

EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Eastham Parish Council held by VIDEO at 7.30pm on Tuesday 26th January 2021

Present: Cllr Arnold (Chairman), Cllr Matravets,
Cllr Adams, Cllr Ward, Cllr Worsley

In Attendance: Clerk, Chairman of Eastham Memorial Hall Committee, County Cllr Ken Pollock

1. **Apologies:** None.
2. **Co-option of Cllr** – No applications received.
3. **Declaration of Interest:**
 - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs reminded to keep their registers updated.
 - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – All Cllrs Item 12 Eastham Memorial Hall
 - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – As above.
4. **Dispensations** - To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) –
Dispensations received – All Cllrs Item 12 Eastham Memorial Hall. Dispensation granted at previous meeting for this item until May 2023.
5. **Public Question Time** – See notes at end of minutes.
6. **County Cllr Report** – Report at end of minutes. Cllrs left meeting at end of report.
District Cllrs Reports – Apologies received, report at end of minutes.
7. **Minutes of last Meeting:** Minutes of Parish Council VIDEO meeting held on 24th November 2020 were agreed by all and will be signed by Chairman.
8. **Reports on meeting attended by Clerk/Cllrs: - None**
9. **Updates -**
 - a. **Footpaths in Parish** – Cllr had been in touch with FP Officer at WCC who addressed his issues.
 - b. **Defibrillator Box** – New box is with contractors ready for installation on outside of Hall.
10. **Finances** –
 - a. **Payments made** – Mr I Mapp (LM December 2020) = £216.00, Mrs S Burrows (see item 12a) = £147.18, Mrs S Burrows (see item 10d) = £202.37, Mrs S Burrows (see item 10e) = £160.00.
 - b. **Payments received** – WCC LM July/August 2020 = £360.00.
 - c. **Bank Reconciliation** (circulated) – November/December 2020 figures were agreed. Balance in cash book £21473.80 on 31st December.
 - d. **Clerks Expenses 2019-2020** (circulated) – It was agreed by all to pay expenses of £202.37.
 - e. **Defibrillator Battery replacement** (circulated) – It was agreed by all to pay Clerk £160.00 for battery.
 - f. **Internal Auditor** – It was agreed to appoint D M Payroll Services Ltd at cost of £75.00 for 2020-2021 audit.
 - g. **To agree Precept for 2021-2022** (circulated) – After discussion it was agreed by all to increase precept by £100.00 to £8400.00.
11. **Planning:**
 - a. **Plans received since last meeting** – None.
 - b. **Decisions received since last meeting** – None.
 - c. **Plans for consideration at this meeting** – None.
 - d. **Outstanding issues**
ENF 20/0213 – Eastham Grange, Eastham, Tenbury Wells WR15 8NP – MHDC have confirmed the application approved in 2000 is in line with work being undertaken now, no further action required.
12. **Eastham Memorial Hall** – No urgent matters to discuss.
 - a. **Purchase of taps for EMH at cost of £147.18 (inc. VAT)** – It was agreed by all to pay Clerk £147.18.
 - b. **Representative Trustee on EMH CIO** – Cllrs Adams was appointed at the Trustees AGM held on 18th January.
 - c. **Insurance of Hall on completion of build** – PC will be responsible for insurance of new building when a completion certificate and valuation is given. It was agreed the PC will not ask Trustees to pay any increase in premium. This will be reviewed at renewal of PC insurance due 1st June 2021.

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- d. **Documents required on completion of Hall** – Cllr Worsley will oversee this with Clerk to ensure conditions in Lease/License are met. PC, as Landlords, will need to view new building on completion.
- e. **Eastham Community Garden Project** – Crowdfunding reached its goal so PC did not have to pledge any money. Work will start when Hall is completed and weather improves.

13. **Tenbury Transport Trust** – To be discussed when pandemic has improved.

14. **Risk Assessment** (circulated) – This was agreed at last meeting, apologies from Clerk.

15. **Road Report:**

- a. **Lengthsman** – Cllrs agreed to advertise the contract for 2021-2022 to ensure transparency when spending public funds.
- b. **Problems to report** – Blocked drains Orleton Road.
- c. **Outstanding queries -**
 - **Eastham Bridge damage/dead trees** – WCC confirmed they will do the work but no date given. County Cllr is disappointed the damage has not been repaired despite his and Clerks efforts.
 - **Orleton Road** – Clerk to report again with new pictures.

Cllr Worsley gave his apologies and left the meeting.

