

EASTON
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
FRIDAY JUNE 1ST 2018 – 7.30PM
EASTON & LETHERINGHAM VILLAGE HALL

Attendance- 15 members of public. 3 Parish Councillors

Chair – Cllr S Piggott

The Chair welcomed everyone.

1 APOLOGIES

Cllr F Siddall, Clerk

2 MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING –2017

The Chair requested agreement to sign the minutes. Mr I Palfryman objected to the signing as felt that they did not represent his participation and requested that his account be added to the minutes. The Chair received his report. The Minutes were signed off.

3 PARISH COUNCIL REPORT – Chairs Report

The past year has been a busy year.

The village grass cutting and hedge cutting contract remains with Kindlewood.

The Cemetery has received a higher level of management, the contemplative circle has been improved and a dead ornamental tree has been removed. The ongoing management and maintenance remains a priority. There is a problem that the grass contractor has reported on and recently a family member visiting a grave has also reported on and that is dog fouling. Dog fouling is occurring within the grounds but more upsettingly on graves. This is a situation that is wholly unacceptable, the Parish Council has put up signage on the Cemetery gates, and should the problem continue the Parish Council will need to re-assess what further actions can be taken.

The Play Area continues to be maintained and grass cutting is kept at a level to allow the area to be used. The Goal Posts have had two new nets installed. The Play Area has repeatedly been vandalised, and bonfires have been lit behind the goal posts. The PC have put a sign up and installed a new rubbish bin and arranged for SCDC to include it in their village refuse collection run. Landscape management has commenced at the Car Park and at the beginning of the year a local contractor was appointed to construct a bay for the Re-Cycling bins and we look forward to this work starting. The Re-Cycling bins have created a problem in excess deposits left around the bins when they are full. The PC approached SCDC who eventually agreed to empty the bins on a weekly basis and at a later time in the morning which is now beyond 8am. The Parish Council notice board has been put in place along with the new car park lights.

The Parish Council perseveres to gain response from Suffolk County Council a site visit in the village took 6 months to happen. The Chair met with an Engineer to cover all the points and issues within the village, from road drains, failing footpath surfaces at the village hall and pound corner and concerns at Hopkins development. The concerns regarding the effectiveness of the splay from the development was confirmed by the concerns that the Engineer had, along with others that he and his team picked up on at the development and car park, they assured the Chair that these would be addressed. The Highways officers expressed a willingness to work with the PC to address the safety of the splay, they had not expected that traffic would be travelling at the speed it does at the point of the blind bend which results in the sight splay dimensions appearing to be insufficient.

The Parish Council continues to sponsor the Speed-watch programme, Speed-watch relies totally on volunteers and needs more to come forward, Jenny McAvoy has done an amazing job as Co-ordinator over the past years, but Jenny is no longer able to continue and needs to hand over to another volunteer.

To commemorate the WW1 centenary year, the Parish Council decided to replace three signposts with traditional style signposts which will carry a finial recognising the WW1 centenary year. Suffolk County Council have to clear the style and installation of the signposts and have proved very difficult to deal with, e-mails and phone calls are not responded too and constant chasing to try to get to the point of ordering and installation and licencing, has now reached one year, but it has now at the final stage required to allow the PC to go ahead.

The decision was made by the Parish Council to support a Neighbourhood Plan. A Steering group was formed and a Consultant appointed. The Neighbourhood Plan is making good progress, the Launch event and the Questionnaire responses have shown that the community is strongly supportive of the Neighbourhood Plan to help preserve all that is good about Easton and the countryside and to control future housing development.

The Parish Council purchased and arranged delivery of a Christmas Tree for the village green, and thanks the volunteers who placed and decorated the tree with lighting it looked absolutely beautiful

Visitors to Easton comment on what a well-kept and lovely village Easton is, and often remark on coming to the pub and having an enjoyable experience, walkers will also comment and hope that the countryside and village remain as beautiful as it is.

On behalf of the Parish Cllrs I would like to thank all the members of the community who give their time to the village and thanks all the community members that show 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.

Thank you

4 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – None

5 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT – None

6 REPORTS INVITED:

All Saints' Church to Easton Parish Council Annual Meeting 2018 – Report given to Chair

You will notice that it is a different 'vicar' making a report, I'm the Revd Canon Graham Hedger and took office in May, so I welcome this opportunity to meet with the parish council and with villagers. As a former parish councillor in Charsfield and having worked on various voluntary groups I know the immense hard work that many people put into making villages great places to live. On behalf of the Parochial Church Council I thank you for asking the church to make a presentation to the Annual Meeting and also thank the many people who support All Saints Church in a variety of ways.

