Easton Parish Council

Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held at Easton Farm Park on 27th March 2017 at 19:45

In Attendance: County Cllr Ron Vickery

CCllr RV gave an update. He had completed budget and was gearing up for elections. This would be last year of no increase to Council Tax. The Government is allowing 3% increase for adult social care and increases to cover uplift in the National Living Wage. This year Social Care and 'Child related' budgets had overrun and reserves used. Most reserves being allocated to major projects such as Orwell Bridge. CtyC has attracted good Government funding. Roads focus is on prevention. New offshore wind farm project is initiating. Broadband target now 96% by 2019. GCSE results are better. The PC raised HGV issues and was advised to report again to Highways. CCllr RV to support if needed.

1. Present:

Chair:	Cllr S Piggott	SP	**Clerk:**	Mr W Dicks	WD
Vice-chair:	Cllr A Thomas	AT		Cllr A Hollins	AH
	Cllr M Coney	MC		Cllr F Siddall	FS

Apologies: None **Not present:** Cllr B Gibbon BG

No. Item

2. Declarations of interest
Cllr MC declared an interest regarding item 6.3.

3. Consideration of any dispensation requests
None.

4. Minutes of ordinary meeting 30.01.17 and extraordinary meeting 27.02.17
Both minutes were accepted, signed by the Chair and adopted.

5. Matters to report from actions of last meeting
The Chair reported that the new grass contract started on 1st April. The reason that the village green looked unkempt was because the contractor previously in place did not honor his grass cutting contract. The new contractor is committed to keeping to the grass cutting contract. The green will be as needed for the Fete. The Chair had submitted the required photographic evidence of the overgrown hedge to SCC Highways prior to storm Doris worsening the problem - the area had now been cleared up.

Cllr AT reported that the new notice board that had been delivered a month ago had presented him problems with the assembling of it, he had taken it to Broadwater for them to assemble. The Chair requested that Cllr Thomas chase up the matter.

The Clerk reported that he had:

- Brought asset register in line with insurance schedule.
- Set up new web site www.easton.suffolk.cloud with Suffolk Cloud and received training. First 6 months hosting is free. Applied for transparency grant for March 17 but SALC has backlog. Clerk days funded are less than hoped for.
- Completed revised grass specification including requirement not to strim against play area wooden posts; re-issued RFQ – contract agreed at 27/2 meeting;

Kindlewood has completed and billed cemetery work.
- Notified SCDC planning and electoral teams of clerk details.
- Responded to Planning 'no objection' regarding Dark Lane House.
- Responded to Planning 'support' regarding Old Kennels.
- Learned that the annual internal control statement is in the annual report.
- Written confirming appointment of Heelis and Lodge as Internal Auditor.
- Undertaken helpful cemetery management training with Carol Rook.

Cllr FS asked for Play Area resurfacing to be called forward to the next meeting.

6. Finance

6.1 The Clerk presented the latest Financial Statement, which was agreed and adopted subject to clarification on Village Hall grants (clarified later in the meeting).

6.2 A draft revised Grants Policy was discussed. The revision provided for Grants to be considered twice per year and brought policy and procedure together. It was based on practice across many other PCs' policies making for a more transparent system with clearer rules and assessment criteria, demonstrating better control of spend. PC confirmed a £2000 grant funding reserve, whilst legacy reserve money was available, but decided against a suggestion of a 'match funding' process. Policy was adopted subject to one change requiring applicants to spend the grant within twelve months.

6.3 Two grant applications had been received but both had lacked necessary detail and supporting documentation. PC considered that the village green/crinkle wall flower borders could be brought into the grass and landscape contract as it was not ideal to rely on the goodwill of volunteers. It decided to grant £400 retrospectively to the Village Hall (VH) under the process applicable at the time a '2016-17' grant was first requested. But PC could not be expected to replace lost VH Play School revenue. It reiterated that other grants were available and suggested the VH Committee could speak with Community Action Suffolk. PC decided that any VH grant for 2017-18 needed to be applied for under the new policy, including necessary detail and documentation.

6.4 Clerk had reported on new website and Transparency Code under item 5.

6.5 The PC considered and adopted the draft Expenses Policy.

Action Items	Responsible
19/2017 3/17: Consult LCPAS as to whether PC can grant for running costs.	Clerk
20/2017 3/17: Amend Grants Policy to require applicants to spend the grant within 12 months, or refund it.	Clerk

7. Car Park

PC had decided at its 27th February meeting to appoint A Nobbs to install new lighting. He had submitted a compelling quote. Now waiting to hear more. Cllr Thomas reported that Suffolk Welding were happy to cap the post once it had been cut down. Notice Board had been covered under item 5.

8. Highways

8.1 The Chair updated on the Speed Indicators (SIDs) scheme. Highways had decided the location of posts, on Framlingham Road and The Street. SIDs are rotated every few weeks. Easton does not have to fund or manage the scheme, which starts in April.

8.2 There was again HGV routing through the village. The HGVs are mainly from a hire company serving a concrete supply business on Brandeston Road. The Chair had enquired of SCDC about the planning rules governing HGV routing. They had not been aware of the issue. PC decided to 'keep a watching brief'.

9. Planning

There had been no new applications or developments.

10. Cemetery

PC considered an application for a replacement headstone spanning two plots and decided to refuse permission. It believed that this was in line with rules applicable in most if not all cemeteries.

Action Items	Responsible
21/2017 3/17: Notify mason of headstone decision: add Cemetery Rule proscribing headstones spanning more than one plot.	Clerk

11. WW 1 Beacon

PC considered Beacon storage but decided to discuss wider subject at its May meeting.

Action Items	Responsible
22/2017 3/17: Put Beacon in VH and make gas bottles accessible in kennels.	Cllr AT

12. Play Area

PC had agreed to call this item forward to May under item 5.

13. Footpaths

A sign was still down, so was in need of action. Fouling by dogs was not considered serious for the moment and PC decided to 'keep a watching brief'.

Action Items	Responsible
23/2017 3/17: Report collapsed footpath sign.	Cllr AH

14. Correspondence

None had been received.

15. Items for next agenda

PC agreed to take its regular items and WW 1 – to confirm details. It also noted that Cllr AT will be leaving before the next meeting. Cllrs wished him well and thanked him for his sterling service.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Dates confirmed/agreed: Parish 05/05/2017; PC Annual 08/05/2017. Next ordinary PC 31/05/2017; subsequent ordinary PC, 24/07/2017, 02/10/2017 and 27/11/2017.

Action Items	Responsible
24/2017 3/17: Notify CCllr RV of meeting dates.	Clerk

Meeting was closed at 21:30.

Chair **Date:**