

Easton Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Easton Parish Council Held on Friday, 15 December 2023 at 1.00pm at The Village Hall, Marlingford Road, Easton

Present:

Cllr P Milliken – presiding
Cllr D Lewis
Cllr P McCarter

In attendance:

Gina Lopes, Acting Clerk to Easton Parish Council
3 x public

2023/030) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Moye.

2023/031) Declarations of interest

None received.

2023/032) Continued Delegated powers and quarterly meeting schedule

On the motion of Cllr Milliken, seconded by Cllr Lewis, it was
RESOLVED to continue with previously delegated powers and quarterly meeting
schedule.

ACTION: ALL CLLRS/CLERK/RFO

2023/033) Suspension of meeting for Public Participation

On the motion of Cllr Milliken, seconded by Cllr McCarter, it was
RESOLVED to suspend the meeting to invite members of the public to speak – see
“Public Participation Notes”.

2023/034) Minutes of the meeting held 21 September 23

On the motion of Cllr McCarter, seconded by Cllr Milliken, it was
RESOLVED to accept and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21
September 2023 as a true and accurate record.

2023/035) County & District Councillor’s Report

NCC & SNC Cllr Dewsbury confirmed she had submitted a written report in the
previous month. There were a few additions which included the following –

- The date of the election of the SNC Leader has been changed to save costs
- Norwich Western Link road is going ahead and full funding in place
- Fire Service accommodation is being changed as more women are coming in to the Service. The HQ is by the Police at Wymondham but still a separate force

- Noted traffic was diverted from the A47 when there was recent flooding and there have been several flooding incidents historically on A47. Reminder to farmers to keep ditches clear.

Easton Parish Councillors expressed thanks to the team at SNC who had achieved the full funding to progress the Norwich Western Link Road.

2023/036) Budget & Precept 2024 to 2025

The draft budget was considered and discussed.

On the motion of Cllr Milliken seconded by Cllr Lewis, it was

RESOLVED to accept and approve the budgeted figures for financial year 2024/25 to a total of £25,926.36 remainder of expenditure to be taken from Easton Growth Fund.

The suggested precept request would be a 3% increase on last year and would result in an increase of £1.28 per household per annum.

On the motion of Cllr Milliken, seconded by Cllr McCarter, it was

RESOLVED to make a precept application of £25,926.00

ACTION: CLERK/RFO

2023/037) Application to Public Works Loan Board

There was a recent meeting with South Norfolk Council (SNC) attended by Cllr Milliken and Cllr Lewis. The report sent to SNC Cabinet was a result of CIL payments several months ago and many items were not clear. The SNC Cabinet were now in a position where they would have to borrow the money to provide the funds to Easton Parish Council (EPC) and it was felt better for EPC to make a direct application themselves.

Mr Vincent, Planning Consultant was invited to outline the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) application process and his report presented to Easton Parish Councillors.

There was a lengthy discussion and it was confirmed that whilst a loan was required to enable completion of the new Community Centre, CIL money would cover the costs of the loan including interest once it was received. There would be no increase in the precept to facilitate the loan. Cllr McCarter asked for a clear statement to be made available to residents so they would understand this loan was not a burden on them and this was agreed. It was also confirmed the report presented would be made available to the public for transparency and general information.

On the motion of Cllr Milliken, seconded by Cllr Lewis it was

RESOLVED to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £500,000. (five hundred thousand pounds) over the borrowing term of 10 years for the Easton Community Centre. The annual loan repayments will come to around £71,145. It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

ACTION: RFO/CLERK/ALL CLLRS

2023/038) Finance matters

a) Payment lists to-date & Statement of Accounts –

On the motion of Cllr McCarter, seconded by Cllr Lewis, it was **RESOLVED** to approve and accept the list of payments dated 1 September to 12 December 2023 to a total of £833,060.70

On the motion of Cllr McCarter, seconded by Cllr Lewis, it was **RESOLVED** to approve and accept the Statement of Accounts dated 12 December 2023 to a total of £351,245.03

b) Grass cutting service & contract –

Cllr McCarter had met with Norse and they had submitted a quote. It was noted this was higher than the current contractors who only got paid for work they had actually done. It was felt best to review the grass cutting and grounds maintenance service in the Spring.

c) SLCC – Conference/training –

The Acting Clerk, Gina Lopes, had received a National Award from the Society of Local Council Clerks for her outstanding voluntary services to the profession. She had also been voted as President Elect of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and would be President next October. Councillors noted these achievements and confirmed the Clerk was an asset to Easton.

On the motion of Cllr Milliken, seconded by Cllr Lewis, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the payment of the Clerk's attendance at SLCC Practitioner's Conference to a total of £360 +VAT.

It was confirmed a bursary of £200 had been received from the SLCC by Easton towards costs of a previous Conference the Clerk had attended.

On the motion of Cllr Milliken, seconded by Cllr McCarter, it was **RESOLVED** to approve a part payment of £100 towards the Clerk's SLCC membership fees.

ACTION: RFO/CLERK

2023/039) Updates & any urgent business

a) New Community Centre -

Cllr Milliken confirmed the build was progressing well, much of the inside had been plastered and the second part of the floor screeding would be done in January. The project should be completed in March 2024.

b) Any other updates or urgent correspondence

Thanks & Condolences –

Councillors expressed their condolences and thanks to the late Mr and Mrs Cossey who had both died very recently. All present acknowledged the great contribution they had made and many years of service given to the community of Easton. They will both be greatly missed.

The Chairman wished everyone a Happy Christmas and closed the meeting at 2.45pm

Public Participation Notes

The Chairman invited members of the public to speak and comments received included the following –

A resident voiced his strong objection to the response made by Easton Parish Council to his planning application – the Chairman advised this matter had already been concluded several months ago and was not for further discussion

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