

Easton Parish Council

MEETING OF EASTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 20 JANUARY 2025 – 7.45PM Easton & Letheringham Village Hall

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

86/24-25 PRESENT & APOLOGIES

Present: Cllr Piggott, (Chair), Cllr Balcombe, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Gibbon, Cllr Ladbrook, Cllr Palfreyman and Cllr Siddall. In attendance: County Cllr Bryce and A Staples (Clerk). Apologies received from District Cllr Langdon-Morris.

87/24-25 COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA AND FOR CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Two members of the public attended. They commented on the flooding following Storm Babet in 2023 was raised; the response from Patrick Spencer MP and County Cllr Bryce to queries raised; and changes made to the water course near Harriers Walk.

88/24-25 RECEIVE REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

An oral report was received from County Cllr Bryce, which covered SCC's recent vote in favour of entering into the priority devolution programme. It should be known by the end of January whether Suffolk has been selected, and thereafter confirmed whether the council elections in May are cancelled.

89/24-25 RECEIVE ANY CHANGES TO MEMBERS INTERESTS

No changes received.

90/24-25 RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS RELATING TO AGENDA ITEMS

No declarations received.

91/24-25 APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2024

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

92/24-25 POLICY REVIEW:

92/24-25.1 To review and adopt the updated Financial Regulations for 24/25

Draft Financial Regulations, amended to incorporate the new template issued by NALC in 2024, were discussed and approved.

92/24-25.2 To review and adopt the Risk Assessment for 24/25

The Risk Assessment policy was reviewed and adopted.

92/24-25.3 To review and adopt the Internal Controls Statement and Report for 24/25

The Internal Controls Statement and Report was reviewed and adopted.

93/24-25 FINANCE MATTERS:

93/24-25.1 Confirm bank account balances (Community Account £2,956.73 & Business Premium Account £7,403.14 dated 13 January 2025)

The above-mentioned bank account balances were confirmed. The latest Barclays Bank statements (December 2024) were signed.

93/24-25.2 Consider and approve Financial Statement dated 13 January 2025

The Financial Statement presented by the Clerk was considered, approved and signed.

93/24-25.3 Consider retrospective approval for Neighbourhood Plan printing costs which had increased from the beginning of the year quote £188.00 to £208.00

The above-mentioned increase in the costs of printing the Neighbourhood Plan was retrospectively approved.

93/24-25.4 Consider retrospective approval for the purchase of new Christmas Tree lights £30.15

The expenditure on the purchase of replace Christmas tree lights at a cost of £30.15 was retrospectively approved.

94/24-25 APPOINT COUNCILLOR TO COMPLETE INTERNAL CONTROL REPORT

It was agreed Cllr Ladbrook should carry out the checks 2024-25 required by the Internal Controls Statement and Report.

95/24-25 CONSIDER AND APPROVE BUDGET FOR 2025/2026

The draft budget for 2025-26 was reviewed and approved. The salary of the Parish Clerk in the approved budget will be five hours per week at £17.05.

95/24-25.1 Consider funding for the Easton Village News

It was agreed in 2025-26 the donation to Easton Village News should remain at £120.00.

Action: Clerk to notify Easton Village News editor.

95/24-25.2 Discuss and agree approach to further fund onesuffolk village website

It was decided to no longer fund the onesuffolk village website, once the current web hosting contract with CAS expires.

Action: Clerk to notify webmaster.

96/24-25 AGREE AND SET PRECEPT FOR 2025-26

ESC has calculated there to be 188.72 Band D equivalent properties in the parish, which would result in a precept of £11,138.25 if there was to be no increase on the current year. It was agreed that a 3% increase was required due to inflation and the council's reserves being reduced in the current year. Accordingly, it was agreed that the 2025-26 precept requirement be set at £11,472.39, which is £60.79 per Band D equivalent property.

97/24-25 REVIEW INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2023-2024 AND AGREE ACTION PLAN

The action plan prepared to in response to the comments and recommendations in the 2023-24 Internal Audit was reviewed and approved.

Action: Clerk to complete outstanding items on the Action Plan.

98/24-25 AGREE APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2024-2025 AUDIT

It was agreed to appoint SALC as the internal auditors for 2024-25.

99/24-25 MATTERS TO REPORT FROM ACTIONS OF LAST MEETING:

99/24-25.1 Chair's report

Nothing to report.

99/24-25.2 To receive reports from Cllrs that attended the Sizewell Forum held at the village hall on 9 December 2024

Cllr Palfreyman reported having attended the meeting, the minutes of which have since been circulated to councillors.

99/24-25.3 Progress of Residents Play Area Survey questions and format to be agreed

Cllr Siddall has prepared a questionnaire for completion by parishioners. To be added to the agenda for the next meeting to discuss and agree content.

100/24-25 UPDATE ON CAR PARK – LONG-TERM PARKING OF HORSE BOX ETC. TO CONSIDER ACTIONS

It was noted that the horse box remains parked in the village car park without permission. It was decided the owner should be identified and a letter sent requesting it be moved.

Action: Clerk to write letter.

101/24-25 DISCUSS PHOSPHATE LEVELS IN RIVER DEBEN

Reports received from Deben Climate Centre were noted.

102/24-25 DISCUSS AND AGREE APPROACH TO ANGLIAN WATER ABOUT ADEQUACY OF WATER RECYCLING FACILITIES IN VILLAGE

The provision of water recycling facilities for the village were discussed and concerns raised about the capacity of the facility being exceeded on occasion, causing discharge of untreated wastewater to the Deben. It was agreed to write to Anglia Water to highlight these concerns about the adequacy of the facility.

Action: Clerk to write letter.

103/24-25 UPDATE ON PLAY AREA SURVEY TO RESIDENTS - COMPILATION TO ASCERTAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF A PLAY AREA AND WHAT TYPES OF EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE INCLUDED

Cllr Siddall presented a draft questionnaire and agreed to send out to members ahead of the next meeting to prepare for sign off and progress.

104/24-25 CONSIDER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

104/24-25.1 Consider response to letter sent to Paul West (SCC) and Patrick Spencer (MP)

(This item was taken earlier in the meeting to include discussions with County Cllr Bryce). The response received from Paul West was discussed. A reply has been received from Patrick Spencer MP today, indicating a full reply will be sent in due course.

105/24-25 SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

105/24-25.1 Sizewell C impact forums to decide on level of PC involvement and contact with Sizewell C.

106/24-25 DATES OF NEXT MEETING

24 March 2025.

107/24-25 FIX DATES FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It was agreed that the Annual Parish will take place on Friday 9 May 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall. The Parish Council's AGM will take place on Tuesday 20 May 2025 at 7:45pm in the Village Hall. The remaining meeting dates for 2025-26 were provisionally agreed, (subject to confirmation at the AGM): 16 June 2025 (2024-25 year-end meeting to sign off AGAR forms and consider internal audit); 21 July 2025; 22 September 2025; 17 November 2025; 19 January 2026; and 23 March 2026.

Meeting closed 21:24