

EASTON ON THE HILL PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Easton on the Hill Parish Council

Held on Monday 10th June 2019 at 19.00 in the Easton on the Hill Village Hall

Present Councillors A Cutforth, J Rawlinson (Vice chair), I Forman, J Ward, A O’Grady, P Bates, W Davies, D Sharpe
Clerk J Rice
Others 15 Members of the public were in attendance.

19/20	<p>NEW CHAIR TO SIGN DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE</p> <p>Clerk to explain and clarify counting of votes issue raised by 2 Councillors</p> <p>Cllr Rawlinson announced to the meeting that Cllr Simpson had resigned as Chair and Councillor that afternoon. Cllr Rawlinson read out the resignation letter. He also confirmed that Cllr Lee Stokes had also resigned earlier in the month. It was agreed that at this short notice Cllr Rawlinson should chair this meeting and then a vote taken at the next meeting on when to elect a new Chairperson. The Clerk then clarified the process for voting for a chair as there had been representations from 2 councillors over the last vote process. The Clerk confirmed that any Councillor can without notice nominate, and vote for, themselves to be Chair.</p>
19/21	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>To receive and note apologies and accept reasons for absence given to the Clerk Apologies were received, noted and accepted from Cllr E Hanson (work commitment)</p>
19/22	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>To receive all declarations of interest under the Council’s Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda. (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). Declarations of interest were received from Cllr A Cutforth on items 25.9, 29.2, 29.3, 29.5, 30.6 and 31.1, Cllr A O’Grady in items 34.1 pt 3 and 34.2, Cllr I Forman in item 28, Cllr J Ward in item 28 (although disputed this as it is not a monetary discussion) and Cllr Sharpe in items 28 and 34.</p>
19/23	<p>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</p> <p>A member of the public raised the fact that complaints that were raised in public time at the last meeting were not recorded in the minutes. The Clerk explained that they are not meant to be a verbatim account of what is said and that she did not feel it was appropriate to mention them but agreed to check best practice on this. Cllr O’ Grady reported that if complaints needed to be made about individual Councillors then they should be made using the form available on the ENDC website or from the Clerk. Another resident stated that they felt the response from the Parish Council to recent communication contained in documents for the last meeting to be unedifying. They felt a mid-term election an easy action with just resignations on block needed. Other residents remarked on the dominance of governance on the agenda and the hours spent on past events. They felt it time to draw a line and all Councillors old and new should work together on issues.</p>
19/24	<p>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (previously circulated)</p> <p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on Monday 8th April 2019 and Monday 13th May 2019 (amended) The minutes from 8/4/19 were signed as correct however there was a query regarding the minutes from 13/5/19 and it was agreed to add in a can of petrol in 19/05 line 1. These will be amended and presented at the next meeting.</p>
19/25	<p>GOVERNANCE MATTERS</p>

