

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

**held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7pm in the Village Hall, Easton on the Hill**

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

Cllr Green arrived at 19:50, item 25.16. Clerk: J Rice

<b>24/17</b>	<b>TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN</b>	
	<p><b>Current Chairman (or Vice Chairman) to take nominations and votes for Chairman and elect. In the event of a tie in votes, the outgoing Chairman has a casting vote. Once appointed, the new Chairman to sign the Declaration of Acceptance and chair this meeting.</b></p> <p>Cllr Nicol took nominations and Cllr Nicol was nominated for the Chairman role. There were no other nominations and Cllr Nicol was proposed, seconded and unanimously voted to be elected as Chairman again. Cllr Nicol signed the declaration of acceptance and chaired the meeting.</p>	
<b>24/18</b>	<b>TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN</b>	
	<p>Cllr Nicol took nominations and Cllr Watson was nominated for the Vice-Chairman role. There were no other nominations and Cllr Watson was proposed, seconded and unanimously voted to be elected as Vice-Chairman again. Cllr Watson signed a declaration of acceptance.</p>	
<b>24/19</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
	<p><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. (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).</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made.</p>	
<b>24/20</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. To receive apologies sent to the Clerk.</b>	
	<p>Apologies were received from Cllr Green (arrived 19:50). Cllr McAllister and Cllr Ford did not attend.</p>	
<b>24/21</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b>	
	<p><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. Chairman to remind Councillors of one of the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life.</b></p> <p>There were no members of the public present. The Chairman reminded all Councillors of the Nolan principle of "Integrity" in everything they do as Councillors.</p>	
<b>24/22</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (previously circulated)</b>	
	<p><b>To confirm as correct the record of the minutes of the last meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024, previously circulated. Chairman to sign.</b> The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.</p>	
<b>24/23</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING from previous meeting.</b> Cllr Bates confirmed that she will see the resident about the notice board renovation costs now he has taken a look.	
<b>24/24</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE</b>	
	<b>24.1</b>	<b>To review and agree all committees' and working groups' members, herewith.</b> The committee and working group members were all agreed as they are now.
	<b>24.2</b>	<b>To review committees' and working groups terms of reference and resolve any changes, herewith, for Playing Field, Planning, Complaints, Finance and Staffing Committees.</b> The terms of references were all agreed to stay as per previously agreed.
	<b>24.3</b>	<b>To receive, review and agree to adopt (new) Financial Regulations (to follow) and Standing Orders, herewith.</b> It was agreed to review the new financial regulations via the Clerk and working group and defer to the June agenda. The standing orders were reviewed and adopted as now. <b>Action Clerk</b>
	<b>24.4</b>	<b>To review Councillor finance internal control checkers, currently as per monthly defib checker.</b> It was agreed to make bank signatories the internal checkers to see bank details of payments (and the defib checkers to remain the same.) <b>Action Clerk to confirm ok according to financial regs.</b>
	<b>24.5</b>	<b>To review Council's annual risk assessment, herewith.</b> This was reviewed and agreed.
	<b>24.6</b>	<b>To check bank signatory Councillors and arrange for more if needed.</b> It was agreed to keep just the 4 signatories as there are now and to make them the internal checkers if that fits with financial regs. <b>Action Clerk</b>

