



Easton Parish Council

www.eastonparishcouncil.co.uk

The Village Hall, Marlingford Road, Easton, Norfolk NR9 5AD

Email: clerk@eastonparishcouncil.co.uk Tel: 07879379181

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Easton Held on Wednesday, 17 May 2023 at 3.00pm At The Village Hall, Marlingford Road, Easton

Present:

Cllr B Moye, Chairman Easton Parish Council - presiding	
Cllr D Lewis (EPC)	Cllr P Milliken (EPC)
Cllr P McCarter (EPC)	NCC & SNC Cllr M Dewsbury
Jerry White (Easton College)	Martin Colbourne (Easton College)
Heidi Philpott (Bridge School)	Pamela Hooker
Brenda Nelson	Anthony Perry
Peter Kidd	Marion Barr

Gina Lopes – Acting Clerk to Easton Parish Council (minute taker)

2023/1) Welcome from the Chairman of Easton Parish Council

The Chairman, Cllr Ben Moye, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2023/2) Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 23 May 2022

RESOLVED to approve of the Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 23 May 2022 as a true and accurate record.

2023/3) Annual Report from the Chairman of Easton Parish Council

Cllr Ben Moye, Chairman of Easton Parish Council read the following Annual Report: *It has been another busy year for Easton Parish Council, where we have continued to work tirelessly in the best interests of parishioners. Firstly, I would like to express my thanks to Councillors Milliken, McCarter and Lewis for putting their names forward for election.*

Secondly, when considering the amount of change occurring to the village and the number of vocal residents it was surprising and disappointing that no one else in the Parish put themselves forward to be a Parish Councillor. The Parish Council has been operating efficiently with the aforesaid Councillors and I hope we can continue in this manner. Nonetheless, we are only volunteers, who have jobs and commitments, and are therefore very stretched by our workload so we were disheartened no other residents have stepped forwards in the interests of our community.

At the end of my report last year, I identified five key priorities. I am pleased to say we have made considerable progress in these, alongside other matters.

College heights: We have completed the improvements to the play areas of College Heights. The new equipment makes use of the green space and has proved popular with the older children in the village.

Traffic calming: We have continued to push for traffic calming measures along Dereham Road, the Longwater Interchange and Marlingford Road. The extension of the 30mph speed limit and the reduction of the speed limit from 60mph to 40mph will be coming into force along Dereham Road soon. We have also made several representations to improve the safety of the Longwater Interchange and Norfolk Showground entrance as part of the development of the Food Hall and Market Garden at the Norfolk Showground site. As part of the new Easton Community Centre, we will be making changes to Marlingford Road so it becomes safer for all.

Planning: We have made numerous comments on planning applications of various sizes across the village. This includes small residential applications, the Food Hall and Market Garden development at the Norfolk Showground and the specialist school at the Diocese site.

Easton Community Centre: As you will have noticed when passing the site, significant progress has been made building the new Community Centre. The delivery of the project has been hindered by South Norfolk District Council's disinclination to release their part of the funding for the project, but thanks to Councillor Milliken's tireless efforts we have now reached an agreement and the build out of the scheme is continuing to progress.

Neighbourhood Plan Review: The Neighbourhood Plan review has made substantial progress and the proposed updates to the document underwent consultation for six weeks earlier in the year. The comments received are now being reviewed before an updated Easton Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to South Norfolk District Council.

Going forwards we will:

- Continue in discussions to improve the Longwater Interchange and other areas of the Parish where there are traffic problems
- Continue to act in the best interests of the village when responding to planning applications
- Complete the construction of the new Community Centre
- Complete the review of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Establish the management of the new Community Centre

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to Councillor Milliken for all his efforts over the last year, especially in relation to the new Community Centre. The time and effort devoted to the project, especially in relation to the funding issues, have been instrumental in the delivery of the project. I would like to thank Councillor McCarter for his work on the new Community Centre and his indefatigable litter-picking efforts, and Councillor Lewis for his work monitoring the defibrillators across the Parish. Finally, I would like to thank our Parish Clerk Gina for her support over the last year. We have also received assistance from other individuals, but I cannot name everyone, what I can confidently state is that without this small group of dedicated people the Parish of Easton would be a worse place.

Regrettably, and in addition to my annual report, the main contractor of the new Village Hall build went into liquidation at the beginning of the week, however, the Council is committed to delivering the project and the Council funds are protected within the contract. More information will be provided once known.

