**EASTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**Held on Monday 18th November 2019 at 7.30pm**

**at Easton Village Hall**

**Reports from District, County Councillors and Question time for members of the public –Duration time maximum 10 minutes - 2 minutes per person re Agenda items.**

In attendance – 1 member of public

The chair invited the Mr Palfreyman to speak, comment was given on 3 items on the Agenda:

Item 13 – Village Hall –suggestion that following the refusal of the village hall committee to have the Defibrillator sited on the external wall that it be sited in the Car Park in a bespoke made structure. Cllr Gibbon explained that the equipment would be more secure at the hall, well placed for public events and functions, and was considered the best place to serve the community. Item 6.2 – suggestion that instead of purchasing a Dictaphone to record minutes to aid minute taking, that a laptop with speakers was used instead. Item 6 – To understand the Financial Statement - questions raised were answered by the Chair who explained that the Precept must be budgeted for and spent accordingly and that a Parish Council can hold double the Precept and best practice is for this to be by way of reserves. The Statement shows the details to provide complete transparency, and always includes the budget. The fees received by the Cemetery are taken as admin, the reserve as others are reviewed to hold an amount as shown for unexpected expenditure.

Meeting opened 7.45pm

**1 PRESENT & APOLOGIES**

**Present Apologies**

Cllr S Piggott – Chair Cllr M Birt - Holiday

Cllr B Gibbon

Cllr F Siddall – late arrival – 7.45pm

Cllr J Armfield

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Cllr F Siddall – Item 7.2 – Proposed Radio Mast – Letheringham Abbey, pre-application notification from District Cllr M Cooke inviting pre-app response.

**3 CONSIDERATION OF ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS - None**

**4 MINUTES OF MEETING -**– To Approve Minutes Sept 23rd & Oct 7th 2019.

Council members approved Minutes Sept 23rd & Oct 7th 2019.

**5 MATTERS TO REPORT FROM ACTIONS OF LAST MEETING**

Following the meeting on 23rd September, the parish council received the resignation of Cllr A Hollins. The Chair registered the vacancy on the register of interest’s portal, which electoral services then acted upon and supplied the notices for the vacancy. 10 electors of the parish requested a by election poll for the vacancy and the notices were sent from electoral services to be displayed on the notice board. The poll for those that have put their names forward is now advertised and the notices are displayed.

The Chair received a response from the SCC Cabinet member for Highways following the letter that was sent explaining that the Highways team were not communicating with the PC. The result was that Highways manager Callum Poole contacted the Chair and the Chair arranged a village site visit. The Chair explained that the result of the NP household survey gave a high percentage of the almost 70 percent of village residents stating that the speed and volume of traffic through the village was of concern and needed to be addressed. Residents regularly ask the Chair when installing speed calming into the village will be happen. The Highways manager assessed the village from Dark House lane where the extension of 30mph was put forward to the Hacheston Rd junction. The Highways manager explained that he could see how traffic was entering and treating the village and it was clear there was a problem so would organise installing survey equipment to gather data regarding volume and speed, this happened between 31st October and 8th November. The results and response from Highways will be given under item 14.

The Chair contacted LCPAS to enquire about their training programme, currently there are none. The Chair has spoken to SALC to seek details of their training programme. This will be discussed under item 6.1.

The Chair has contacted and met with two grass and tree/hedge cutting contractors to obtain quotes, Kindlewood is the same for next year. The details to be discussed under item 6.3.

The responses for the planning applications as agreed at the meetings on 23rd September and 7th October have been submitted.

**6 FINANCE –**The Financial Statement was agreed.

**6.1** LCPAS services had become limited, council members considered changing LCPAS advisory services to SALC which would enable them to access a full training programme, and to consider contracting the locum Clerk from a SALC partner OPUS. SALC subscription is £180 annually, and locum Clerk fees £24.89 per hour with all payroll and staff management managed by OPUS. It was explained that the pool of Clerks held to fill locum positions were all experienced Clerks, that there is an acute difficulty finding Clerks’ so the pool is small. Members agreed to appoint SALC as the advisory service and not renew LCPAS subscription, and to appoint a Locum Clerk on a flexible arrangement. The Chair will notify SALC and OPUs **SP**

**6.2** Members agreed to the purchase a Dictaphone to record meetings- with 360 degree distances for meetings the total cost-£122 ex VAT and expenditure from Transparency Fund.