25.1	<p>To discuss feedback on holding a mid-term election, refer back to A 4 year review and report in response, and the suggestion to invoke persistent complainant policy.</p> <p>The Clerk reported feedback received from NCALC and ENC on holding a mid-term election. Points being that it is costly, risky for a few reasons and not perhaps timely. It was put to the vote whether to hold one and the majority voted against.</p> <p>The issue of the persistent complainant policy being invoked was therefore re-visited and a vote taken whether it should now be invoked as an alternative course of action. The majority voted against it and it was therefore resolved that it would not be invoked.</p>
25.2	<p>To hear feedback on the use of CEO NCALC and/or MO ENC for individuals involved in recent disputes as suggested at the last meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk had suggested this formally to both parties. Cllr O’Grady stated that she felt it irrelevant to do this now that the Chair had resigned, however had felt it was not a good idea anyway. The Clerk reported that Cllr Simpson had previously replied that he felt it was not an appropriate course of action.</p>
25.3	<p>To hear a complaint from a Councillor against the Support Clerk for a potential breach of data protection regulations and for bringing the Council into disrepute for such a breach - to be heard later during a closed session. See below.</p>
25.4	<p>To review and agree any changes to Standing Orders, copy circulated. The Clerk suggested changes to add in a point about voting for chair as above and all advice requests to go through the clerk as per the governance review. Another suggestion to ensure 2 Councillors minimum sit in on all external meetings was not supported. It was resolved that the Clerk will amend and circulate for further comments.</p>
25.5	<p>To review and agree all committee and working party members.</p> <p>Councillors on these were reviewed and resolved as</p> <p>Planning “Committee” consisting of Cllrs Hanson, O’Grady, Cutforth and Rawlinson and remains unchanged except for the terms of reference – see 26.1.</p> <p>Priest House; Cllr O’Grady</p> <p>Playing fields working party; Cllrs Forman and Davies. Cllr Rawlinson has resigned and although proposed, Cllr Bates did not want to join.</p> <p>Trees and Greens; Cllrs Bates, O’Grady and Cutforth</p> <p>Joint Action Plan Group; Cllr Sharpe</p> <p>Finance Committee; disbanded previously although policy on website. It was resolved that this be convened when needed.</p> <p>Traffic working party; Cllrs Sharpe and Rawlinson</p> <p>ENRMF Liaison Committee; Cllr Sharpe</p>
25.6	<p>To note item 279.1 code of conduct complaints against a Councillor that is being investigated is carried forward until an outcome is received.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that this was carried forward from previous minutes so as not to lose sight of it however it is reported that it is being investigated and will take upto 3 months.</p>
25.7	<p>To note that the complaint outcome received from a resident about a Councillor be awaited from CEO, NCALC before processing further.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that no update had been received, however was aware that one is expected soon.</p>
25.8	<p>To note and discuss request for a 9 month report on the Governance review and 12 month report due in July</p> <p>The Clerk raised concerns over the fact that no review or response had been done or able to be done despite the request for a 9 month review from the JSCC. She also raised the fact that the 12 month report was due next month. In the current situation without a Chair and many complaints still ongoing, it was resolved that an extension to the dates should be requested. It was further resolved that the latest report would be circulated for Councillors to review and comment on the priorities, ready for the next meeting. If necessary, a separate meeting will be held to discuss it.</p>

	25.9	To review Membership on Outside Bodies report. There was confusion about how the report came about however a vote took place on whether to adopt the advice and it was resolved not to.
19/26	PLANNING APPLICATIONS from Planning Committee	
	26.1	Planning committee terms of reference to be reviewed and agreed. The Clerk stated that the “committee” do not operate as per the current terms of reference and so it was resolved that the Councillors would meet and review them and feedback at the next meeting. It was further resolved that some planning training would be investigated and the Clerk advised Councillors that there is a guide to handling planning applications on the NALC website.
	26.2	10/00798/OUT Outline planning for residential development of up to 115 dwellings on land off Stamford Road, Easton on the Hill. (Follow up after extraordinary meeting on 5/6/19) The feedback from the extraordinary meeting was discussed and it was agreed that to represent the majority view, a response would be sent to ENC Planning to object to the planning application on the grounds of its large scale, a lack of infrastructure and being contrary to the current local plan. A discussion took place about the application for S106 funds and it was resolved that if possible a statement will be sent to request funds towards, but not limited to, improved sports facilities. If it is subsequently apparent that this will not suffice (advice has been mixed about this to date) then a detailed response will be sought.
	26.3	19/00730/FUL Single storey side extension to dwelling at The Abbey, 34 Stamford Road It was resolved that an objection be submitted to say that the design and materials are not in keeping with the area and building, noting that it was objected to previously and no changes to the application made.
	26.4	19/00872/FUL First floor side extension at 16 Western Avenue. It was resolved that comments of no objection be submitted.
19/27	TREE SURVEY REPORT	
	27.1	To note query with tree report ongoing and tree policy for consideration, to follow. The Clerk reported that she had raised a query that some trees had been surveyed when not asked to be. The surveyor will amend the invoice accordingly and refund us £50. A tree policy has been sought from another council and will be carried forward to the next meeting.
	27.2	To arrange for boundary and ownership of trees data to be collected The land boundaries for tree ownership is yet to be determined and so the trees and greens working party agreed to look into this with the land registry.
19/28	ALLOTMENTS	
	28.1	To receive a verbal report from the Clerk on matters relating to the allotments since the last meeting. The Clerk reported that there was nothing new to report on the allotments.
	28.2	To clarify the situation regarding Cllr Bates and the ongoing management of the allotments – c/f from extraordinary meeting 13/5/19 to be discussed later under closed session. See below.
19/29	CLERKS REPORT	
		To receive and note copies of correspondence not previously circulated.
	29.1	Street lighting – to receive quote from Eon to replace the remaining 32 lanterns with new LED lights and decide on further action. It was reported that no order had been placed as yet and so resolved that the order will be placed asap as per the quotation for the remainder of lights. It was clarified that where appropriate they can be angled to avoid glare outside residents’ properties.
	29.2	To receive request and information regarding renewing lease on land at SSSI Collyweston managed by The Wildlife Trust and decide on a way forward.

