

EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Eastham Parish Council Held in Eastham Memorial Hall at 7.15pm on Tuesday 26th May 2015

**Present: Cllr Arnold (Chairman), Cllr Inge (Vice Chairman),
Cllr Adams, Cllr Horsfall, Cllr Conway, Cllr Moseley,**

In Attendance: Clerk, 4 members of Public.

All Cllrs present signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the start of this meeting

1. **Election of Chairman:** All agreed Cllr Arnold be elected, Declaration of Acceptance of Office signed.
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Worsley. It was agreed Cllr Worsley could sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the start of the next meeting.
3. **Election of Vice Chairman:** It was agreed Cllr Inge be elected for this year.
4. **Declaration of Interest:**
 - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs were issued with new Register of Interests forms to be completed and returned to Clerk.
 - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – None.
 - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – None.
5. **Dispensations** - To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) –
Dispensations received - None received.
6. **Public Question Time** – No matters were raised.
7. **Standing Orders** (circulated) – It was agreed to adopt as drafted.
8. **Financial Regulations** (circulated) – It was agreed to adopt as drafted.
9. **Code of Conduct (circulated):** Cllrs have been emailed copy of Code adopted in July 2012.
10. **To consider the Councils Scheme of Delegation** (circulated to all):
 - a. **Staffing Working Party** – Chairman, Cllr Horsfall.
Grievance/Disciplinary Committee – Chairman, Cllr Horsfall.
Appeal Grievance/Disciplinary Committee – Cllr Adams, Cllr Moseley.
 - b. **Planning Working Party** – Delegated to Clerk, Cllr Worsley, Cllr Adams, Cllr Moseley, Cllr Arnold and Cllr Conway. PC meeting would be called if controversial application received.
 - c. **Clerks Financial Support Group:** It was agreed all PC should be involved in this. Cllr Horsfall to oversee monthly Bank Reconciliations and sign them at meetings.
11. **Risk Assessment:** Risk Assessment circulated. It was agreed for Chairman to sign.
12. **Insurance** – It was agreed to renew insurance with Aviva the present provider total £159.00.
13. **To appoint individual Volunteers to following:**
 - a. Footpaths Officer – Cllr Arnold to continue with help from Cllr Conway.
 - b. Tree Warden – Cllr Conway agreed to do this.
14. **To nominate Cllrs to the following outside bodies:**
Eastham Memorial Hall Committee (1 Cllr) – Cllr Inge agreed to continue on the Committee.
WCALC Area Meetings – Any Cllr to go to meetings if relevant to PC.
15. **Minutes of last Meeting:** Minutes of meetings held on 24th March and 1st April 2015 were agreed and signed by Chairman.
16. **Progress reports for information:**
 - a. **Defibrillator Training** – Clerk is organising local person to do training as West Midlands Ambulance Service are not able to come out at present.
 - b. **Speeding issues** – Reports of traffic speeding through Eastham village have been reported. Clerk to try to obtain stickers for wheelie bins as a reminder to drivers. Police will be informed of this issue.

EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

17. Reports on meeting attended by Clerk/Cllrs: -

WCALC Training - 16th April - Audit, 29th April – Elections. Clerk attended both meeting and had updated information on these issues.

18. Finances –

- a. **Payments made** – Broker Network Ltd (Insurance 2015-16 see item 12) = £159.00, Mrs S Burrows (Clerks expenses see item e) £489.05, WCALC (Clerks training 16/04+29/04) = £45.00, WCALC (see item d) = £102.55, Mrs P Howell (Internal Audit see item g) = £50.00, Mrs S Burrows (printer ink see item e) = £44.99, Eastham Memorial Hall (rent 14-15) = £126.00.
- b. **Payments received – March** - WCC LM December 2014 £156.00, **April** - MHDC Precept £3123.61 and Council Tax Subsidy £326.39.
- c. **Bank Reconciliation** – March/April 2015 signed Balance = £13732.42 at 30th April 2015.
- d. **Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils** – It was agreed to join for 2015-16 at cost of £102.55.
- e. **Clerks Expenses 2014-15** (circulated) – It was agreed to pay expenses of £489.05 and Printer ink costs of £44.99.
- f. **Internal Audit Procedures** – it was agreed that all procedures are being adhered to and there are no areas of concern.
- g. **Internal Auditors Report 2014-15** – no queries were raised. It was agreed to pay £50.00 fee.
- h. **Annual Governance Statement** - It was agreed by all that the Statement is being complied with as per audit requirements and it was signed by Chairman.
- i. **Accounts 2014-15** - It was agreed to sign accounts and Annual Return for year ending 31st March 2015. Total balance of £10991.33 is being carried forward to 1st April.

