There is also maintenance budget not spent at playing field - could be used for some jobs outstanding. Training budget available for Cllrs/Clerk - roles and responsibilities training offered by NALC Bank balance is 31k, with new bank account interest bringing in £352 so far. Playing field general budget balance is £6200 project monies (incl £3250 c/f) but could be spent on car park, pavilion refurb and roof. Cllr Green confirmed the internal checks were carried out and no issues found.
137.2	<b>To note any feedback from training attended (including Artificial Intelligence (AI) part 3 and 4) and consider any new training required.</b> The Clerk summarised the latest sessions from the AI taskforce, noting the speed and application of various AI in more and more areas of work. Could soon be used for policies, posters/adverts, planning responses, MVA data summaries and free apps are still good enough especially GoogleBard. No new training was wanted.
137.3	<b>To make arrangements for the Clerk's appraisal and incremental assessment from April 2022- April 2023, effective from April 2023.</b> It was noted that this is overdue and a date for the staffing committee to meet will be arranged, without, and then with, the Clerk. Councillors will be asked for feedback on this period. <b>Action Cllrs/Staffing Committee/Clerk</b>

Signed by Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

137.4

**To note resignation of Councillor and agree process to replace including representation on groups.**  
The resignation of ex Councillor Pat Firth was noted and a vote of thanks was given for Pat's contributions and passion for well-being. The notice to advertise the opportunity for a bi-election will be displayed and co-option can take place from 12/2/24. **Action Clerk/Cllr Lawson**

23/138

**PLAYING FIELD WORKING GROUP (PFWG)**

- a) **To receive, note and approve/amend Terms of Reference and members of the PFWG, herewith.** The differences between the committee and a working group were explained. The Chairman stated his desire for 6 months maximum term. The draft terms were received, noted and agreed. There are members yet to confirm their membership. **Action Clerk/Cllrs Ford and McAllister**
- b) **To receive and note final hire agreement with Wittering Premiair FC and note impact on business plan plus recommendation that WPFC are the approved contractor for improvement works. Resolve to approve/amend/sign, herewith.** The draft hire agreement was received and noted and the rental cost of £300 pm agreed as per the business plan. It was noted that included in the agreement is the arrangement that Premiair Ltd contractors carry out improvement works for a maximum of £900 contribution from the Parish Council, for this season and then subject to review. Councillors agreed to the suspension of the financial regulations on getting 3 quotes for works or going out to tender due to the competitiveness and uniqueness of the situation. The contractors will invoice the Parish Council for the works as per the maximum amounts. A list of their possible works had been circulated. It was noted Premiair Ltd has also applied for a grant to the FA. It was further noted that the cricket club looking to hire the field might also want a similar arrangement. **Action Clerk to firm up agreement and send**
- c) **To agree to invoice WPFC for utility bills Oct-Dec 2023 and ongoing added to hire charge.** It was agreed to invoice as above as per the verbal agreement. **Action Clerk**
- d) **To note any update from the car park contractor since email and letter sent and agree next steps.** A response from the contractor had been circulated on Friday. The content was discussed and a principle of working together to resolve and rectify the situation amicably was agreed as an approach, with acceptance of responsibility from both sides. A meeting will be arranged between the contractor, the surveyor and Cllr Watson. **Action Clerk, Cllr Watson**
- e) **To agree accuracy of the minutes of the last PFMC meeting on 18/10/23 and Chairman to sign.** The minutes were unable to be signed at the meeting and will be read and presented to be agreed and signed at the next meeting. **Action PFMC/PC**
- f) **To receive specification for asbestos removal, plus written quotes/bids for work and agree and appoint contractor subject to adequate PLI and risk assessment provided, to follow.** The 3 specifications and quotes were received and noted. It was agreed to appoint Handiman, K Cox, as the contractor, subject to provision of adequate public liability insurance to the Clerk. **Action Clerk**
- g) **To approve new waste disposal contract, as previously agreed by PFMC.** The contract was agreed and has been changed over to the Parish Council to pay.
- h) **To receive and note proposal to replace caretaker of the playing field and pavilion, to note work specification, to follow, and decide status of contract reporting to the Clerk and approve process to fill.** Cllr Nicol presented the content of the draft specification of the work and the Clerk explained the need to assess this as per HMRC guidance on status of the contract, employed or self-employed. It was agreed to be a self-employed status due to them providing own equipment, buying their own supplies and materials and having no set hours, and a Grounds Maintenance Contractor. It was noted that the contractor will be managed by the Clerk, like the other contractors, and they will liaise and send all paperwork and invoices to them. It was agreed to advertise the opportunity in the next What's on the Hill and other places. **Action Clerk**
- i) **To agree an interim contractor arrangement if necessary for bin emptying etc.** It was agreed to appoint K Cox/Handiman to do a list of urgent and necessary works to get the pavilion safer and more operationally sound. A maximum of £120 plus £250 materials was agreed.
- j) **To receive and note information regarding trade accounts, how they/who will operate and approve or not.** The PFWG had requested this for the contractor however the Clerk advised this was not appropriate as they should have their own account and not access to a Parish Council account and public funds. It was stated that the Parish Council could open an account for mainly low value items they might need.