		The current lease was discussed as it ran out in 2004 however had continued adequately although no rent had been received. With the playing fields title still in progress, it was resolved to ask that the lease be continued as it is for now and backdated rent be paid.
	29.3	It was noted that the defibrillator training will be 18/9/19 4pm to 7pm drop in. It was noted that Councillors are not aware that the batteries need checking and Councillors need to know how to operate the defib and so would benefit from training.
	29.4	To receive and note update from the Clerk on the ICO investigation into FOI Request dated October 2017. The Clerk reported an update from the support clerk that a resolution should be heard soon.
	29.5	To note and consider request from Cllr Cutforth to attend chairmanship training. This was noted, however, until the new Chair is appointed, it was resolved to review the situation regarding who would benefit and payment for training until then.
	29.6	To receive information from Freedom Leisure, ENC, regarding free turn up and play sessions and decide if EOTH wants to book them. Venues were discussed and it was resolved that this sounds like a good opportunity for free activities for village children and that the school will be contacted about their grounds and facilities being used. If not agreed, it was resolved that Cllr Davies will contact the cricket club to see about their venue.
	29.7	To decide on News and Views articles and an author for it. Articles for news and views were agreed and the Clerk will send in the article.
	29.8	To receive and note the rolling programme. The Clerk reported that she had had no time to update this and will resolve to do it asap.
	29.9	To receive and note correspondence about Network and Coffee Morning for Councillors, copy herewith
19/30	REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES	
	30.1	To ask for reviews of working parties' terms of reference for next meeting
	30.2	a) Trees and Greens – Cllr Bates
	30.3	Playing Field – Cllr Simpson, not present a) To review situation regarding security at the playing field entrance and whether the old church gates can be used to replace the metal one, and if not, agree disposal of old church gates It was reported that the roller has been moved back to the gap of the gates to stop vehicles getting in. It was voted on and resolved to sell the old church gates, as they will not be fit for purpose, at a minimum price of £80 if possible. b) note complaint received regarding the length of the grass recently and suggestion from the contractor to increase the frequency of cuts A complaint had been received from the cricket club about the length of the grass recently however no problems had been seen by Councillors present and the cutting contract appeared to be being stuck to. c) Update on “title” application and bridleway change of status It was reported that at a meeting at the solicitors, it was confirmed that the application for title was being progressed via the land registry however no timescale was known. The BOAT status was also being investigated with Highways as it would appear that it is far from straightforward and could take years. More information was being sought however there would be a joint responsibility to maintain the byway.
	30.4	Vehicle Activation Devices – Cllrs Forman & Rawlinson It was reported that the batteries had been changed and they are operating ok.
	30.5	Checkers Report – Cllr Forman from May and this month's report from Cllr Hanson. Cllr Forman apologised that May was not done due to holiday, however he and Cllr Davies have had training with Cllr Hanson and Cllr Forman will now do July and Cllr O'Grady August and then as per alphabetical list. Cllr O'Grady offered to update the forms.
	30.6	Village Hall update – Cllr Simpson. No update as there is no representative. Resolved to C/F.
	30.7	Playing Field Working Party – Cllrs Davies and Forman. a) To receive and note PF Working Party meeting minutes Minutes of the last meeting were circulated, received and noted and there was nothing more to add. b) To receive update/report on equipment inspection if available. The ROSPA inspection is due in June but no report has yet been received.