2017 was a year of change and transition. In August the Revd Deirdre West retired and the Orebeck benefice (the seven parishes that work together and share a priest) entered a vacancy. In this diocese vacancies frequently last up to a year. However, in December I was appointed and the vacancy came to an end two weeks ago.

All Saints Church exists as a group of people worshipping God and seeking to serve the whole village. We have a fantastic building which is open throughout the day for private prayer and provides a space for contemplation. We are also fortunate that many people want the church to be used for those all important life events. In 2017 we had 3 baptisms and 1 wedding.

There were regular services twice a month on the second and fourth Sunday of each month. On remaining Sundays the churches of the benefice join together. Easton School came to the church for their own services on three occasions.

I experienced the Sunday Café for the first time a couple of weeks ago and from the comments that I heard it is a valued community activity. It has been running very successfully here in the Village Hall for several years now on the 3rd Sunday of each month. I'm sure many of you have been along to sample the homebakes and bacon rolls and meet up with friends. This is a great community event and we couldn't do it without a large number of willing helpers. We are very thankful for their participation.

One of the features that is so attractive and welcome is that Easton has an active children's ministry. This is the COSMIC club which meets on the 4th Sunday during our communion service. COSMIC stands for children on Sunday morning in church. They go to their own special room and come back to the service for a blessing and to tell us what they have been doing. Their contributions and insights benefit us all. We also have a Family service on the second Sunday which is more informal and allows a mix of young and old to worship together. We often make things or have a story instead of the sermon/talk in a formal service.

There are other special services during the year such as the Remembrance Sunday service, our Carol service, and the COSMIC Nativity on Christmas Eve and we also celebrate Harvest with a festival service and lunch.

Whether people go to church on a regular basis or not, the building is for all people and I along with the church council am very grateful for the support that many people offer through helping with fundraising events. In 2017 the May Fair raised over £1,400 and the Hidden Gardens just short of £1,200. These sums are essential to enable us to continue to ensure that the church building is available throughout the year. So, a big thank you to everyone involved.

When this report is made by one of the church wardens it is more difficult to say but I can publicly acknowledge the great support and work that the members of the parochial church council put in to ensuring that everything is done well, and that the church not only serves the village today but will continue to serve the village in the years to come.

Revd Canon Graham Hedger, priest in charge.

Easton & Letheringham Village Hall

Report not given to Chair

The village hall committee has now changed, Jenny McAvoy is the Chair and the new Treasurer is Frances Gander.

Major projects are necessary for which the hall will need to seek funding. The flat roofing area needs replacing and other ongoing structural and capital expenditure is needed. The Village Hall maintains its income and expenditure for running from a good list of user groups, but this is always subject to change. The Village Hall has now submitted their latest accounts required for their grant funding application for £400 from the Parish Council and look forward to receiving this money. The committee continues to work hard and organises fund raising events, the village hall remains demanding in upkeep.

Jenny McAvoy, Chair Village Hall Committee

7 PUBLIC FORUM

The chair invited questions from residents of the parish.

Mr Pollock raised the following:

Questioned when the Recycle bins bay would be built, it is now many months since the expectation of completion. It was requested that the rose which is growing back should be allowed to climb the screening.

Response from Cllr Hollins

The contractor had been chased and will be contacted again to be given a deadline. The decision had been to appoint someone within the village.

Mrs Pollock raised the following:

When walking on the pavements low tree branches are hanging over them in places.

Mr I Palfryman raised the following.

1. Following the report given by Rev G Hedger asked for Rev G Hedgers' opinion of the Parish News, and that Clare Owen should receive thanks for being the editor.
2. Questioned the Parish Councils budgeting and precept. The 20% increase of precept and the justification of the decision to employ a Clerk for 7 hours a week at £13 per hour.
3. Questioned the finances from published financial statements. Expenditures planned and that the community should be involved in deciding how the CIL monies should be spent. He had researched and been told by SCDC that over the next few years there would be a total of just over £47,000, he then held up a placard displaying the figure to attendees.
4. Questioned the Play Schools intention to apply for CIL money to improve their site at the Farm Park, and that this would be to improve a private business premises at the Farm Park.
5. Questioned the decision of the PC to hold the next two meetings at the Farm Park as minuted from the last meeting.

