

Easton Parish Council
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**Minutes of the Meeting of Easton Parish Council
held on Monday, 12 April 2021 at 8.00pm
via Zoom**

Present:

Cllr P Miliken, Chairman Easton Parish Council - presiding
Cllr D Lewis Cllr S Renders Cllr B Moye Cllr M Blathwayt

In attendance:

Cllr M Dewsbury, Norfolk County Council
PC S Barnard, Norfolk Constabulary
Gina Lopes, Acting Clerk to Easton Parish Council
Francis Woodcock, RFO to Easton Parish Council

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
No apologies as all Councillors present.

2. Declarations of interest of items on this agenda not recorded elsewhere and any requests for dispensation

Declaration of interest were received as follows:

Cllr P Miliken – Agenda item 11.1 – Planning application 2021/0357

3. Receive and approve minutes of meetings on 1 March 2021, 15 March 2021, & 18 March 2021

Minutes of meeting on 1 March 2021

RESOLVED to accept and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2021 as a true and accurate record, subject to the following amendment:

Min 8.2 – ~~delete~~ – “of March” ~~add~~ - “the end of March”

Minutes of meeting on 15 March 2021

RESOLVED to accept and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2021 as a true and accurate record

Minutes of meeting on 18 March 2021

RESOLVED to accept and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2021 as a true and accurate record

4. Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda elsewhere (for info only)

It was noted there was an outstanding action to contact the School. Cllr Miliken will contact Isabelle Homer on this matter.

ACTION: PM

5. Presentation: Community policing issues in Easton by Stu Barnard, Beat Manager, Norfolk Constabulary

PC Barnard gave a verbal report and there was discussion which included the following:-

- A public meeting had been held virtually to cover all his area including Costessey, Easton and the surrounding villages

- Had a Poll to identify priorities, these were Burglary, Speeding and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Crime statistics were noted as low with one domestic violence incident noted and reassurance was given this crime is taken very seriously
- Anyone wishing to talk to Police are able to do so by any medium and can remain anonymous if wished
- There are specialists to deal with different issues
- If crimes are not reported they are not recorded, need to report all to Police so action can be taken
- There was much discussion about school parking, generally felt drop-off time was worse and suggestions for alternative parking and traffic measures to improve the situation.
- Noted lines and traffic calming are under the remit of Norfolk County Council
- Recent near-miss incident was reported and obstructive parking
- Only one officer covering large area with limited time but if registration numbers are taken PC Barnard will speak to drivers and enforce if necessary
- Has been in discussion with Gill Starkey, Road Safety Co-ordinator at Norfolk County Council, she suggests a “Parent Parking Promise” and he will suggest Easton as a trial area. Would be positive to involve the schoolchildren to help educate parents.
- Noted Rembrandt Restaurant had offered use of parking
- Village Hall parking was not under the management of the Parish Council
- Several vehicles had not moved during lockdown and were parked on roads
- Dereham Road had a serious speeding problem and possible traffic measures were discussed – PC Barnard will ask colleague Jack Askew
- Suggestion for Police Dog Handlers training at Showground to drive through village at end of training to show increased Police presence – request will be passed on
- Community Speedwatch could be effective but would need commitment

The Chairman thanked PC Barnard for attending in uniform on his day off

6. Adjournment for public consultation

No comments received

7. Introduction to new Acting Parish Clerk

The Chairman introduced Ms Gina Lopes who will be Acting Parish Clerk for the next few months whilst Mr Woodcock takes a sabbatical. Mr Woodcock will remain as the Responsible Finance Officer for the Council during this time. Ms Lopes gave a brief summary of her background.

8. Update by Chairman: Proceeds from Dereham Road land sale

The Chairman gave a brief verbal report; the money is now in the Council’s bank account. A sum of £50k has been placed with the Council’s Solicitors to enable any interim payments to be made whilst the Council account is amended. The Chairman has now received his new authorisation code from the bank and other Councillors’ access is progressing accordingly. Once the account is fully functional again the funds with the Solicitor will be transferred to the Council’s account.

9. Update by Chairman: New Village Hall

The Chairman advised an ambitious target had been set of completion in 2 years. It was felt this is possible but there must be commitment. If planning permission is granted by the end of this year the project will be on track to receive funding from South Norfolk Council. Architects are now working on Phase 2, reports and pre-consultation work being done. Persimmons are wanting to work with the parish council and sharing as much as they can. There are some matters relating to ownership of Norfolk County Council land which are being dealt with. There is single entrance parking and have to agree a scheme with Persimmons, this involves extra footpaths. Confirmed Easton Parish Council does not control the existing Village Hall.

10. Fencing quotes relating to Phase 2 of Jubilee Playing Field refit

The Chairman explained the fencing quotes and diagrams which were considered and discussed.

The total cost for fencing and gates would be £9788.20 +VAT; clearance costs would still need to be added and the pricing for this was awaited. It was recommended to allow for a 10% contingency sum.

RESOLVED to approve and accept the fencing quote with a 10% contingency sum to a total cost of £10,800 +VAT

An additional mixed hedgerow (2 rows) to be planted to screen off the planned footpath and CGM quoted £421.20. Oak will be added into the hedge to ensure long term hedging and the hedging will not be planted until October at the earliest. Ivy will need to be cleared from the hedge on Woodview Road and pricing is awaited.