	30.8	Village Traffic Working Party – Cllrs Sharpe & Stokes Cllr Stokes has resigned. Cllrs received, noted and accepted the report. Cllr Sharpe asked for support, as per the report, in respect of parking code of practice, extension to layby and updating the technology for traffic data. Cllrs voted to accept and support the requests in the report.	
	30.9	Village Plan Working Party – to nominate a Councillor to represent the Parish Council on Working Party c/f from previous meeting. Cllr Cutforth volunteered and was voted on to the WP.	
19/31	Orders for payment		
	31.1 Payments were agreed as follows;		
		SLCC membership fees	£156
		Village hall hire fee	£26
		Clock servicing overdue account (already paid)	£186
		Leicestershire Gardens, cuts in April (already paid)	£560
		Clerking services A. Benfield in May, with timesheet. Clerk reported hours are mostly for governance issues.	£273.10
	Payments to be made between meetings also agreed:-		
		Clerk's salary and HMRC payable 30/6/19 and extra 11.5 hours worked in May	£745.76 £145.36
	31.2	To note new account signatory forms being processed. Signatories are needed asap now that the Chair has resigned as he was one of two active authorisers of bank payments. Cllr O'Grady agreed she will again try to activate her log in. Resolved to send forms and id supplied in asap. The Clerk resolved to change the email access password for exclusive access now.	
	31.3	To consider options for the remainder of the loan and decide on appropriate action – information circulated. The information was received, noted and it was resolved to pay off the loan asap.	
19/32	BUDGET REPORT		
	To receive and note Budget Report up to 31 May 2019 and bank reconciliation. The Clerk reported that these reports will have to be carried forward as there had not been time this month to complete them.		
19/33	NOTICE BOARD		
		To receive information on a replacement, dedicated notice board and decide whether to pursue further. Cllr Rawlinson presented information/costings on a new notice board and confirmed consent from Burghley if in keeping. He had found a suitable one for £216. It was resolved that he would try to improve the lockable one opposite the war memorial by varnishing to keep this one as a council dedicated board, before a decision on buying a new one.	
19/34	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC		
	To resolve that the press and public are excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the sensitive and/or confidential business to be transacted in accordance with s1(1) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960		
	34.1 As above item 27.2 To clarify the complaint against a councillor by a resident concerning the Parish Council owned allotments. It was confirmed that the code of conduct complaint against a councillor was still ongoing and that no outcome had yet been received by the Monitoring Officer. Until then no more information was available. To clarify the dismissal of Councillor Bates from her position as the allotment manager, and the announcement of this in 'News and Views'.		

This was discussed and the roles and actions clarified. The article in the News and Views was supposed to be just factual and helpful to inform tenants to go through the Clerk for any queries, however it was recognised that Cllr Bates had been upset by it and this was regrettable.

To clarify the current and future management of the allotments.

It was resolved that as it is not an urgent matter, and there is still an outstanding issue, then no further changes or decisions will be made and the current arrangements will continue.

34.2 As above item 24.3 formal complaint against Ex Clerk by a Councillor, with Ms Benfield present.

Ms Benfield was not able to attend due to illness.

Cllr J Ward left the meeting at this point with no acceptable explanation except objection to a "kangaroo court."

The complaint was heard by the council, from a Councillor. The Clerk further explained some facts and Councillors invited the Councillor in to ask questions. The issue was not resolved as time had run way past the recommended 2 hours for a meeting. It was resolved to carry it forward and reconvene the discussion and action to be taken at a future meeting.

19/35	RE-ADMITTANCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
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	To resolve that as the sensitive and/or confidential business has been transacted that the press and public are re-admitted to the meeting in accordance with s1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960
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19/36	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
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	To note that the date of the next meeting is Monday 8 th July 2019
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Please note, this is a public meeting and you may be filmed, recorded and published.

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