

# **EASTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING**

**Held on Friday 22nd May 2023 at 7.30pm**

**Easton & Letheringham 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.**

2 members of public in attendance.

### **1. PRESENT & APOLOGIES**

#### **Present**

Cllr S Piggott – Chair  
Cllr G Edwards  
Cllr B Gibbon  
Cllr F Siddall - Vice-Chair  
Cllr I Palfreyman  
County Cllr E Bryce

#### **Apologies:**

Alison Bramall – Parish Clerk/RFO

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed members of the Cricket Club, Village hall committee & Church.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were accepted from Alison Bramall, Parish clerk/RFO. The Chair explained that there were no SCC or District Councillor reports, as there had been elections on 4th May, the new District Councillors were only just in post.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

- None

### **4. CONSIDERATION OF ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS –**

- None

### **5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 27/5/22**

The minutes from the previous year's meeting were approved and signed off

## **6. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT – CHAIRS REPORT**

### **Sue Piggott, Easton Parish Council Chair - MAY 22<sup>ND</sup> 2023**

The Parish Council continues with its responsibilities, managing the cemetery and burials, village car park, village play area, village grass cutting, responding to planning applications along with village projects.

The village green Christmas tree is organised and provided by the Parish Council each year and last Christmas has benefitted from some new lights. The Parish Council would like to thank the team of volunteers that place and decorate the tree.

Parish Council business which includes finances and conduct is officially audited each year by a qualified independent Internal Auditor and Government External Auditor each year. The annual audit reports and documents are uploaded onto the PC website, along with the Minutes and Finance statements.

SCC Highways installed the speed-calming scheme for the village at the beginning of August last year.

The Neighbourhood Plan has suffered problems and had stalled, due in part, to the process that requires involvement from ESC this was also compounded by the NP assigned consultant not being able to progress the plan in a timely manner. The Steering Group appointed Rachel Leggett Assoc. as the new consultant. The steering group managed to get the Draft Plan consultation stage in place at the beginning of the year, after working hard to do so, it meant that it was concluded before the funding financial year end of 31<sup>st</sup> March. The Plan has stalled once again whilst it waits for the government to open up the next funding window, this is affecting the progress of NPs nationwide. As soon as the window opens the steering group will apply for the last phase grant and aims to complete the whole project by the end of this year.

The Parish Council organised the Platinum Jubilee celebration. A successful Hog Roast and Beacon lighting took place, also a street party was held at the Cricket Club which also proved to be successful. It was good to see so many people enjoying the events. Following the Queens death, the preparations that were in place were triggered, together with the Church a condolence book was set up and available at the Church. The Parish Council has safely handed the condolence book to the records office to ensure that the records are held as requested by Suffolk County Council.

The Parish Council joined with the Cricket Club and organised a Kings Coronation Tea Party event for the holiday Monday, this was well attended and enjoyed by all that came along. The Parish Council are grateful to the Cricket Club for all their input in creating this successful event. Thanks too to the bell ringing team who rang the church bells on the day of the Kings coronation.

On behalf of the Parish Cllrs I would like to thank all the members of the community who consistently give their appreciation for the work that the Parish Council does. All Councillors give a lot of their time to meet their duty as a Parish Councillor and they do their very best to ensure the Parish Council meets its legal obligations and works within its powers for the village.

**7. EASTON & LETHERINGHAM VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE REPORT - Jenny McEvoy – Chair - Easton and Letheringham Village Hall Committee**

During the majority of 2021/22 the VHMC continued to be impacted both in hirer income and maintenance activities with a second year of Covid restrictions. A small number of our regular Hirer groups continued to operate with lower numbers, masks and social distancing and continuous ventilation to reduce transmission, which contributed to higher energy costs. My thanks to Jean & Christine for your support in continuing to assist in compliance as the ever-updating guidance and Winter Plan B and roadmap to reopening in line with advice from the government and our advisors. We did not find ourselves having to close the hall during this time due to any outbreaks.

The Sunday Café made a welcome return after two years in February, along with the long-awaited Quiz Night in March, which was wonderful for the community to come together once again after such a long period of time. We also welcomed back the dance class and Monday Mardles. Hires continued to be varied, at times seeing late cancellations due to omicron over winter and spring, but we hope a return to more normal patterns of activity after such a long period of uncertainty.

Overall hirer income was down by a third for the year on pre-pandemic levels. With running costs disproportionately high due to the covid interruptions and mitigating measures necessary during the year. An old building demands attention and now with more certainty we shall be rescheduling paused maintenance, albeit against a backdrop of increasing labour and material costs to ensure the hall is kept in good order.

My special thanks to the committee, especially Christine, who volunteered to clean the hall for several months as due to the uncertainties of usage and finding a cleaner is not an easy in this locality. This resulted in much lower expenditure than would have been. A big Thankyou also to our hall neighbour, Peter who continues to keep the hall garden and hedge in good order, we are always very grateful for your voluntary support and hard work over many years in this regard. We welcomed our new Treasurer Guy onboard, who was co-opted onto the committee in November.