RESOLVED to approve and accept the CGM quote for new hedging to a total of £421.20+VAT and to plant October time.

ACTION: PM/Clerk

11. Planning applications and planning issues to be brought to the Council for discussion and resolution

11.1. 2021/0357. Applicant: Mr Paul Brooks, Location: Avondale, 15 Marlingford Road, Easton. Proposal: Extend existing dormer windows and new single storey front extension (Resubmission of 2020/1150) – There was some discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to make the following response -

This application under a previous planning reference 2020/1150 came before the Parish Council on the 3rd August 2020 and was unanimously rejected. This application has been resubmitted for consideration.

Our previous concerns still stand which are this scheme will be unable to meet policies 6 and 8 of the Easton Neighbourhood Plan's. This considers Housing and Its Setting (policy 6) and the Housing Mix & Character (policy 8) .

Policy 6 – The plans do not demonstrate that this scheme would preserve and enhance the village of Easton by ensuring proposals are sympathetic to the existing rural context and feel of the Village.

Policy 8 – The plans do not recognise or reinforce the village character in relation to height, scale, features and building features of the other dwellings in close proximity to the development. There has been no attempt to integrate into and enhance the existing street scene of predominantly chalet style dwellings in this part of Easton.

In addition, the scheme fails to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 Section 12, Paras 127 A, B and C which states that development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive

as a result of good architecture and landscaping and be sympathetic to the local character and build environment. No attempt was made by the applicant to contact or connect with the Parish Council over this development, contravening Para 128. Given the location at the centre of Village and the visual impact of the scheme, the Council voiced their dismay and disappointment.

Having reflected further on this proposal we believe that this application is now unable to satisfy Privacy of Existing Homes (Policy 9) of the Easton Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy 9 – The plans do not demonstrate that the new dwelling will be of a similar scale and proportion to existing dwellings, and the design will not retain the privacy of existing residents. Concerns over the privacy of existing homes were raised with the initial 2020/1150 application, however, these were overcome with subsequent amendments. There is concern the proposed extension of the dormer windows to the West of the dwelling will result in it overlooking existing residents (on the West side of Marlingford Road) and impact their privacy.

(Cllr Milliken declared an interest and did not participate in discussion or voting on the above application)

11.2. Any other planning applications received

2021/0638 - Siting of Persimmon Homes Carriageway sign, Persimmon Homes flag and Charles Church flag Location: Land Off Long Lane, Costessey

After discussion, it was

RESOLVED to make the following response -

Object on the grounds of Highway safety. The current slip road alignment is leading to an increase in road traffic collisions and near misses as drivers become confused and try and change lanes on the roundabout. This signage will lead to unnecessary extra distraction and hesitation and as such we believe is a potential road safety hazard. Its size and scale is disproportionate to the existing Highway signage on the slip road.

ACTION: PM/CLERK

12. Financial & Governance matters

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) Mr Woodcock presented the following reports.

12.1. Update by RFO on the Council's financial reserves at 31 March 2021 & cashflow forecast

RESOLVED to approve and accept the report on the Council's financial reserves at 31 March 2021 and cashflow forecast

12.2. April 2021 payments

RESOLVED to approve and accept the report on the Council's Payments list to April 2021

12.3. Annual internal audit

RESOLVED to approve and accept the Internal Audit report to 31 March 2021

12.4. Annual Governance Statement - for resolution: to approve

It was noted there was a note on the previous year's External Audit report referencing an incorrect date for display on notice which had been rectified by the Council at the time. The RFO confirmed he had spoken to the Auditor's office earlier in the day and they had agreed this was their error.

RESOLVED to complete “Yes” to all boxes on the Governance Statement on the AGAR for financial year 2020/21

RESOLVED the RFO will add a note to the AGAR Governance Statement regarding the previous point on the incorrect dates.

12.5. Accounting Statements for 2020/21

RESOLVED to approve and accept the Accounting Statements for AGAR for financial year 2020/21

ACTION: PM/RFO

The Chairman and all Councillors thanked Mr Woodcock for his work on completing the internal audit and compiling all necessary financial reports.

13. Correspondence received and response or action required

The Chairman advised a resident of Buxton Close had reported they had carried out work to the hedge as it was damaging their fence and car. South Norfolk Council should have carried out this maintenance work and SNC Cllr Dewsbury was asked to assist. SNC Cllr Dewsbury advised it was necessary to confirm the name of the SNC Officer the resident contacted in order to progress.

It was suggested to install a letter box at the Village Hall to enable post to be delivered to this address rather than to the Clerk’s home. To be discussed further at the next Finance Working Group meeting and Mr Woodcock will contact Village Hall Chairman.

ACTION: PM

14. All: to raise agenda items for the next parish meeting

Agenda items for next agenda –

Election of new Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Councillor vacancies

Any other items to be forwarded to the Clerk and Chairman

Agenda items for Finance Working Group –

The Chairman will report on the meeting at the Food Hub

There is a new, exciting development of vertical farming which will bring employment to the area.

ACTION: PM/CLERK

15. Date for the next Parish meeting (by Zoom)

Parish Council Meeting 4th May 2021, 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.40pm