Chairman agreed to close the meeting at 7.56pm and the Annual Parish Meeting was held at 8pm.

Chairman reopened the meeting at 8.35pm at close of Annual Parish Meeting.

One Member of the Public remained for this part of the meeting.

19. Planning:

- a. **Plans received:** None.
- b. **Decisions received:**

15/00047/OUT - Oakwood Barn, Eastham WR15 8NN - Outline application with all matters reserved to erect a 3 bedroom single storey residence. **Refused by MHDC.**

15/00286/PDU – The Oaktrees, Highwood WR15 8PB – Prior Approval of Proposed Change of Use of part of an Agricultural Building to a Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3), and for a Associated Operational Development. **Refused by MHDC.**
- c. **Plans for comment tonight –**

15/00618/HOU – 2 Council Houses, Eastham WR15 8NP – External insulation and render system to existing house. After much discussion it was agreed to object to this application. It was felt the cladding should match existing; the top is matching but not the bottom. The application as it is would not be in keeping with the other houses. They are late 1930s houses and should be protected. Cllrs are in favour of insulating older properties but it is felt this application should not be allowed in the materials submitted. Residents had attended the Parish Meeting and expressed their concerns on this application. They were encouraged to write to MHDC.

15/00345/HOU – Eastham Kiln, Eastham WR15 8NN – Two velux windows in the roof to the east of the property. After discussion it was agreed to support this application as it would have little effect on exterior of property.

15/00465/HOU – Dingle Cottage, Eastham WR15 8PB – Timber shed and log store. After discussion it was agreed to support this application as the shed would be well screened.
- d. **APPEALS have been lodged by applicant from Oaktrees Caravan, Highwood as follows –**

14/01640PDU – Prior approval of Proposed change of use of part of an Agricultural Building Dwelling House (Use Class 3) and for Associated Operational Development and **14/01127/FUL** - Retention and resiting of mobile home. All matters of concern have been addressed in previous comments sent to MHDC regarding both applications. These comments will be considered at the appeal. It was agreed by all no new comments could be made that would add information to the case. **The appeal will be heard in September.**

20. Road Report:

- a. **Lengthsman** – continuing work to ensure drains/grips are clear.
- b. **Problems to report** – Pothole on corner of Rhyse Lane junction.

Robins End Corner water on road – County Cllr had arranged meeting with WCC onsite, Clerk attended. It was agreed to investigate drains and then a solution may be found. County Cllr to keep Clerk updated.

Astley Orchard – No date for start of works yet given by Housing Association.

EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

21. Correspondence for information:

Various items brought to attention of Cllrs. See list attached for interested parties.

22. Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting.

23. Councillor's reports and items for the next agenda.

Agenda items – Clerks Review.

24. Date of next meeting: 25th August 2015

25. Meeting closed 9.00pm.

Signed-----

Date 25th August 2015

Chairman

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT 26th May 2015

1. WCC finances and budget

Eastham residents do not need reminding that we have been through a period of budgetary cuts that have resulted in the County Council becoming a much more efficient unit, with fewer employees but nevertheless fulfilling our statutory obligations across the county.

The County contribution to council tax had been kept unchanged for several years but this year has increased by just 1.94% equivalent to £20 a year for a Band D property. This is in a budget of about £330 million pounds. As a way of responding to budget constraints, we have been examining the best ways of fulfilling our responsibilities with a comprehensive review of all services and the way they are delivered. Some have been commissioned to outside bodies, on occasions made up of staff that used to work for the County.

This has been part of a drive to offer services online where possible, with the aim of reaching 85% of such contacts online, while always making phone or face to face facilities available to those who wish to use them. People in several local villages suffer from a poor internet service and these people will always have a phone or face to face alternative to going online to interact with the County Council.

2. Road conditions

One area that always attracts attention is the state of our roads and footpaths (technically footways, where they are pavements alongside a road). Worcestershire has a proud record in this regard and can claim to be better than our near neighbours. That does not mean we do not have a lot of repairs to do and we gained a multi-million pound allocation from central government to attend to potholes this winter.

We are operating an online system of reporting such problems, including defective street lights, flooding, overgrown shrubbery and the like. This is giving more rapid and better responses to problems and should be seen as the first line of reporting, even before resorting to badgering your county councillor. The new system is much easier to operate, with interactive maps for locating problems easily and then reports back on what is to be done.