16. **Correspondence for Information:**

COVID 19 updates from CALC, NALC, WCC, MHDC, Police

South Worcestershire Development Plan - updates

MHDC – Video Planning Training – 11th January – 6pm

MHDC – Video Town and Parish Forum – 25th January 2021 – 6-8pm

WCC - Online Budget Briefing for Parish and Town Councils and VCS Organizations – 27th January – 5pm

17. **Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting –**

Payments made – 1st January 2021 – Mr L Mapp (LM December 2020) = £216.00.

18. **Councillor's reports and items for the next agenda.**

Agenda items – Eastham Memorial Hall, Mowing Contract, LM Contract.

19. **Date of next VIDEO meeting: TUESDAY 23rd MARCH 2021 AT 7.30PM.**

20. **Cllrs agreed to close meeting to the Public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.**

21. **Mowing Contract for Millennium Green** (circulated) – It was agreed to accept quote given by MTM Contracting Ltd at cost of 1104.00 (+VAT).

21. **Meeting closed 7.50pm.**

Signed----- Date 25th January 2021

Chairman

Public Question Time – Chairman of Trustees joined the meeting and updated Cllrs. There are no issues with the build or finances. Render on outside delayed due to weather. Carpark to have tarmac with ramp to bar side of hall and tarmac area for seating, this is being costed.

Cllrs asked Clerk to send email of thanks to Contractors via Chair of Trustees. The contractors had been very considerate to the local community, the site always looked clean and tidy, this was appreciated by the PC on behalf of the Community. Chair of Trustees left the meeting.

District Councillors Report

A very belated Happy New Year to you all. I hope everyone had a lovely Christmas. I have been watching with great interest the Eastham Hall rebuild. From the images, it is looking amazing and I can't wait to see it fully functional again! I have included a short report for the meeting.

Covid-19 recovery at heart of revised plan: Supporting the district's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic has been made a key part of Malvern Hills District Council's blueprint for the future. A revised version of the council's Five Year Plan was approved by the Executive Committee on Tuesday (19 January) and includes several new actions focused on supporting communities and local businesses to rebuild. On the economy the council has committed to continuing to work with local traders to promote town centres and town centre plans to help them adapt to future changes in customer habits. Supporting delivery of the Worcestershire Covid-19 recovery plan, new apprenticeship and graduate grant programmes, a new Visitor Economy Action Plan to help the tourism

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sector and lobbying for key infrastructure improvements also feature. The council is developing a new communities strategy which will build on the strengths of communities highlighted by the pandemic to make them stronger, sustainable, and resilient. Tackling loneliness, supporting those in poverty and revamping the council's youth plan to make sure it meets the needs of the district's young people post Covid-19 are included as new actions as well. Bringing new housing sites forward based on community need, including provision for key workers, and a renewed commitment to tackling rough sleeping have been added to existing actions. Councillors have also pledged to lobby for several active travel schemes across the district to support a green recovery from the pandemic and the council's carbon reduction aims. The committee also approved a new five year business plan which sets out the financial challenges against which the council will deliver the actions in the Five Year Plan. The council needs to save another £500,000 by 2026, on top of more than £6million already saved from the budget since 2010, with less than one per cent coming from reductions to frontline services. The council intends to continue to make savings through efficiency savings, working with other councils and growing its income but the report warns 'difficult decisions' are ahead. The pandemic has so far cost the council about £1.4million and there are future uncertainties including the speed of the economic recovery and future government decisions on local government funding.

Cyber security reminder: We have been warned to expect an increase in cyber security attacks and to prepare for having our systems out of action for several weeks, if not months, in the event of such an occurrence. Emails are particularly vulnerable, and hackers will try various techniques, known as phishing, to trick you into clicking on links which look genuine but then allow them access to our systems. Please be extra vigilant.

How to spot a suspicious email: Spotting scam messages and phone calls is becoming increasingly difficult. Many scams will even fool the experts. However, there are some tricks that criminals will use to try and get you to respond without thinking.

Things to look out for are:

Authority - Is the message claiming to be from someone official? For example, your bank, doctor, a solicitor, or a government department. Criminals often pretend to be important people or organisations to trick you into doing what they want.

Urgency - Are you told you have a limited time to respond (such as 'within 24 hours' or 'immediately')? Criminals often threaten you with fines or other negative consequences.

Emotion - Does the message make you panic, fearful, hopeful or curious? Criminals often use threatening language, make false claims of support, or tease you into wanting to find out more.

Scarcity - Is the message offering something in short supply, like concert tickets, money or a cure for medical conditions? Fear of missing out on a good deal or opportunity can make you respond quickly.