2023/4) District and County Councillor's reports

Norfolk County Councillor and South Norfolk Councillor Margaret Dewsbury read the following reports:

Norfolk County Council Annual Report -

Many of the Services have been very busy over the last year.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards were so busy dealing with the outbreak of Avian Flu that other services sent people to assist them. There were 65 outbreaks identified across the county as opposed to 3 the previous year. It became mandatory to keep birds 50 or more birds inside but advisory to keep them all inside.

Trading Standards also continued its everyday work ensuring businesses are operating within the correct legislation and trying to protect local residents from rogue traders who email, telephone or knock on doors. They work in partnership with Citizen's Advice who provide a helpline to received information and give advice to local people. Tel: 0808 223 1133. They also provide a Trusted Trader directory of local organisations.

Eleven new No Cold Calling Zones were set up in 2022 taking the number to 308. These 308 act as a deterrent to bogus callers and help protect 14,474 households across the county.

Fire and Rescue Service

The Fire Service was very stretched at times during the year dealing with flooding and wildfires. Last summer they dealt with over 650 wildfires sometimes tackling 50 per day, over 6 times more than in 2021 when they dealt with 96. On July 19th the call centre received 808 fire calls and on July 24th 1672 so a major incident was called and ten engines from other services came in to assist. As well as field fires many houses were completely burnt out.

April 1st 2023 marks the 75th Anniversary of the creation of the current Fire Service. They will be having Open Days at some Stations and there will be an Emergency Village at the Royal Norfolk Show to show the work of the emergency services as well as a display from the Fire Museum.

The Council continues to work with the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance and all of its partners to reduce inland and coastal flood risks by establishing a single phone number for all flood related issues and targeting support for those areas most at risk. Work will continue to encourage people to clear ditches to try to prevent the build up of water during heavy downpours. An advice leaflet has been produced.

Adult Learning

Adult Learning continues to offer hundreds of courses both online and face to face. They have just opened a new Construction Centre on Hellesdon Industrial site offering free courses for anyone over 19 years of age on bricklaying, carpentry, plastering, plumbing, and much more. A second centre is soon due to open in Kings Lynn. A temporary Construction Centre was set up at Wensum Lodge last year as they were keen to start delivering the course. Over 600 people attended the training and a third of them were female, this is far more than the one per cent of women in the construction industry. The courses are for people to learn new skills for employment but also for those who want to do their own DIY.

They have also been offering courses to people who have English as a second language. They worked with the Fire Service to ensure immigrants and refugees knew how to report a fire or other incident in this country and they are offering new

Multiply training to help people with numeracy. These are to help businesses upskill their staff, improve peoples employment opportunities or help people to manage their money. Training is free and can be for individuals or groups.

Libraries

The libraries continue to be the font of all knowledge, helping people requiring information about services provided by all councils and other organisations as well as providing a warm space during the cold winter months and the opportunity to join in activities for all ages, including knit and natter, bounce and rhyme, and board games. They also provided free, Keep Warm and Go bags containing a hat, blanket, socks and a hot water bottle and Toiletry Bags containing shampoo, bodywash, soap, hand gel, toothbrush and toothpaste and deodorant as well as the usual Tricky Period sanitary packs.

The Summer Reading Challenge was a great success with around 9,000 children taking part. Children were presented with certificates and medals as a reward for completing the challenge.

There has been a Public Consultation on mobile libraries to review the routes and the demand in each village. Not many people use them and fuel costs keep rising so there will be some changes later in the year.

Museums

The Castle Museum is still hosting weddings and visits from groups of school children. The transformation of the Castle Keep to a replica of what it was like in Norman times is nearly complete. All five levels from basement to battlements will be accessible to everyone. There will also be new catering and toilet facilities.

The latest exhibition of artifacts from a shipwreck which sank near Great Yarmouth on May 6th 1682, called the Last Voyage of the Gloucester, has been very popular and attracted an above average number of visitors, over 500 people, on the first Saturday that it was open.

Carbon Emissions

The County Council has committed to achieve 'net zero' carbon emissions on our estates by 2030. All street lighting should be converted to energy efficient LEDs by 2024.

The proposal to plant one million trees in five years to help off set carbon emissions is continuing. Trees are being grown at the Environmental Hub at Gressenhall Museum. To date 210,000 trees have been planted and there is also a Hedge Restoration Fund to help fill the gaps in hedgerows and join up habitats to provide corridors for wildlife to travel safely along.