As always, a big Thank you for the ongoing work and support of the Trustees as we continued to navigate such unusual times. We hope that life can once again return to normal, and more leisure events can be held to bring the community together once again.

*Jenny McEvoy, Chair*

5 **REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2022 - ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, EASTON - Jane Woodbury Eggins – Church Warden**

**BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS**

There were three weddings, no funerals and no baptisms in 2022.

**PRIEST IN CHARGE**

Revd Ann Kember is being licensed soon, on 26<sup>th</sup> July. She will be part time.

Our numbers attending church are still not up to pre-pandemic levels, but numbers have risen this year, especially for our Christmas carol and nativity services.

Zoom services continue to run once a month for those who find it difficult or impossible to attend church.

Our new organist, Alexander, plays when school and studies allow. This is a lovely contribution to our worship.

**MAINTENANCE**

The gutters were cleaned out in 2022. There continues to be some work which will need to be done soon, including work on the roof.

**CHILDREN IN CHURCH AND EASTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

During the year we have not been able to get enough children together for specific church-based activities or services, but the Nativity was a great success. We started with colouring and assembling paper angels and then did our traditional nativity procession telling the story of Jesus' birth. We even had a real baby as Jesus!

Easton primary school had three services in the church in 2022, at Easter, Harvest and a Christmas service. We were so pleased to see them in church and hear them sing so well.

**SUNDAY CAFE**

The cafe, which was instigated by the church as outreach to the community, returned in 2022 and has been a great success. It was inspected and received a full 5 star rating on hygiene. The cafe has donated £400 to church funds and has raised money for a number of charities during the year including £200 to Children in Need and £66.50 to the Ukraine appeal.

**FUNDRAISING**

Fundraising could happen again in 2022 and we had two extremely successful events. Our May Fair raised a total of £ 1743 and was well attended by village and local people who seemed pleased to be able to come together again after

the pandemic restrictions. The other extremely successful event was the Open Gardens in July. We were blessed with good weather and visitors from all over the local area and beyond. Open Gardens raised £ 2593 (plus a generous donation) of which £ 593 went to the Red Cross Ukraine appeal.

### **PARISH AND BENEFICE MAGAZINES**

Our grateful thanks to Clare Owen for producing a great parish magazine for many years. The magazine has been online and in hard copy.

The decision was taken in 2022 for all the parishes to contribute to a benefice magazine called A Slice of Suffolk covering church events, services and news from the parishes. As a result there is now a separate Easton Village News produced for news and events in the village.

### **PILGRIMS' CROSS**

The Cross pilgrimage was able to visit us again in 2022. They stopped for refreshments and to share some prayers and reflections.

### **CHARITY DONATIONS**

Our collections for charity this year included the Children's Society from the collection boxes, the donation of our collection at Harvest to Water Aid (£ 50) and FIND (£ 50) and the tinned and packet goods to the Salvation Army in Woodbridge. The Remembrance Day collection (£ £82.50) was donated to the RBL. We also collected tinned goods and hot water bottles for FIND's Christmas appeal.

*Jane Woodbury-Eggins*

## **Easton Cricket Club Report for 2023 Annual Parish Meeting – James Harper - Chairman**

- 1) Jamie Harper took over as Chairman in November from Jerry Jayasuriya. Angus Pearson remains as Junior Chairman.
- 2) Current Playing Membership is approximately 150 (100+ Juniors and 50+ Seniors) split across the following teams:
  - a. 3 Men's Team (2 on Saturday and 1 on Sunday)
  - b. Ladies Team
  - c. Junior Boys Teams at U9, U11, U13, U15
  - d. Junior Girls Team at U11/13
- 3) Following a serious water leak over the Christmas period, the club conducted a very successful Crowdfunding Campaign to raise funds for the clubhouse refurbishment. We ended up raising a staggering £30,000 in just over a month. We had over 150 Supporters including Sport England (£6,800) plus very generous donations from many across the community. Many thanks for your support, not only in contributing but also in raising the awareness of the campaign.
- 4) Secured Sponsorship from three local companies: GAH, Bentwaters Parks and Foskett Willows enabling new covers, new picket fence and new nets (coming in July). With the refurbishment and these investments, the club has really had a face-lift!
- 5) 1<sup>st</sup> Team was promoted in 2023 to the highly competitive Division 1 of the Two Counties Championship for the first time in 15+ years and so on and off the field the club is in good health.
- 6) Looking to have more social events throughout the season and to build closer links with the local community including the Primary School. The Coronation Event with the village was a good start and happy to have more of these types of events. Easton Cricket Teas are famous in the county and so please feel free to pop up and have a cup of tea and sandwich on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. On a sunny afternoon, there aren't many better places to be!

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The Chair closed the meeting at 20.15

(Signed by S Piggott)  
Chair

13 May 2024  
Date