

Minutes of the Meeting of Easton Parish Council held on Monday 14th March 2016 at 7.30pm in Easton Village Hall.

Present: Linda Ford (Chairman)
Mark Caton
Mike Jobling
Peter Milliken
Catherine Moore, Locum Clerk

Also present: County and District Councillor Margaret Dewsbury, Phil Coutier of Broadland District Council, Tim Horspole of South Norfolk Council and 30 members of the public were also in attendance.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Jonathan Bailey.

2. Declaration of interest for items on the agenda and applications for dispensations

None.

3. Adjournment for Public Participation

The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public to speak.

The Chairman invited Phil Coutier and Tim Horspole to give a presentation to the meeting regarding the proposed Food Hub. The notes of the presentation and the ensuing discussion are at Appendix 1 of these minutes. It was noted that these would be uploaded onto the website, and forward to Phil and Tim. The representatives were thanked for their input.

Clerk

Around 25 members of the public left the meeting, and after a short break the meeting was reconvened.

4. Co-option to Casual Vacancy

There had been no applications for co-option.

5. Reports

i) Police Community Support Officer

There were 7 crimes in February (2 thefts, 1 handling of stolen goods, 1 drugs, 3 non-disclosable). Two arrests had been made in relation to the drugs offences.

ii) District and County Councillor Margaret Dewsbury

Councillor Dewsbury reported that the road near the church was due to be resurfaced very shortly.

6. Minutes of the meeting held 8th February 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th February were considered. It was noted that at item 7, it was the school that had made contact, not the college. At item 12 the minuted wording suggested that the land agent's invoice was £4,229 whereas in fact that was 50% of the original sum. With these amendments, the minutes were **agreed**, proposed by Mark Caton, seconded by Mike Jobling, all in favour.

7. Matters arising from the minutes

The signage was up for resurfacing of the road at the church. Funds were expected to be dedicated in the new year to discouraging large vehicles from going into Lower Easton.

The allotment agreements had been sent out, and this would be advertised on the website and in the Grapevine.

Clerk

The next discussion on the Food Hub would be a single item agenda, possibly at the College.

8. Planning

i) Applications Received

No planning applications had been received.

ii) Judicial Review

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

Clerk

9. Updates on ongoing issues

i) Neighbourhood Plan

A project report was circulated. Documents were being created, and the next meeting would be on 17th March 2016. The next phase would be the Emerging Policies Statement and consultation with the statutory bodies.

ii) Food Hub

Covered earlier in the meeting.

10. Progress reports

i) Parish Allotments

The agreement forms had been sent out, and would be advertised on the Grapevine and the website. The rental vacancies would be looked at next. The Council needed to ensure that plots were looked after.

ii) Defibrillator

The schools fundraised money had been banked. To date, £1,440 had been raised in total. Further funding would be applied for from 1st April 2016, and the Ambulance Service would be pursued to ensure that the Council did not miss out on funding.

11. Update on grounds maintenance and grass cutting

Mike Jobling reported that letters had been going out and Gary Lake would start cutting in April. The hedge at the park had been cut, and the invoice was presented for payment.

12. Finance

i) Budget Update

Catherine Moore had completed the update of the accounts, and a report was presented and noted.

ii) Payments for March 2016

It was **agreed** to pay the following, proposed Mike Jobling, seconded by Mark Caton,

a) all in favour:

b) Mrs Cordy	Salary – Litter & College Heights	£100.00
c) Mr Ditton	Salary – Bus Shelters	£40.00
d) Mr Harrowven	Salary – Jubilee Playing Field	£40.00
e) HMRC	PAYE February and March	£90.00

g)	ABZAG	Neighbourhood Plan	£1,020.00
	Anglian Water	Allotment Water	£16.33
	A Mabee Landscaping	College Heights Grounds Maintenance	£3,078.00
	S&C Moore Farming Ltd	Locum Clerk February 2016	£165.55
	Mrs Cordy	Jacket	£29.99
	Harvey & Co Ltd	Land Agent	£5,074.80
	Easton Village Hall	Hall Hire	£58.50
	Gary Lake	Grounds Maintenance	£305.00

13. Internal Auditor

It was **agreed** to appoint Anne Barnes as internal auditor, proposed by Peter Milliken, seconded by Mark Caton, all in favour.

14. Update on Easton land owners consortium meeting

Linda Ford reported that she had attended the meeting and put forward the Council's proposal that the Consortium would accept the plans to include the Dereham Road site. The Consortium rejected the proposal and agreed to go with the amended plans. This meant that the Council's land could now be sold to whoever the Council wished, with outline planning permission, leaving the Council in a better bargaining position. It was confirmed that the leased land was not wanted as part of the development, and it had been designated as playing field. It was for the owner to prove that it was not used for this purpose if that designation was to be removed.

