

Easton Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 13th July 2015 at 7.30pm
In the Village Hall, Marlingford Rd, Easton

Present: Mrs Linda Ford (Chairmen), Mr Peter Milliken, Vice-Chairman, Mr Jonathan Bailey, Mrs Clare Chisholm, Mrs Margaret Hart and Mr Michael Jobling.

In attendance: Mrs Diana Dring (Locum Clerk)

Members of the public: 9

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Dennis Barrow, who was on holiday and were accepted by the Council on the proposal of Peter, seconded by Clare.

District and County Councillor Margaret Dewsbury had also sent her apologies as she had to attend another meeting.

- 1.1** The Chairman advised that item 13 was to be brought forward to follow item 6 as it had a bearing on the expenditure to be discussed under subsequent items.

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda and requests for dispensation

Declarations of interest were received from Margaret, Jonathan and Linda in respect of item 11 as they were allotment holders and could be perceived to have a personal and pecuniary interest in the allotments and therefore should not speak or vote on the matter.

Peter had requested a dispensation to participate in discussion relating to his interest as a member of the group against the 907 house development. On the proposal of Margaret, seconded by Michael the dispensation was agreed.

3. Adjournment of the meeting for public participation and to receive a presentation/reports from:

Frances McKenzie, Practice Manager at Roundwell Medical Practice gave a presentation about the organisation, funding, capacity and strategies for coping with the influx of new patients from the future developments around Easton. She said that there was scope for the practice to extend but there were access issues and it could be difficult to get the funding in place to make it happen. She said she would keep in touch with the Council.

The Chairman advised the public that if they had any issues concerning the medical practice they should address them to the patients' forum, who deal with complaints.

The Police Community Support Officer had not been able to attend the meeting but councillors were able to give report of recent crimes which included 2 criminal damage, 1 theft other and 2 violence against people. Specifically there had been a theft of a caravan on 25 June and a burglary in Easton Rd on 5th July leading to the theft of a car which was subsequently abandoned and burnt out.

Peter advised that PCSOs do not deal with 'blue light' crimes but with category B crimes. They would be looking at illegal parking in the village such as blocking pavements. There were only two traffic enforcement officers in South Norfolk and he asked the public to send

evidence such as photos of such incidence so that action could be taken. Further details would be published in the newsletter.

A member of the public also raised the issue of overgrown hedges obstructing the pavements.

Terry Stanford commented on the Norfolk Showground advertisements displayed at the Green, near Diocesan House, Dereham Rd, and asked the Council to look into whether a license had been given. Vehicles with advertising display boards were also parked on the Green, which caused visibility problems for local residents. Mr Stanford had also observed excessive speeding by motorbikes and buses and advised that vegetation had overgrown the speed reactive sign in the area so that it was not working effectively. Peter encouraged anyone observing speeding to get the number plates and report it.

Mark Caton said he would follow up a comment about speeding cars coming through the village from the Cooper/BMW garage when they take customers on a test drive.

The Chairman suggested trying to revive Community Speedwatch and advertise for volunteers in the newsletter.

Janice Barnston raised a query about the re-siting of the village hall and asked for clarification. Clare advised that there was an issue with the suggested site as there was a possibility the land was contaminated and that other options were being explored. Concern was expressed that if the Marlingford Road site is not used for a sports ground, it could be used for building. Councillors responded that it would be important to negotiate with developers and the Neighbourhood Plan would make a difference. More information about the Neighbourhood Plan would be provided later in the meeting.

Martin Alcock from the football club commented that the club was interested in having the sports field next to the school. It was pointed out that there were parking issues there.

Public Participation was closed and the meeting recommenced at 8.28pm

4. Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 27th May and 8th June 2015

Following an amendment to the number of members of public present to 80, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 27th May 2015 were approved as a true record on the proposal of Peter, seconded by Clare.

Following an amendment to item 10.i. to add to the end of the sentence ‘of the graffiti and resolving the flooding’, the minutes were approved as a true record on the proposal of Peter, seconded by Margaret.

5. Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda, for information only

The Chair advised that the appointment of the new Clerk, was being taken forward by the interview and appointment panel. It was expected that a decision will be made during the summer recess and to have a new Clerk in place as soon as possible in the autumn, meanwhile Diana would continue to assist as Locum Clerk with Councillors support.

6. Recommendations on planning applications, note decisions and other planning matters

- i) Planning Applications No; 2015/1238. At 6 Marlingford Way for a single storey extension to the front of the dwelling to include an entrance porch and increased size of study

Following consideration of the application, it was agreed on the proposal of Margaret, seconded by Michael that that the Council had no objections.

ii) Any other planning applications received- None

iii) The following decisions were noted

Application No: 2014/2629 At Rembrandt Restaurant, 61 Dereham Road. For: Alteration and extension to existing roof to provide improved living accommodation within roof space, including raising pitch, introduction of dormer windows, and new external stairs. Decision; Approval with Conditions by delegated decision on 19 June 2015.