The Council has received government funding to provide 70 electric, zero emission, buses and the Roundtree Way Depot will be one of the first two fully electric bus depots outside London. Also 16 local authorities, including Norfolk, are to receive government funding to help roll out thousands of electric vehicle charging points.

Housing

Repton Property Development, the County Council's housing development company has recently completed a site in Attleborough where all 48 properties are affordable homes.

Strategic Review

The Council has been undertaking a strategic review to try to find savings by 'doing things better for less'. The predicted £60 million gap has been covered although due to increasing demand for Adult and Children's Services we foresee a gap of about £46 million next year. It has been agreed to increase the precept by 2.99% for

general Council Tax and by 2% for Adult Services Social Care in line with the governments suggested cap.

Children's Services

Children's Services has been dealing with a need for more school places over the coming years. The three new SEND schools providing 500 more specialist places have been built and have opened in Fakenham, Gt Yarmouth and Easton.

Childminders and Foster Carers have been caring for children for decades. The Council now has a New Roads scheme which is looking for people willing to offer lodgings and advice and support to young people aged 12 – 25 to help them develop independence and prepare for adult life.

Last year the Council supported children aged 5 – 16 as part of the government's Holiday Activities and food programme. The Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Scheme will be repeated again this summer and at Easter. The scheme is free for children eligible for free school meals, young carers, children who are refugees and disabled children.

The Council offers various training schemes including Social Work Apprenticeships and experience of working with both children and adults.

Highways

Work continues on plans for the Norwich Western Link and Highways England will soon be starting work on the A47 between North Tuddenham and Easton. There will probably be more rat running through the local country lanes and villages whilst the work is in progress. Highways are looking at ways of mitigating this.

The third River Crossing at Gt Yarmouth is nearing completion.

Highways Rangers have already started coming round the village to clean signs or help with small highways issues.

Devolution

The Council has been considering a County Deal with the Government which would bring in £600 million over thirty years, (£20million per year) plus the opportunity to apply for other funding and deliver more jobs, housing and investment. This would involve a directly elected leader and cabinet governance. A public consultation was held in March and the responses are being analysed. An agreement will be signed at the December Council Meeting if it is agreed to continue with this proposal.

South Norfolk Council Annual report

Over the last few years South Norfolk and Broadland Councils have worked together to share staff and provide services, yet still remain separate councils. Last year they jointly purchased the Horizon building at Thorpe and they hope to move in in April when the work to prepare it has been completed. Both councils have put their current headquarters up for sale and South Norfolk have vacated the Long Stratton building and are currently sharing Broadlands headquarters in Thorpe. Two thirds of South Norfolk residents live as close or closer to the Horizon building than to Long Stratton but to compensate for those living furthest away the Council has opened an office in Diss and called it Octagon Outreach.

The new building will use 84% less energy than the old headquarters as it has over 2500 solar panels plus air source heat pumps are being installed. This should save around £750,000 per year.

Solar panels are also being installed at the Leisure Centres and swimming pools to make them more energy efficient. Every year at least 3,000 children learn to swim in these pools.

South Norfolk Council wants to help the whole district to 'go green' and have committed to provide EV (electric vehicle) charging points for every village that wants them. The Market Town car parks have already been fitted with charging points.

The Council has worked with Harleston Town Council to improve their market place and this year will be helping Wymondham Town council to improve theirs.

To assist with people's health and wellbeing the Council has supported two new Country Parks near highly populated areas at Cringleford and Queen's Hills and are working with the NHS and CCG to provide a new surgery at Hethersett.

A free bin collection App has been launched to ensure people know when their waste will be collected. It also provides advice on what can or cannot be recycled.

This year South Norfolk Council approved a capital budget of £113 million, whilst freezing Council Tax for the ninth time and committing an extra £1.3million for those in need, so it can continue to help 500 households a month to deal with the cost of living or other challenges.

The Help Hub continues to provide support and advice for local residents as do the Community Connectors.

We have welcomed 200 Ukrainian refugees to the area as well as those from Hong Kong, Afghanistan and Syria.

Numerous grants have been awarded. In this Ward Marlingford and Colton have received funding for outdoor seating, Gt Melton Pavilion has received funding to update and refurbish their building, Easton Gym club has received funding to purchase more equipment and replace some that is worn out and the Council worked with Easton Parish Council to provide a new multi purpose village hall for the ever increasing village.