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

24.7	<p><b>To note Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioner’s guide changes to be aware of for Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) signing.</b></p> <p>The Clerk confirmed the review of the guide changes and reminded Councillors of the purpose of the guide.</p>
24.8	<p><b>To receive AGAR internal audit report and resolve any actions, herewith.</b></p> <p>The Internal Auditor’s Annual Return form was received as all passed. The advice note in her report referred to the changes of the playing field committee to a non-public working group and the possible issues with perceived advantages of those present when work is discussed. It was agreed that pecuniary interests must be declared at all meetings, attendees leave the meeting as appropriate and that the contractor will not obtain quotes. <b>Action PFWG/meeting attendees</b></p>
24.9	<p><b>To review AGAR Governance Statements and Chairman and Clerk to sign the form, herewith.</b></p> <p>The Governance Statements were read out and the Chairman completed the form, and then it was duly signed.</p>
24.10	<p><b>To review AGAR Accounting Statements and Chairman to sign the form, previously circulated and herewith.</b> The Accounting Statements were agreed as circulated and the form duly signed.</p>
24.11	<p><b>To agree dates for public to exercise rights to inspect accounts and forms to be submitted to external auditor as required, herewith.</b> The dates were agreed and the notice (plus all other forms) agreed to be sent/displayed/published. <b>Action Clerk</b></p>
24.12	<p><b>To receive and review asset register for insurance quotes and cover against the budget and resolve which to accept, circulated.</b></p> <p>The 3 different quotes were considered, and it was agreed to accept the Clear Councils quote for cover from 1/6/24 on a 3-year long term agreement basis. It was consequently agreed to purchase a sign and lifebuoy as required for the pond. <b>Action Clerk</b></p>
24.13	<p><b>To receive finance report and internal checks for April and resolve any queries, including transfer amount to instant access account for greater interest. herewith.</b></p> <p>The latest report was received and noted with no questions. The Clerk confirmed the bank balances of £42852 and £20492 includes the whole of the precept £40012 and recommended transferring an amount from the current account to the higher interest account. It was agreed to transfer 20k as there are a few large payments for the pavilion refurb going out soon. The VAT reclaim of approx. 5k is due soon.</p>
24.14	<p><b>To receive feedback from any training attended, including the Roles and Responsibilities training and Annual Parish Meeting and resolve any issues arising, and consider any new bookings for training.</b></p> <p>The feedback on the training was positive as it was useful and practical and a good reminder, and the slides will be requested and circulated for those that could not attend. The Annual Parish Meeting resident attendance was thought a little disappointing and the format will be reviewed for next year. <b>Action Clerk</b></p>
24.15	<p><b>To receive and note update on Councillors/ vacancies and resolve any further action.</b></p> <p>It was confirmed that no contact has been made and nobody has come forward to the Clerk to apply for a Parish Councillor vacancy, despite more advertising. Councillors agreed to approach suitable candidates. <b>Action All</b></p>
24.16	<p><b>To note criteria for General Power of Competence still met (2/3rds of councillors are elected and Clerk Cilca qualified).</b> The Clerk confirmed what the power does, and it was confirmed to still continue as the criteria is still met.</p>
<b>24/25</b>	<b>PLAYING FIELD AND PLAYING FIELD WORKING GROUP</b>
25.1	<p><b>a) To hear update on the car park situation and remedy suggestion and agree next steps.</b></p> <p>Cllr Watson and the clerk confirmed that a response from the surveyors is still outstanding, following a request for comment on the suggestion from the contractor on a way forward. <b>Action Clerk</b> to chase again.</p> <p><b>b) To receive and note update from PFWG – herewith – and discuss any queries including proposal for ad hoc bookings changed criteria, C/F.</b></p> <p>The update report was received and noted. The increased criteria were confirmed to deter ad hoc bookings of the playing field and protect the residents, the field and car park.</p>

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

The Friends of the Playing Field list will be compiled with those that have offered, including all Councillors. An advert for more help will be made in WOTH. **Action Cllr Nicol**

The update report was discussed and decisions made as follows:

- c) **To note no TV licence required as only used as a monitor.** Wittering PremiAir FC has confirmed they do not use the aerial for TV, just the monitor, and therefore no licence is required.
- d) **To agree increase in costs for cladding supplies, from PC reserves, of £187.09 and increase on quote to fit of £389.35 for flashing.** The increased costs were agreed to be paid from the playing field project budget as the spec has changed – Envirobuild £4175, skip £250, materials £441, Stablehire £400, Cladco £389 and £987 plus extras of £350. It was agreed to check insulation options whilst old cladding is off and £350 was allowed for if possible. **Action Clerk, PFWG, contractors**
- e) **To note quotes from K Cox, Handiman, exclusive of VAT and to discuss/agree PC buy materials and reclaim VAT. Clerk to check this.** The Clerk checked this due to the refurb being for a possible business activity of hiring the building out. (Resulting response is that it is ok as long as it is not over a certain amount.) Quote to be adjusted as £1k labour only and materials as agreed to be bought by PC.
- f) **To note insurance cover for “tower” hired for cladding work by K Cox, can be covered temporarily by PC insurance.** This has been checked with the insurers by the Clerk and is covered as required by the hirers.
- g) **To note Augean agreement/contract for grant and works in place for flooring and cladding to start early June.** This was confirmed and grant payments for the total of £6750 will be claimed. Total costs were agreed again as an increase in materials is now required – see above. The Clerk warned that the grant may not be received by the time the deposit and materials are needed to be paid and the Parish Council agreed to pay this upfront before the grant is paid. **Action Clerk** to accept orders and apply for grant.
- h) **To note quote for asbestos removal by PremiAir in progress, to be approved.**

It was confirmed that PremiAir do not have the required insurance and an approved contractor with insurance is needed after all and a previously obtained original quote from Stone Asbestos was accepted of £1650 to include removal from the shed also. (A second quote received of £1650 excluded shed). **Action Clerk to accept.**

- i) **To note replacement roof quotes received - one quote from K Cox of £1376.88.**

The roof will be replaced once the asbestos is removed and 2 quotes were received. It was decided to accept the amended quote of £1944 (incl £987.53 materials to be bought by PC) from Contractor Handiman K Cox as the better value.