Application No: 2015/0539 at The Ash Trees, Bawburgh Rd, for the replacement of existing mobile home with bungalow. Decision: Refusal on 10 July 2015

iv) Other Planning matters;

Peter advised that the Council should be making a comment on the Premier Inn Application 2015/1210, which included the access arrangements. He said that Costessey Town Council had asked for various concerns to be taken into consideration and proposed that the Council support the application subject to the provision of a green man crossing, seconded by Michael and agreed.

13 Confirmation of eligibility and resolution to adopt the General Power of Competence (brought forward)

Peter explained what the General Power of Competence was and the benefit it would bring to the Council. He reminded Councillors that this had been mentioned on their introductory training course. However, councillors felt they did not have enough information to vote on the matter and asked for a report to be circulated prior to the next meeting when they would be better informed to make a decision. Deferred to next meeting.

7. Consideration of the disposal of the parish land on Dereham Road and confirm the holding a parish poll to establish whether residents support the selling or keeping of the land

The Chairman explained that when the Parish Council opposed the 907 planning application, a stop had been put on the selling of a parcel of land on Dereham Road to the development consortium. The Council wanted the village to decide whether to go ahead with the sale now the planning application had been approved. Peter said the developers wanted the piece of land but that the people of Easton had the right to decide and he suggested holding a Parish Poll, run by South Norfolk Council with voting at a polling station at a cost of about £1,000.

Following discussion Margaret advised that the Council should get legal advice about the status of the land, ownership and the options for selling it. She proposed the Council confirm the holding of a parish poll but, in the meantime, get clarification of the wording of the legal advice regarding the alternatives to do with the land. Seconded by Clare and agreed.

8. Consideration of a report regarding College Heights and agree appropriate action

Margaret presented the report of the observations and recommendations that she and Michael had made following their investigation of the condition of land around College Heights and other areas of the village.

The Council agreed with Margaret and Michael's recommendations to: put a reminder to residents about cutting back overhanging bushes in the Grapevine; contact Saffron Housing

and South Norfolk Council about their areas of responsibility; maintain contact with Ribbonsdale to ensure he does the work he is contracted to do; decide whether to lower the tall shrubs on Eddington Way and Garnett Drive first checking with residents if it would affect their privacy; and get three quotes to carry out the various pieces of work on the border/shrub areas, repositioning the grit bin etc. In view of the need to complete the work as soon as possible, Jonathan proposed that Margaret and Michael were authorised to select the most suitable contractor and arrange for the work to be carried out on behalf of the Council, seconded by Clare and agreed.

9. Consideration of the replacement of the Jubilee Playing Field play equipment

The Chairman said that the playing field had a mix of child play equipment and adult exercise equipment not suitable for children and that some of the equipment had been damaged and needed repair.

Michael offered to take on the management of the playing field equipment, which it was suggested had been put in in breach of the covenant.

As some of the Councillors had started conversations with the public, the Chairman reminded councillors that they need to put discussions through the Chairman and not to have discussions with the public during the meeting unless the Chair agreed to adjourn the meeting to do so.

The Chair said she had also received a report from Ben Harrowven regarding large and small pieces of stone on the MUGA at the Jubilee Park, which he had spent an hour clearing up. Pieces of wood had also been broken and strewn about the field. On Michael's proposal, seconded by Clare it was agreed to ask Ben to remove all pieces of wood and stone to make the area safe. However, Martin Alcock volunteered to clear the park free of charge which was gratefully accepted.

10. To receive progress reports and further action required relating to i) Easton Neighbourhood Plan

Jonathan explained the background to the Neighbourhood Plan and that the parish was currently being designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area through the District Council. He advised that a Steering Group would be formed to oversee the development of the plan and that this would be advertised in the Grapevine.

Jonathan advised that the Neighbourhood Plan would work with the Local Plan and that having a Neighbourhood Plan would affect the level of Community Infrastructure Levy payable by developers to the parish, which Clare said would make a difference of £200,000 to £400,000 extra funding.

Jonathan said the Council was looking at possibility of employing a consultant to assist with the Neighbourhood Plan process and Clare asked about putting this out to tender. Peter emphasised that it was important to get someone experienced and with time to devote to the plan. He advised that the Council would need to make funds of £2,500 available immediately to pay for cost prior to accessing the available funding. The cost is likely to be in excess of £20,000 but grants should be available for at least £10,000. The Chairman agreed that time was of the essence to get the plan through as soon as possible.