Fifty per cent of Council Tax income is generated by trading activities including house building and providing commercial space for businesses to expand and prosper. The Council is working with others on a solution to Nutrient Neutrality because it has not been possible to grant planning permission for properties in the River Wensum or Broads catchment areas since last March. This is about to restart because from this April a new mitigation scheme is being offered which allows builders to 'off set' the impact of their developments by buying credits to fund measures, such as creating reed beds to trap nutrients, that will minimise the impact of the pollution, although larger schemes will probably created their own ways of mitigation on site.

As South Norfolk Council's day to day work covers 86 different activities this is just a summary of the main activities during the last year.

2023/5) Reports from local clubs, groups and organisations

The following reports were received:

Mr Jerry White, Principal, Easton College –

Easton College in facts and figures

850 young people learning, 120 adult students, 150 HE students and 140 apprentices

Over £1M invested in improved facilities across the campus including in Animal Management and Agriculture provision since 2020

40 student bedrooms redecorated and improved

Ofsted "good" in October 2021 as part of City College Norwich inspection

Some key areas for discussion

How can the College play an enhanced role in supporting the growing village?

How can we work together to enhance public transport and active travel routes?

How do we maintain an appropriately controlled student campus on the edge of a growing village?

How do we ensure our agricultural activities work alongside village life?

Do the needs of our students for local facilities align to those of the wider village?

Ms Heidi Philpott, The Bridge School –

All are happy with the site and both children and staff are loving being there

Complex needs School thus children attending have complex needs and barriers

They opened in January 2023, this was delayed from November 2022 but once open children were on site within days

There are still things to do and sort out and the site is still being developed

46 children started with 5 classes, there are now 60 children

This a growth journey as 98 children are expected in September and over the next 2 years this may increase to approximately 170 to 200 children

Several children come to School in taxis and many are solo passengers at the moment, however as pupils increase they will share so no significant increase in taxi numbers

The main priority is around settling in and children had their first outing walking from the School to Easton park which was a lovely day with the topic “All about us”

The biggest challenge is staffing, they also need support staff and would be good to have some local people

General discussion following above reports -

There were some discussion and concerns raised about traffic along Bawburgh Road in particular, it was suggested Norfolk County Council Highways need to push on to address same. The needs of the new School and College Students using this area should be paramount and a recent accident was highlighted. Councillors were keen to discuss traffic management planning and offer support, they had already asked the Police for a zero tolerance policy on speeding in the Village. A meeting with Highways, local Schools, Easton College and Easton Parish Council was suggested.

A resident asked about maintenance of St Peter's Path and Councillors reiterated this is owned and maintained by Norfolk County Council and all concerns should be addressed to them.

There was a brief discussion about the use of gritting and grit bins in Winter.

Easton Good Companions Report – written report received and noted -

Entertainment

Our programme throughout the year has been varied. We learnt about the History of Costessey; been told about the Great Thorpe Railway Disaster of 1874 which happened during a thunderstorm, heavy rain and wind on the 10th Sept. 1874. Dr. Jan Sheldon of St. Martin's Trust spoke of the often unfortunate circumstances that causes homelessness and their ongoing need for men's clothing and household items. The Gal Tina with her husband 'D a r e v i d' entertained with Norfolk Squit. A talk related the true story of the 3 girls who toured Norfolk in a gypsy-type caravan in

1912; The HATADS Trust that “Preserves the Past – Captures the Present”. Kevin O’Demont with his Laughing Yoga assured us it is very good for our well-being. Brian Hedges showed a video of “The Way We Were” which brought back many happy memories. We celebrated Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Celebrations with a strawberry tea, sausage rolls and scones, even with ‘Paddington Bear’ in attendance with his marmalade sandwich. We celebrated the 60th Wedding Anniversary of Jean & Dave Ditton with buffet, cake and wine; the 50th Wedding anniversaries of Ann and Ben Harrowven – also – Gwen and Mick Cousins, and again on both occasions with buffet, cake and wine. Rev. Laura attended our Harvest Festival and the tinned items brought by our members were afterwards donated to the recently formed Nurse Food Bank, Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital. We enjoyed both our 67th Birthday Lunch and our Christmas Lunch at Glen Lodge Golf Club. We had Fish & Chips brought into the Village Hall with a variety of desserts to follow. We held one minutes silence for Queen Elizabeth II who died on the 08th September 2022. The Special Xmas Buffet, prepared and served by outside caterers in the Village Hall was a gift from our late member Vera Richardson – a lovely meal with many happy memories of Vera – our very own ‘Dancing Queen’.