Signed by Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

		<p>k) <b>To receive and note updated plan from PFWG and resolve any queries, herewith. Health and Safety issues and PC liability to be noted/actioned as a matter of urgency, see list and costs. Clerk recommends an initial, professional audit after this urgent work.</b> The plan was received and noted as an update. Fire safety actions were agreed and it was agreed to purchase Legionella testing kits and get a trained and experienced resident to do an informal audit after the interim works have been done – as above. <b>Action Clerk/PFWG</b></p>
<b>23/139</b>	<b>REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
	<b>139.1</b>	<p><b>Trees and Greens Working Party (Cllr Green, Cllr Mountain, Cllr Holwell and Cllr Bates)</b></p> <p>a) <b>To receive and note feedback from the latest Nature Recovery Group (NRG) meeting and agree any new actions.</b> It was noted that the next NRG meeting is 23/1/24 and a report will follow after that.</p> <p>b) <b>To consider a standalone bio-diversity policy to show the commitment from the Parish Council to conserve and enhance bio-diversity, as per NCALC communication and Government guidance, email refers.</b> This was not discussed.</p> <p>c) <b>To agree and note tree survey to be carried out on 23/1/24 as described for £100.</b> This was noted and agreed. A report will follow.</p> <p>d) <b>To note increased prices of grass cutting and resolve to agree or not continuation of contract.</b> The costs were received and noted and agreed. It was further agreed to review the green areas and the cutting requirements of where and when clarified. <b>Action Cllr Woodman/NRG</b></p> <p>e) <b>To receive a list of jobs for the Justice in the Community project.</b> This will be done as part of the NRG meeting. <b>Action NRG/TAG</b></p> <p>f) <b>To receive and note any new reports from the group incl pond cleaning.</b> The NRG will review requirements and report back. <b>Action NRG/TAG</b></p>
	<b>139.2</b>	<p><b>Checkers reports/village maintenance</b></p> <p>a) <b>To receive checker reports from Cllr Green and Cllr Holwell for December and address any issues raised.</b> Cllr Lawson is checker for January, Cllr Ford for February. Checkers reports were received and no issues raised.</p> <p>b) <b>To note any new reports of village maintenance, including church wall and resolve action.</b> The church wall had been reported to the Diocese and they reported they will deal with it. Cllr Woodman had changed a bulb in the bus shelter.</p> <p>c) <b>To note plans for redundant church flagpole.</b> It was noted that the redundant flagpole is available from the church if the Council wishes to site it somewhere as a village pole. It was noted that it is very big and so it was agreed to check out the practicalities first. <b>Action Cllr Lawson</b></p>
	<b>139.3</b>	<p><b>Village Hall.</b></p> <p>1) <b>To note any update from Cllr representative.</b> Cllr Green reported that it was all running well.</p>
	<b>139.4</b>	<p><b>Vehicle Activation Devices and Traffic Working Group. (Cllr Woodman and Cllr Green)</b></p> <p>a) <b>To receive and note any changes in the latest data from devices.</b> Cllr Woodman reported that the data is on now but there is no notable difference in the data pre and post installation of the device.</p> <p>b) <b>To note request from NCALC for electric devices information and reply.</b> The Clerk explained this was required for an emergency system should a streetlight get damaged. She confirmed there is no emergency call out with the maintenance contractor. <b>Action Clerk to submit</b></p>
	<b>139.5</b>	<p><b>Joint Action Group/Police Liaison Representative (PLR) and Local Area Partnership (Cllr Firth)</b></p> <p><b>To receive and note latest reports.</b> There has been no attendance. A replacement representative will be C/F.</p>
<b>23/140</b>	<b>ALLOTMENTS</b>	
	<b>140.1</b>	<p><b>To receive update from Allotment Manager.</b> P Bates reported the Damson tree has been addressed by Longhurst.</p>
<b>23/141</b>	<b>LAND REGISTRY PROJECT</b>	
	<b>141.1</b>	<p><b>To receive update from Cllr Lawson on parish land registration.</b> Cllr Lawson updated the Council on the situation and it was noted.</p>
<b>23/142</b>	<b>THE BRIERS LIGHTING MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY COSTS</b>	
	<b>142.1</b>	<p><b>To receive and note update on the transfer of 3 lights in The Briers to PC control – request for a letter/agreement to authorise change from PC sent and back dated payment request.</b></p>