Margaret proposed that Jonathan, Clare and Peter try to get up to three quotations from consultants to help draw up a Neighbourhood Plan for Easton in the next 4 weeks and that they should be authorised to decide on the most suitable consultant and that initial funds of

£2,500 be made available for Neighbourhood Plan costs. Seconded by Michael and agreed unanimously.

ii) Parish Council website

Peter reported the progress with the new website which would be using the Wordpress platform but would be mobile friendly, which the Norfolk parishes websites did not provide. He advised that this would be a good quality website that would cost no more than £100 per year. The fee for the domain name was due in August. On the proposal of Michael, seconded by Clare it was agreed that Peter should go ahead with setting up the new Easton Parish Council website.

iii) Facebook

Clare reported that the Councils Facebook responses were settling down as more constructive concerns about parking for the Norfolk Show and traffic management suggestions. Peter commented that he had been in touch with the Showground and asked them to make sure there is coming on Bawburgh Road in future. He also asked to be informed of any issues relating to the Sundown event which he would take up with the Showground.

iv) Highways

Peter advised that the emergency remedial work carried out by Highways at the church roundabout had not worked and they were looking at putting in a more permanent surface, while the slip road would be dealt with by a separate department.

v) Bus shelter

Linda reported that the bus shelter has been inspected and the cutting back of the overgrown foliage around the shelter would be carried out. Peter advised that quotes were being sought for the removal of the bank behind the bus shelter to alleviate the drainage problem, and that the Showground people had offered to tidy up the bus shelter in return for using parish land for temporary parking.

vi) Lower Easton matters

Linda's had been talking to residents at lower Easton regarding the traffic issues and that following discussions with Historic England, they were looking into making the property Grade 1 listed, which would help put pressure on Highways to make changes to the road and put weight restrictions on bridge. Michael suggested the road could be narrowed and that there may be an issue with Satellite Navigation systems directing vehicles to use the road.

vii) New Village Hall Committee meeting

Linda advised that an informal meeting had been arranged between Jonathan and herself and members of the New Village Hall Committee on 20 July 2015.

11. Consideration of the maintenance and upkeep of the parish allotments

Peter said that there were a lot of the parish allotments that had been let to go to seed and/or abandoned. He suggested that the Parish Council should write to allotment holders who had not maintained their allotment and ask them to sort them out or contractors would be bought in to do so and they would be billed for the cost.

Jonathan suggested a gentle reminder might be more appropriate. A discussion about the general condition of the allotments, paths and bonfires took place. Margaret suggested that the vacant allotments be advertised as available in the Grapevine.

Peter proposed sending a letter to existing allotment holders giving them 4 weeks to clean up their allotment and if this did not happen a further letter advising them that action would be taken to clear up their allotment in 7 days and they would be charged for the cost. In addition the Council would arrange the strimming of vacant lots and pathways, which Michael would arrange with a contractor for a maximum cost of £150. Seconded by Clare and agreed by members able to vote (see item 2. Declarations of interest)

12. Consideration of a report regarding bat and wildlife habitats in the village

Peter commented on a local survey of bats in the village produced by Frank Howe. He felt that this and any other wildlife surveys of the village should be used as a deterrent for building as it would affect their habitat. Peter suggested an article should go in Grapevine encouraging other residents to get involved and he offered to co-ordinate such information together.

13. Confirmation of eligibility and adopt the General Power of Competence (taken after item 6)

14. Accounts

i) Approval of payments for May/June/July 2015

John Witcombe	May Salary & *Expenses	£495.42
HMRC	Tax	£66.60
NPTP	Website/Councillor Training –P Milliken	£85.00
LCPAS	Understanding Planning Course (PM and LF)	£50.00
Forage4it	IT work	£50.00
Mr Harrowwven	Jubilee Playing Field June, July	£80.00
Mr Ditton	Bus Shelters- June, July	£80.00
Mrs Cordy	Litter & College Heights June, July	£200.00
Diana Dring	Locum Clerk 1-30 June	£263.32
	(20½ hours x £12.45 p hr + 18mils x 45p = £8.10)	
Ribbonsdale Nurseries	Grass Cutting May, June	£1,318.40
Anglian Water	Allotment Charge 3/2/15- 8/5/15	£21.77

*Expenses breakdown: Phone £6.40, Postage £9.43, Mileage £8.45, Stationery £14.50, Broadband £10.19, Total £48.97

Following a discussion about the Ribbonsdale payment, the payments were approved on the proposal of Peter, seconded by Jonathan but Margaret and Michael would review work with Ribbonsdale and let Clerk know when the payment could be issued.

ii) Appointment of an Internal Auditor

The Council needed to appoint a new Internal Auditor since the retirement of the last post holder and it was agreed to seek three quotes and agree the appointment at the next meeting on the proposal of Jonathan, seconded by Margaret.

15. Correspondence received (listed separately)

- Offer from Atlantic Country Superstore for allotment members to join discount club
- Agency Grass Cutting agreement for 2015/16
- Low Cost Defibs – advertising defibrillator machine and training for £995- Peter suggested the Council should look at this at the next meeting
- Blood Donning in July- on noticeboard
- Good Companions asked for donation for grand draw to celebrate anniversary- Clare offered to make a cake

16. Next Parish Council meeting is on 14th September 2015

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.42