- j) **To note Addida agreement signed and returned and agree insurance and safety/security arrangements for work on the wicket.** The agreement is now agreed with the cricket club to start playing in 2025. The wicket prep will commence with work being done by K Cox and P Nottingham in liaison with the club and an additional expenditure of £150 max. to hire a scarifier for the wicket prep was agreed. The club has its own public liability insurance.
- k) **To receive and note information regarding insurance for hiring of equipment and cladding work and agree suitable arrangements.** There is no personal or public liability insurance in place with the Handiman contractor however the council are prepared to take the risk that they are covered under the PC insurance covering them as competent and skilled workers, as per the cladding work criteria, with risk assessments and methods statements in place agreed by all workers, and any faults rectified at no cost.
- l) **To receive and note play/gym equipment checks feedback and also health and safety checks for the pavilion and agree any actions and expenditure, including £150 to fit post at The Close. Summary to follow.**

The list of jobs needed and outstanding was received and this will be prioritised by the PFWG against other works going on, including a review and clampdown on the cleaning standards. The health and safety actions will be given priority. A fire assembly point sign will be ordered and the original quote to fit a new post of £150 agreed for now. **Action Clerk/PFWG**

- m) **To note fire extinguisher company recommend annual service still needed and agree action.** It was agreed that despite the recommendation, these extinguishers are self-servicing and can be checked regularly in house.
- n) **To note ROSPA play safety equipment inspection due in June.**

This was noted and a full report will be circulated afterwards.

24/26	<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE (Cllr Lawson, Cllr Mountain, Cllr McAllister, Cllr Watson and Cllr Woodman)</b>	
26.1		<b>To hear of and note any planning applications/issues from committee if any meeting held.</b> Cllr Lawson reported from the planning meeting held just before the full council meeting and that consulting with the Conservation Officer will be requested.
24/27	<b>REPORTS</b>	<b>FROM REPRESENTATIVES</b>
27.1		<b>Checkers reports/village maintenance</b> <b>a) To receive checker reports from Cllr Nicol for April and address any issues raised. Cllr Watson is for May.</b> Cllr Nicol reported from his checks performed and the defib battery charge being low. The Clerk reported that the wrong type were advised and a combined battery and pads pack is necessary and to be approved. The last order for these was 3 years ago. <b>b) To note any new reports of village maintenance eg blanket weed clearance at pond/Spring Close and lifebelt depending on insurance requirements. To note flytipping reported, and agree action.</b> It was agreed that the Trees and Greens Group will come up with a plan to clear the pond. <b>Action TAG</b>
27.2		<b>Village Hall</b> <b>1) To note any update from Cllr Green representative.</b> It was noted that a free, official portrait of the King was ordered on behalf of the Village Hall.
27.3		<b>Joint Action Group and Police Liaison Representative</b> <b>1) To note feedback from election day for new Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.</b> It was noted that it was not very busy all day and a new candidate, Danielle Stone was appointed. <b>2) To note PLR Conference details, 25/6/24 7-9pm online.</b> This was noted and anyone interested to email the Clerk.
27.4		<b>Traffic Working Group</b> <b>1) To note application for new device submitted and other speed signs checked amid complaint over "new" 30mph signs.</b> The device was checked and tweaked to show over 40mph. The complaint from NNC however was to do with village signs, not speed devices as they thought.
24/28	<b>ALLOTMENTS</b>	
28.1		<b>To receive update from Allotment Manager, including terms and conditions for some tenants still to be signed.</b> The Allotment Manager had had most terms and conditions signed forms back but not all. It was agreed that in future to just do this once when a new tenant takes over, as it is a rolling agreement. <b>Action Clerk</b>
24/29	<b>TREES AND GREENS WORKING GROUP (INCL NATURE RECOVERY) (Cllr Green, Cllr Mountain, Cllr Holwell and Cllr Bates)</b> <b>a) To receive and note feedback from the latest Nature Recovery Group meeting and agree actions, herewith.</b> The next meeting of nature recovery was deferred and plans will be requested to be sent as they are. <b>b) To receive and note any new feedback from Trees and Greens Group including new, free fruit trees offer.</b> The TAG decided against the free fruit trees as nowhere to plant them and maintenance an issue. Other plans include the action required on the pond clearance. <b>Action TAG</b> <b>c) To agree a rota for the NRG stall at the gala on May 27<sup>th</sup>.</b> It was agreed to send availability to Sophie.	
24/30	<b>VILLAGE FLAGPOLE</b> <b>To note update on the planning implications.</b> It was agreed to ask Building Regulations for their advice first. <b>Action Cllr Lawson.</b>	
24/31	<b>COMMUNITY SUPPORT/ENGAGEMENT/ISSUES</b> <b>a) To suggest and agree any specific items for June's What's on the Hill.</b> It was agreed to promote the Friends of the PF again. <b>Action Cllr Nicol/Clerk</b> <b>b) To note Family Day at PF 8/9/24.</b> It was agreed to review this nearer the time depending on interest shown.	
24/32	<b>CLERK CORRESPONDENCE /INFORMATION TO NOTE:</b> <b>a) NNC Town and Parish Forum 16/5/24 6.30pm, previously circulated.</b> This was noted but no attendees available. <b>b) Resident complaint re disabled parking at The Close, agree response/action.</b> The Clerk said that representations from a resident over a disabled parking sign at a Longhurst managed house and charging cable	