Following a visit to the site with County officers and your clerk, I am hopeful that we will be able to reach a solution to the drainage problems in Rhyse Lane. The new mood in the department at County Hall seems more favourable to a sensible solution, and we will wait to see how it is translated into action on the ground.

3. Tenbury Public Realm

You will be aware that Tenbury has been disrupted this winter with work on the Public Realm between Crow Corner and the Market. This is the first phase of a programme which will take the improvements as far as the Teme Bridge, in conjunction with the building of the new Tesco supermarket.

While there have been difficulties for traders and shoppers during this period, the end result is a great improvement. The design was approved by members of the steering group throughout and the intention has always been to make Tenbury a more attractive place for residents and visitors alike.

The raised tables and future 20mph speed limit are intended to slow traffic and make it less intimidating for pedestrians. It is also hoped that through traffic that can use alternative routes will do so, relieving the centre of the town of some of the congestion.

4. Adult Social Care

Some people have questioned the spending of money on such projects as the Public Realm at a time of budgetary restraint.

This is understandable, but the money was allocated some time ago and, as with highway work, such efforts should not be set aside just because of needs elsewhere.

The social care costs of our ageing population have placed a strain on our budget, but, in line with the results of our Viewpoint surveys into the priorities of the residents, this budget has been increased by several million pounds. We are also keen to help people live at home and use assistive technology to make that safe and comfortable.

5. Children's Services

Another area where budgets have increased is children's care. For obvious reasons, many children need to be taken into care and the figure for Worcestershire now stands at nearly 700, costing about £26 million a year. This has meant an increase in allocation of £2.5 million this year.

It is not a situation we wish to see continue, as it would obviously be better if children were cared for at home and our social workers are intent on achieving that wherever possible. As I mentioned in the March report, we would also like to have a longer list of foster carers, so that children could be cared for with a family rather than in a care home. Anyone interested in volunteering for such a role, or knowing someone who might be able to help, is urged to come forward to offer their homes and hospitality. You can get in touch via a website cleverly called www.isfostering4me.co.uk or call 0800 028 2158.

6. Broadband coverage

EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Worcestershire has been determined to improve broadband coverage throughout the county and in particular in those areas that are not commercially viable, i.e. beyond about 70% of premises. Our initial aspiration was to cover 90% of all residences and businesses and this should be achieved by the middle of 2016. The next phase will then start, to push this penetration to 95%. In addition, Abberley and the nine parishes in North West Malvern consortium, including Eastham, have benefited from the wireless Airband system.

More information can be found on the Superfast Worcestershire website. While this investment is partially funded by central government via BDUK and by BT, the County has invested in the region of £10 million so far, and is unusual in insisting that businesses should be treated in the same way as residences.

7. Tenbury High Ormiston Academy

This last year has seen Tenbury High School pass out of local authority control and re-emerge as part of the Ormiston Academy family. The Ofsted inspection that resulted in special measures was always something of a misjudgement, and I am very pleased to note that new admissions are very healthy, as parents have made their own decisions on whether it is a good school or not.

8. Divisional Fund

Each of the 57 Worcestershire County Councillors is allocated £10,000 each year to distribute to worthy causes as they think fit. While the councillors have control over the money's use, they should never forget that the money comes from Council Tax payers, and it is just being given back to them for the general good of the community.

All of my grants are detailed on the WCC website, as for all councillors, and you may care to have a look sometime. I am anxious to see that as many causes as possible should benefit from this funding, and would encourage anyone who knows of a need that might be helped by a small amount of money to please get.

9. Green Deal Insulation

Grants are available from central government for solid wall insulation of homes under the Green Deal. The aim of this £7.2m project is to install solid wall insulation for up to 750 households across the county. The works are funded by DECC, the procured delivery partner, Eon, and the home owners themselves. Worcestershire County Council is leading the project, which is being delivered in partnership with Worcestershire District councils and local energy efficiency charity, Act on Energy. To date 128 households have signed up for solid wall insulation through the scheme. Installation works on the first 20+ homes are either complete or underway.

In consultation with district councils, the opportunity to take part in the programme is shortly to be widened to include further communities in each district, including Worcester City. The opportunity for any eligible household in the county to take advantage of the offer will also be made available.

The project is now due to finish December 2015, with the last date for signing up in September 2015.

Anyone interested in benefiting from the scheme should contact the County Council via the website.

This initiative is part of the renewable energy programme being pursued by the Council, aiming to reduce energy usage as well as encouraging the use of renewable sources of energy.

Cllr Ken Pollock, Martley, Worcester, WR6 6QA