Signed by Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

		The request was received and noted. It was agreed not to backdate the payment of the lights past the date the Council agreed to take them on. <b>Action Clerk</b>
<b>23/143</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SUPPORT/ENGAGEMENT/ISSUES</b> <b>143.1 To agree items for What's on the Hill</b> It was agreed to insert the Grounds Maintenance contract and vacant Parish Councillor post.	
<b>23/144</b>	<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE (Cllr Lawson, Cllr Mountain, Cllr McAllister, Cllr Watson and Cllr Woodman)</b>	
	<b>144.1</b>	<b>To note minutes and/or feedback from Planning Committee - meeting on 22/1/24.</b> It was noted that there had been no meeting due to there being no new applications needing a response. It was agreed to request an update from planning on the delay on some applications and the process of consultation. <b>Action Clerk</b>
<b>23/145</b>	<b>CLERK CORRESPONDENCE /INFORMATION TO NOTE:</b> a) <b>To agree date of an Annual Parish meeting between 1/3/24 – 1/6/24 and agree dates of meetings for the year of 12/2, 11/3, 8/4, 13/5 (annual PC meeting), 10/6, 8/7, 9/9, 14/10, 11/11 and 9/12.</b> The dates were noted and the decision about calling a Parish Meeting will be deferred to February. b) A letter from a resident regarding the poor service from Anglian Water was received and noted and the response received from AW previously will be sent to this resident. <b>Action Clerk</b>	
<b>23/146</b>	<b>ORDERS FOR PAYMENT</b>	
	Payments were agreed to be made as follows;	
	<b>146.1</b>	Clerk reimburse for HP ink plans. E printer £4.49 plus one shared with other PCs £8.57. £13.06
	<b>146.2</b>	Clerk reimburse for Microsoft package January £5.99
	<b>146.3</b>	HMRC employer NI payment £25.56
	<b>146.4</b>	Clerk mileage for December £2.70
	<b>146.5</b>	Yu Energy electricity bill as per contract, paid by direct debit. January £429.79 £17.92
	<b>146.6</b>	EDF Energy for pavilion December and January £95.45 paid £108.68
	<b>146.7</b>	Village hall hire £33
	<b>146.8</b>	J Rawlinson Caretaker invoice for December £30
	<b>146.9</b>	Clerk new salary payable 31/1/24 £892.53 plus home office £26 less any tax/NI £7 £911.53
	<b>146.10</b>	Fen Tiger Pest Control paid 5/1/24 £800 paid
	<b>146.11</b>	Testing kits for Legionella £120
	<b>146.12</b>	Mountain Recycling waste removal contract £17.94
<b>23/147</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	To note income received; Wittering Premier FC pitch hire costs for December £180 due, received 5/1/24
<b>23/148</b>	<b>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</b> It was noted that the date of the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7pm. Next Planning Committee meeting is 12/2/24 unless another is needed beforehand. See council notice board or website for details <a href="http://www.eastononthehill-pc.gov.uk">www.eastononthehill-pc.gov.uk</a>	

Signed by Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_