**6.3.** Budget and setting Precept for year end 2021.

The Precept allocated for Easton for year commencing April 1st 2020 represents the addition of the Hopkins Homes households, this creates a greater portion of tax collection and gives Easton an increase of £654 to give £9,154 with zero increase for residents on their parish part of their community tax bill. Council members considered the Precept and Budget for year end 2021 and agreed £9,154,00. The Chair to notify East Suffolk Council. **SP**

The Chair explained that two other Grass cutting and tree/hedge land management companies had been invited to quote for the next three years contract. The Chair had shown two contractors the sites concerned and they will submit their quotes but verbally they indicated the quotes would be in excess of the current contractors. It is hoped a consideration of all three can be made at the next meeting.  **SP**

**7 PLANNING –** Any Updates

**7.1** **Application: -** DC/19/4385/FUL – Improvement of existing entrance to site and relocation of access road through site – Martley Hall, Easton.

Council member agreed a response of Support. **SP**

**7.2** Council members considered the letter from Dist Cllr M.Cooke re Proposed Radio Mast at Letheringham Abbey- pre-planning stage. The company involved in the proposed installation is Clarke Telecom. The lattice mast would enable reception for smart meter home installations and limited mobile phone i.e. coverage for 02 and possibly Vodaphone. The equipment required to provide coverage for other providers such as EE would be too great for the Radio Mast to hold, negotiations between companies to accommodate could not be relied on.

Council members agreed to respond with their concerns, that not all Mobile phone customers would benefit, only those with 02 and possibly Vodaphone. Also, that masts can be installed as an artificial tree to help mitigate the visual impact and to suggest this by way of mitigation. The Chair will send the response to Clarke Telecom.  **SP**

**8 CEMETERY**

The Chair had requested that Kindlewood look at the two Ash trees with heavy ivy growth. Kindlewood reported back that the trees had Ash die back disease the majority was dead wood and large bows/branches were regularly falling to the ground. The Chair contacted East Suffolk Council tree officer who then assessed and instructed that the two Ash trees needed to be felled and that Kindlewood could be used as were known to them, it was advised to replace with Field Maple trees. The work was required as a matter of urgency due to public safety. Kindlewood was notified and submitted their charges to carry out the work at £985.00. Council members agreed that this work be carried out as a matter of urgency and agreed to follow the advice and plant Field Maples to replace the Ash trees.

**9 DEFIBRILLATORS FOR CENTRE OF VILLAGE**

Cllr Gibbon reported that he had requested the detail of reasoning for refusing the siting of the Defibrillator on the external wall of the Village Hall from the Village Hall committee; but had received no explanation. Council members were concerned that residents were voicing disappointment with the decision of the Village Hall committee to refuse the siting of the Defibrillator.

**10 VE DAY CELEBRATIONS -MAY 8TH 2020**

A letter from the HM Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk had been received it encourages the VE celebrations to include bell ringing at 11am on 8th May and a street tea party style community celebration. Council members discussed and agreed that combining the ringing of bells with a coffee and cake ‘elevensies party could work well. Organising the celebrations which will be weather dependant can continue at the next meeting. The Chair will contact the bell ringing team to make sure that the bell ringing is possible. **SP**

**11 TRAINING**

Once membership to SALC is in place, training can be booked.

**12 VILLAGE GREEN**

**12.1** Council members considered the quote from Suffolk welding of £385 ex VAT for a new litter bin in similar style to the seat on the village green. To purchase a pre-manufactured litter bin in similar style would be £250. The company that East Suffolk Council use is Glasdon, their pricing is the same as other suppliers for the same style. Council members agreed to purchase a pre-manufactured litter bin.

**12.2** Council members considered the mole hills appearing on the green. Cllr Siddall will seek advice and costs of dealing with the problem. **FS**

**13 VILLAGE HALL**

The Parish Council considered the letter received from the Village Hall committee refusing the invitation of the Parish Council to meet to talk through any misunderstandings and move forward. Council members agreed that there was nothing more they could do.

**14 HIGHWAYS**

The Chair reported on the survey results data sent from Highways the survey equipment was installed over the days 31st October and 8th November. The Highways manager commented that the data showed volume and speeds being in the 85th percentile and this proved there was a big enough problem for them to go ahead to provide designs. They will share preliminary designs as soon as they are available, which will include gate entry treatment and build-outs. It is hoped these will be with the Parish Council a.s.a.p. **SP**

**15 VILLAGE CAR PARK** – Any issues - None

**16 PLAY AREA**

Cllr Siddall has three play equipment companies to request quotes to replace play equipment from. Each will require a site visit.  **FS**

**17 FOOTPATHS -** Any issues

No reports of any issues.

**18 CORRESPONDENCE**

**19 EXTRA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

**20 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

January 20th, March 16th 2020