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

trailing over the verge have been received. Some investigations have been made with Highways and Longhurst and will continue as appropriate. **Action Clerk**

- c) **Portrait of the King ordered.** It was noted that a free, official portrait of the King was ordered on behalf of the Village Hall, see above also.
- d) **EDF Energy contract fixed rates to end on 13/7/24 – new rates to be sought.** This was noted for the power to the pavilion. **Action Clerk.**

**24/33 ORDERS FOR PAYMENT**

The following payments were agreed to be made as follows;

<b>33.1</b>	Clerk reimburse for HP ink plans. E printer £4.49 plus one shared with other PCs £8.57.	£13.06
<b>33.2</b>	Clerk reimburse for Microsoft package May	£5.99
<b>33.3</b>	HMRC employer NI payment and any employee tax payment May	£179.67
<b>33.4</b>	Clerk mileage for April plus home office allowance for May	£8.10/£26
<b>33.5</b>	Yu Energy electricity bill as per contract, paid by direct debit. May	£360.02 and £16.97
<b>33.6</b>	EDF Briers electricity for street lighting	£21.82
<b>33.7</b>	EDF Energy for pavilion to 1/4/24 usage charged to WPFC	£98.28
<b>33.8</b>	Village hall hire	£61
<b>33.9</b>	Clerk salary payable 31/5/24 £995.50 less tax £105.56 Back pay of increment April 23 to Mar 24 Back pay for April 24 Overtime at end March 2024	£889.94 £299.52 £48.67 £679.14
<b>33.10</b>	Multipay card monthly fee and bank charges	£6
<b>33.11</b>	Safe Lincs Defib electrodes – two sets needed	£711.79 inc vat of £118.63
<b>33.13</b>	Glasdon for new dog poo bin at pavilion	£153.83
<b>33.14</b>	Mountain Recycling payment by DD paid 29/4/24	£63.48 £49.20 new rate
<b>33.15</b>	Grounds Maintenance Contractor invoice for April	£255 (17 hours)
<b>33.16</b>	Leics Gardens for grass cutting	£160
<b>33.17</b>	NCALC and auditor subs	£911.65
<b>33.18</b>	NCALC training, whole council and annual PC meeting (Chairman)	£342
<b>33.19</b>	New Health and Safety/maintenance, including Cllr Woodman padlock	tba
<b>33.20</b>	Materials for cladding and roofing work, as per agenda item 25.1e Contributing Third Party landfill tax for grant payment by PC as the donor.	As specified above. £753
<b>33.21</b>	Clear Councils insurance premium	£868.42
<b>24/34 RECEIPTS</b>	To note income received; Blackstones Juniors hire fee for pitch WPFC pavilion hire charge March WPFC utility bill payments  Precept from NNC Hire of pitch/pavilion Wittering WPFC for April due	£60 received 9/4/24 £300 received 25/4 £40.20 received 25/4 £81.60 received 25/4 £40012 received 19/4 £300 due
<b>24/35 STAFFING ISSUE</b>	To close the meeting to the public for reasons of confidentiality.	

**35.1 To hear feedback from staffing committee on the clerk’s appraisal and recommendations for objectives and any pay/hours or other contractual changes and agree action.**

The Chairman of the Staffing Committee summarised the appraisal meeting and the agreed objectives, including the committee sourcing some coaching/communications advice. The Clerk offered to leave the room but was not required to. It was agreed as per contract terms to move one scale incremental point for 23/24 backdated to April 2023, and one other point for the coming year for satisfactory performance. It was further agreed to pay overtime hours of 38.5 until the end of March 2024 and increase hours of the contract to 55 per month including annual leave from April 24 (from 52 plus 7 annual leave pm) to account for the previous reduction of 7 hours pm. Clerk annual leave 16/5 to 21/5 – this was noted.

**24/36 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS** It was noted that the date of the next meeting is the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7pm and the next Planning Committee meeting is the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 6pm. See council notice board or website for details [www.eastononthehill-pc.gov.uk](http://www.eastononthehill-pc.gov.uk)