15. Communication Policy

This would be discussed at the next meeting.

Clerk

16. Double Yellow Lines at Marlingford Road

This would be discussed at the next meeting.

Clerk

17. Appointment of Parish Clerk

Moved to the end of the meeting.

18. Multi Use Games Area

This would be discussed at the next meeting.

Clerk

19. Change of Regular Meeting Day

It was noted that the meetings would be moving to the first Monday of the month.

20. Letter to Village Groups

These would be sent to the list from the Annual Parish Meeting, with information on the Queen's 90th Birthday.

21. Correspondence

i) There had been traffic issues on Lambing Day, with no response from the College on the day. It was felt that they had been overwhelmed by the number of visitors. It was emphasised that there was a need for traffic management for major events at the college, as this had happened before.

The flooding at St Peters Path had been reported to South Norfolk Council, who would deal with it if it was a cleansing matter. However, if it was drainage this would be for Norfolk County Council. This formed part of the planning process so it was expected that the developer would make improvements.

There were problems with people parking on the grass verges on Dereham Road,

however there was no action that could be taken.

A resident thanked the Council for arranging the repair to the bus shelter, which had improved the drainage situation significantly.

It was noted that if the Council was directing parking on Marlingford Road to the village hall, the insurance implications of this would need to be checked. It would also affect the opening and closing of the gates, as well as any users of the Hall. The issues of parking for the school needed to be addressed.

Concern was expressed that the College Heights work was not being completed. It was **agreed** that a site visit would be set up and that the cheque would be held back until that had been resolved.

LF

22. Items for next month's agenda

None other than those deferred.

23. Dates to note

- 25th April 2016 – Annual Parish Meeting.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was agreed to exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 for that item, proposed by Linda Ford, seconded by Peter Milliken, all in favour.

Appointment of Clerk

It was **agreed** to appoint Alan Arber to the position of Clerk subject to the terms set out below, proposed by Linda Ford, seconded by Peter Milliken, all in favour.

Pay progression to be based on qualifications, with the cost of training shared with his other parish. Starting salary £9.55/hour then to £9.90 after 3 months. Then £10.27 on completion of CiLCA. An allowance of £12.25 for internet and £12.50 for petrol would be paid each month.

Linda Ford thanked Catherine Moore for the work she had undertaken as Locum Clerk for two months.

24. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be Monday 11th April 2016, 7.30pm, in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 10.05pm.

CHAIRMAN

Notes of the presentation and discussion regarding the proposed Food Hub

Tim Horspole noted that the concept of a Food Hub had been around for a few years, and was referenced in the Joint Core Strategy as being provided in the Norwich area, however no site had been specified. The site on the edge of Easton had been put forward by the landowner and straddled Broadland and South Norfolk. Funding was available from DEFRA for Food Enterprise Zones, and the Hub would add value locally. The Food Enterprise Zone would cover a broad area, including the Norfolk Showground, Easton College, Pasta Foods etc. The location was close to the A47 and Norwich Research Park.

Phil Coutier noted that this was the very first stage of community engagement, with plans being put in place for a Local Development Order, which would be made by the local authority rather than through an application from developers. Broadland District Council were the lead authority in developing the Order. The Order would grant permission for the land, allowing certain types of development, and streamlining the planning process while eliminating risk for investors.

The proposed site was about 1KM west of Easton. It was noted that Norfolk produced around 5.5% of the nation's food, but most of that was being processed elsewhere. Parameters for the use of buildings, style, access etc would be addressed within the Order.

The Chairman invited questions and comments from the floor.

[Key: Q = Question; A = Answer; C = Comment].

Q: How many jobs will be hub create?

A: This isn't known, it is expected that around 50,000m² of buildings will be developed, however there will be mix a mix of intensity of labour.

Q: The existing roundabout is dangerous, won't an increased number of HGVs cause accidents?

A: This has been hard repeatedly, however a formal response from those agencies responsible for the roundabout had not yet been received. This would be a major consideration.

Q: How many delivery and service vehicles are anticipated?

A: This will be estimated in due course.

Q: In relation to any rendering plant, what sort of processing would be banned? Easton is downwind.

A: Draft conditions will be presented to the Parish Council for comment. Everything is up for discussion. It is the job of Environmental Services to ensure that issues don't happen.

Q: What types of vehicles are likely to use the plant?

A: Nothing has been defined, however the bulk would be expected to be HGV and agricultural.

Q: What is the timescale for development?