Current events - Are you expecting to see a message like this? Criminals often exploit current news stories, big events or specific times of year (like tax reporting) to make their scam seem more relevant to you. If you think a message or call might really be from an organisation you have an existing relationship with, like your bank, and you want to be sure: Go back to something you can trust. Visit the official website, log in to your account, or phone their advertised phone number. Don't use the links or contact details in the message you have been sent or given over the phone. Check to see if the official source has already told you what they will never ask you. For example, your bank may have told you that they will never ask you for your password.

Award nomination: Our Community and Environmental Protection Team has been shortlisted for a Keep Britain Tidy award for their version of the Adopt a Street scheme – a volunteer litter picking initiative. They find out on 3rd February if they have won. Good luck!
Stay safe.

**Councillor Caroline Palethorpe, Teme Valley Ward, Malvern Hills District Council, Tel: 07974 966412
caroline.palethorpe@malvernhillsc.net**

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Corona Virus effects - No doubt like everyone else, you are seeking to adjust to the third lockdown. The new variant of the coronavirus has clearly caused revision of most of the plans across the country as to how to react to the infection, and this latest lockdown needs to be taken very seriously. The watchword is to stay at home, if at all possible. Some people will need to work away from home, and we are grateful for all their efforts to bring us services, food, newspapers and all sorts of deliveries for goods bought online. You will all realise that for every one person you see in those contexts there are as many as 20 to 100 others working behind the scenes, seeking to keep our lives as stable as possible. We are aware that the distribution of vaccines and these will go to the most vulnerable first. While this is being organised by the NHS and not local councils, we recognise that there are anomalies in the ordering of vulnerable people. It would appear that the local surgeries will be administering the vaccines and in consequence some will seem to be doing better than their neighbours. In all these considerations, it is crucial to follow the national guidance and recognise the rapidly changing situation, which means that government advice and orders appear to change without reason or much notice. It would be foolish to imagine this is happening through incompetence or carelessness.

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County matters - You will not need reminding that the coronavirus situation has played havoc with the state's finances, nationally and locally. We will aim to keep our council tax as low as possible but recognise the need to respond to the changed needs and priorities at this difficult time. The budget for 2021/22 was discussed at the Cabinet meeting earlier this month. The 56 pages of the agenda can be read on-line and you can listen to the webcast. We hope to be able to balance the budget, despite the difficult financial situation we are in, bearing in mind some £9.5 million being made available in special one-off grants from the government. The Cabinet are proposing a 1.5% increase in basic Council Tax, plus a 1% surcharge for Adult Social Services. This is below the maximum we are permitted to raise but is in anticipation of continuing financial constraints in the coming years. There was a full council meeting two weeks ago, where there was a full discussion of the performance of the Council in annual reports from the Leader, Simon Geraghty, and the Chief executive, Paul Robinson. This included reference to the budgetary situation as well as all the activities of the council over the last year. It did not include as much attention to the current concern about the climate, as desired by the nine public participants at the meeting, who all felt that more should be said about the climate change situation and its implications. None acknowledged all the work being done by the Council in this area. We are grateful for the Chancellor's help in getting money to our business community, in order to keep these businesses afloat during this difficult period and also to help those who may want to start or expand their enterprises. The County's Here2Help Business programme is the channel for some of this assistance, with the help of the district councils as well.

Local Matters - There is natural concern about the revision of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) as under consideration at present. I represent the County Council on the Joint Advisory Panel, which is chaired by my colleague Lucy Hodgson, in her role as a Worcester City councillor. This may affect many villages near Eastham, and it is worth looking at the MHDC website to see what is being suggested. There are major plans for new settlements, the most prominent being around the new Worcestershire Parkway rail station, but it is important to recognise that the time scale of this revised plan takes us to 2041.

Please take the chance to look at the Environment Agency website, to see what is planned to protect Tenbury from flooding. Anyone may take part in the consultation this month, to seek to ensure the best possible solutions are found to the problems the town faces. In the last week, Tenbury has avoided serious flooding, but Market Street was closed for a short period. The A443 between the Eastham Bridge and Lindridge was also flooded, with diversion signs posted in Newnham Bridge and Abberley. I am aware that these sometimes stay up too long and are not as explicit as they might be. I am seeking an improvement in such matters for future flooding episodes. If you have any local concerns, please let Hannah Davies know in the first instance, but let me know if the response seems inadequate. Apart from all of the above, much of which is rather negative, and if it is not too late in January, I would like to wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. Better times lie ahead...

Cllr Ken Pollock, Cheltenham, GL50 2BZ