Response from the Chair

2. The Chair explained that the decision had been taken because the Clerk was qualified and experienced.
Others in attendance from the floor voiced their experience of Parish Councils and Clerking and agreed with the decision, that 7 hours and pay rate as reasonable to cover a Clerks workload and that the rate must be in accordance with the national pay scale for CILCa qualified Clerks.
3. The Chair explained that the PC could invite members of the community to put forward ideas at the Summer Community NP event, the best indicator was the NP Village Survey which 70% of the village completed.
4. The Chair explained that SCDC holds the major pot of CIL money and are mandated to make it available to communities to apply for projects are within their criteria. The PlaySchool had asked for information from the PC. Mrs J McAvoy objected that she had not been asked.
5. The PC had received a communication regarding the applications, because of the two-week deadline given, the Chair had spoken to SCDC about the impossibility for people to meet this; the deadline has now been changed to June 30th. The Chair had brought downloaded printed forms to hand to organisations at the Parish Meeting. The Chair handed Mrs J McAvoy one of the forms.
6. Response given by Cllr Gibbon,
This decision was made following the difficulties in accessing the key and will be changed when the problems are resolved.

Mr I Palfryman called for a vote from the floor for the Parish Council meetings to only take place in the Village Hall.

The Chair announced Closure of the Meeting, due to point of dis-order which followed previous points of dis-order – Permission to speak must be requested and granted by the Chair, speaking can only be through the Chair and not to the floor, all voting is only taken by the Chair.

Mr Palfryman told the Chair she could not close the meeting because he would continue taking the meeting regardless – the meeting remained as a point of dis-order and the Chair and fellow Parish Councillors remained seated.

Mrs J.McAvoy raised the following:

1. Questioned the Parish Councils decision to increase the precept by 20%
2. Questioned the Precept budgeting and reserves, and that the precept and budgeting is not the same as it was in past council administrations.
3. Questioned providing new signposts for WW1 Centenary, and that these should be approved by the village, and wanted to know how they would look, and was not happy about the idea.
4. Had issue with the website not having the March minutes and agenda uploaded, along with the Agenda's for the most recent meeting.

Response from the Chair

- 1 The Precept had remained the same for previous years, there had been no gradual incremental increase. It was necessary to cover the increased costs for grass and hedge cutting and keeping the verges and village green, play area, cemetery and car park maintained and also cover the costs of employing the new Clerk.
General agreement was voiced from the floor for the Parish Council's decision.
- 2 The budgeting for the precept ensured that the expenditure was controlled. When the new Parish Council took over from the past administration the funds held were too high. The precept had historically been ordered against a budget that did not spend it and monies had accrued. The PC was told by the External Auditor to get the funds held properly in line and that it could only hold a maximum of double the precept, there was a total of over three times the precept. The PC had to allocate expected expenditure to diminish the funds accordingly, grant funding is covered under reserves held.
- 3 The Chair had details of the signposts which were shown to the floor, and explained the decision made was to replace the signposts in the village that needed repair or were no longer in place, SCC would not be repairing or replacing. SCC have strict criteria for the traditional alternative design and would be clearing the design and spec and installing. The finial on the top would be a poppy with WW1 centenary year along with the village name. Support was voiced from the floor expressing support for this idea and the design.
- 4 The Chair would investigate and suggested that a phone call or an e.mail to the Parish Council would be helpful to alert to items that had been missed being uploaded.

Mrs C Burgoyne requested to speak regarding Speedwatch

The Speedwatch has had J.McAvoy as Co-ordinator who is unable to continue, that she was Vice-Co-ordinator and could not be the Co-ordinator, there has been a piece put in the Parish News requesting more volunteers and a Co-ordinator, and that she had issue with the piece placed in the Parish News, also that Speed-watch should be run by the Parish Council as well as being sponsored by them.

Response from the Chair

Explained that she was not in the position to take on the role of Co-ordinator as suggested.

Mr Palfryman called for a vote from the floor to increase the flashing speed sign provision in the village.

Mr Edwards raised the following:

The contract with Kindlewood for the village grass and hedge cutting, that there were no apparent re-quotes involved.

Response from the Chair

When they had checked on this point they understood they did not require this for re-quoting but that she would check again.

Dismay was expressed from the floor and voiced with regards to the unreasonable dissent and behaviour displayed.

The Chair expressed concern that what should have been a positive meeting for the village had been prevented by the dis-order and disruption displayed by a minority throughout the evening.

Meeting closed – 8.45pm

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Chair

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Date