A: We are looking to the start of 2017 for the adoption of the Order. It is then up to the landowner and any developer to set timescales for development, which could be immediate. A planning application for a plant could not be ruled out during that time.

Q: How would water and electricity be brought to site?

A: That is the responsibility of the landowner.

Q: Has the impact of the new development on the roundabout been considered? And also the joining of the Northern Distributer Road in the area? There is a need for joined up working.

A: Discussions are taking place. The challenge is to get plans in place ready for the planning of the duelling of the A47 to ensure it is fit for purpose.

C: The plans for duelling of the A47 from Tuddenham to Easton don't include the roundabout. Little consultation has been seen to date. The roundabout is too close to the entrance of Easton, and the site would need proper access to the A47. This would make the church into an island, and would affect the saleability of the new houses.

Q: The district council should listen to local parish councils regarding traffic issues. The proposed 20 hectare site seems like a gateway to a 40 hectare site. South Norfolk Council also have to do a Local Development Order. The site would cause huge traffic problems with one vehicle every 8 seconds in Lower Easton. This will get worse when the NDR reaches Taverham. The infrastructure needs to be sorted first.

A: The access road is as proposed and open discussion – it has not been decided upon yet.

Q: From the perspective of Marlingford and Colton, traffic from the west and south would get worse. The roads are unsuitable, and there are already morning traffic issues. Most roads are single track. Why not site this in the A11 corridor?

A: The key ambition is proximity to the A47.

Q: Will there be conditions around operating times?

A: If processing causes noise or smell disturbance, it can be conditioned, however if there is no impact then a condition cannot be included.

Q: Other sites such as Harford Bridge have been suggested, where there are no residential developments. The village has been told that the plant will operate 24/7.

A: The Harford site was considered but the landowner didn't want to proceed with it. Landowners were asked to propose sites at the beginning of this process, and deliverability is also a key consideration. The Easton site has been promoted for many years.

Q: Would other sites still be considered?

A: Yes, but the Food Enterprise Zone has been declared and will progress.

Q: Is there any truth that the landowner has to find new premises for the Livestock Market?

A: Unknown.

Q: From the perspective of Honingham, Wood Lane is an accident blackspot. Traffic backs up and accidents happen, the development of the old Atlas site for refuse sorting at Weston will worsen this. An increase in heavy traffic will cause big issues.

A: Duelling will offer a solution, and the councils are keen to get something adopted so that the duelling can be pushed forward.

Q: Will the Hub be developed if the A47 is not planned for duelling?

A: Access and the A47 is a big challenge, we would look for an interim arrangement then put on as a condition – for example only allowing a certain amount of development before the A47 is duelled.

C: The volume of traffic is the issue.

Q: Who is the author of the access arrangements?

A: The landowner submitted the plan for illustrative purposes.

Q: The site is too close to the church and roundabout. A balance will be needed when the duelling takes place. Is an abattoir likely to be approved on the site?

A: There is already one in Taverham.

C: The project can't move forward until the infrastructure is in place, and no development should be allowed until that is completed.

C: This needs to be done properly, with roads and plans put forward, which can then be forwarded to Highways England.

Q: In relation to the Local Development Plan, how much consideration has been given to the lives of people? They should have a chance to have their say.

A: District councils was homes and jobs in their areas. It is a positive that food processing will bring money into the area.

Q: The vehicle issues will affect children walking to school. The church should not become an island, and the foundations may be affected by HGVs.

A: The LDO cannot allow an adverse impact on a listed building.

Q: Is it not hypocritical to be carving up farm land to concrete over and provide a food hub?

A: The project is about food security and unfortunately means building on agricultural land – it will allow processing to take place in the county instead of elsewhere.

Q: What sort of production might take place at the Hub? Could it include retail?

A: Further investigation will be done and information sent, there may have been changes to the original plans.

C: Could the hub be put in a more appropriate place like Postwick? Could compulsory purchase powers be used? Why would there be a need for so many trucks to come this far? Why not use the Thetford/A11 corridor?

Q: If the LDO doesn't need the same planning controls as a planning application, will an Environmental Impact Assessment be considered?

A: If it is over the size requiring this, it will be included.

Q: Will you come to Colton Parish Council to speak about this there?

A: Yes, very happy to do this.

Q: There are a lot of unknowns – what will be processed, routes, traffic volume etc. Does it need to be brought in? Where is it going to?

A: Would the Council be supportive if it processed crops from the local area?

Q: These key questions need to be understood, could you come back with further formulated proposals for further discussion?

A: Yes, this is the very beginning of the process and we can now take these comments, and come back with further plans for discussion.