Charity for 2022/2023

Our Charity was for the E.A.Air Ambulance and a Coffee Morning was held which raised £150.00.

Membership

Our membership, with an age range of 56 - 94, now stands at 28 as two new members joined the Club this year, the average attendance is 25..

It was agreed at a Meeting held February 2022 that Membership would increase by £1 (from £5 to £6 per annum) with effect from March 2023

Outings

With Coaches so expensive to hire it is no longer viable for us to do this instead, with members sharing transport, we had an Afternoon Tea at Café Verde, Mattishall then later a visit to Peter Beales Attleborough which did not disappoint with some members having lunch in the restaurant whilst others preferred a picnic in the beautiful gardens;.

Special Birthdays

We have celebrated THREE special birthdays this year, all of whom were 80 years young

Grants

This year we have been fortunate in applying and receiving Grants from the Parish Council ‘Covid19 Recovery Fund’. We also received a Gift, being the beneficiary of the late Vera Richardson’s Will, which was a very generous kind gesture.

We have, once again, enjoyed a mixed and pleasurable year (many homemade cakes included) and our thanks go to all those who make it possible. As always, we extend a warm welcome to anyone over 55 who would wish to join us.

Pamela Hooker, Secretary

Easton Football Club Report – written report received and noted -

The Adult Saturday teams enjoyed a successful 2022/2023 season. Pride of place goes to the First team after winning the prestigious Mummery cup in May 2022 went one better by winning the Division One title gaining promotion to the Anglian Combination Premier Division for the 2023/2024 season.

Led by manager Chris Brownbridge, the team were very consistent only losing 3 league matches out of 28 and winning their last 15 matches clinching the title with a 5-1 win away at Wymondham Town, ahead of runners up Gorleston Reserves by 5 points. A great achievement by all involved in only their third season in Senior football.

The reserve team finished in fourth position in Anglian Combination Division 4. They also reached the Semi-Final of the Norfolk County FA Junior cup losing 2-0 away at Loddon United who were playing 2 divisions higher and have since been promoted to Senior Football.

The A team playing in the Central and South Norfolk League division 3 also performed well in only their second season finishing in fourth position. They have also reached the final of the Ambulance Cup which is being played at the FDC Bowthorpe on May 27th 2.00pm KO.

The Club also had five youth teams with the Under 15's playing in the Christian League and an Under 13, two Under 11 and an Under 8 team all playing in the Norfolk Combined Youth League.

There will be a further four youth teams added for the 2023/2024 season.

Michael Cossey, Secretary

Poppins Group –

Mr Anthony Perry gave a brief verbal report –

20 years ago Anne Dunbar founded Poppins, when she became ill Mr Perry and Brenda Danes took the Club on

25 people a week attend when they meet each Tuesday morning

The Club relies on Volunteers

Any spare money is used to make charitable donations and these were listed

St Peter's Church

Mr Anthony Perry gave a brief verbal report –

It is hoped the Church will be there in the future but have a dwindling congregation, about 21 worshippers

Struggling to pay utility bills

Total of 4 Churches in the Benefice with services held in each of them

There was a significant problem with the guttering and the Parish Council assisted

Held the Flower Festival which took hours of preparation but over 300 people came and there were some very inspirational displays

Easton College provided magnificent flower displays and the local Academy loaned a throne and crown and lots of photographs were taken

There was a life size "King Charles III" for photos

There was a special "Songs of Praise"

It ended with a cake sale

They achieved £330 on the first day and a final total of £615

2023/6) Parishioners' questions and comments

The Chairman invited the parishioners present to speak and comments received and discussed included the following –

Resident raised concern about trees in her neighbour's garden and what could be done to reduce them – Advised these would not be included in the High Hedges Act

as trees not a hedge, suggested checking house insurance to see if there is legal cover as this is a civil matter

Cllr Milliken asked if the Dairy at Easton College was still in use – Advised not at this time but the Government sets the curriculum so may be used again in future

Reported Easton residents should receive discounted rates to use Easton College facilities, part of the Persimmons site agreement.

Meeting closed at 4.25pm