

EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Eastham Parish Council held in Eastham Memorial Hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday 26th March 2019

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

In Attendance: Clerk, 1 Member of Public, County Cllr Pollock

1. **Apologies:** Received and accepted from Cllr Jones.
2. **Declaration of Interest:**
 - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs reminded to keep register updated.
 - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – All Cllrs Item 11 Memorial Hall issues.
Cllr Worsley item 16 - 19/00199/FUL and 19/00200/LB – Robins End, Eastham due to being a neighbour.
 - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – See above.
3. **Dispensations** - To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) –
Dispensations requested – All Cllrs requested a Dispensation for item 11 regarding Eastham Memorial Hall, it was agreed by all at previous meetings Cllrs can speak and vote on this matter until May 2019.
4. **Public Question Time** – See notes at end of minutes.
5. **County Cllrs Report**- Report circulated, see notes at end of minutes.
District Cllrs Report – Apologies received; due to computer problems no report could be given.
6. **Minutes** – Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 29th January 2019 were agreed by all and signed by Chairman.
7. **Progress reports for information** –
 - a. **Parish Path Warden** – No update.
 - b. **Elections 2nd May 2019** – Clerk has forms for candidates to complete. Notices are on noticeboards.
 - c. **Annual Parish Meeting 21st MAY 2019** – It was agreed to ask representative from Tenbury Community Pool to attend to inform residents about the work that is planned to improve facilities.
8. **Reports on Meetings attended by Clerk or Councillors** –
Clerk/Cllr – MHDC Election session – 13th February
Clerk/Cllrs Eastham Residents Association (ERA) AGM 22nd February – a resident had sent an email to Clerk; some issues were relevant to the ERA. Details sent to Chairman of ERA who had replied direct to resident with Clerk being copied in.
9. **Finances**
 - a. **Payments made** – Mr I Mapp (LM February 2019) = £187.20, Mrs S Burrows (photocopying elections papers) = £15.00.
 - b. **Payments received** – WCC LM Payments September 2018 = £156.00 and October/November = £312.00.
 - c. **Bank Reconciliation** – 1st January 2019 to 3rd March 2019 balance in cash book agree as £14632.70.
 - d. **Clerks Salary increase (circulated)** – National increase from 1st April 2019 was noted. Standing Order letter signed for monthly payments to increase to £203.20 for payments due after 22nd April 2019.
10. **Planning** –
 - a. **Plans circulated since last meeting** – See item 15.
 - b. **Decisions received since last meeting** – None.
 - c. **Plans to comment on at this meeting** – None.
 - d. **Update from MHDC regarding – 14/01640/PDU and 14/01127/FUL** – Oaktrees Caravan, Highwood. MHDC have advised a planning application has been received and is being processed. Details will be sent to PC in due course.
11. **Eastham Memorial Hall Subcommittee** – No further meetings have been held. Trustees have advised BLF were sent all legal documents week commencing 11th March. AGM to be held in May, new Trustees are needed.
12. **To discuss adopting policies as circulated** –
 - **Grant Application Policy**
 - **Media Policy**

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- **Communications Policy**
- **Public Question Time Policy**
- **Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure**

It was agreed by all to adopt all policies as drafted.

13. Road Report –

- a. Lengthsman** – Drains, grips to be cleared.
- b. Any problems to report** – Pipers Brook – blocked drains, drain by Church blocked (possible broken pipe).
- c. Outstanding queries** –
 - **Eastham Bridge** – dead trees – Clerk to report exact trees this spring. Vehicle damage is to be repaired in due course.
 - **New Road subsidence** – Clerk had taken WCC Highways to the area and it was agreed work is needed, no date given.

14. Correspondence for Information –

CALC Training dates – MHDC Planning Training, Election details.

15. Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting –

Payment made 16th February 2019 –

Mr I Mapp – LM January 2019 = £187.20.

Came & Company Insurance for Memorial Hall building only = £61.03. This matter was agreed by email, the Hall building is now insured by PC until 31st May 2019. Trustees have now obtained insurance for their responsibilities.

Plans circulated by email for comments –

14th February 2019 - 18/01871/FUL – Hanley Mill, Hanley William, Tenbury Wells WR15 8QT – 3no timber holiday lodges for use as holiday accommodation. It was agreed to comment on bridleway/footpaths that would be near to the lodges.

Cllr Worsley declared an interest in this matter due to being a neighbour, he did not make any comments as a Cllr.

25th February 2019 - 19/00199/FUL – Robins End, Eastham Tenbury Wells WR15 8NW – Change of use of The Granary from mixed use of ground floor agricultural with first floor domestic ancillary accommodation to No.2 holiday lets. It was agreed to support this application.

25th February 2019 - 19/00200/LB – Robins End, Eastham, Tenbury Wells WR15 8NW – Conversion of The Granary to No.2 holiday lets. It was agreed to support this application.

16. Councillors reports and items for the next agenda.

Eastham Memorial Hall Subcommittee.

17. Date of next planned meeting: Tuesday 21st MAY 2019 at 7.15pm – ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

To be followed by Annual Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm or at close of previous meeting if later.

18. Meeting Closed – 8.11pm

Signed----- Date 21st May 2019

Chairman

Residents queries raised -

New Road subsidence – It is an agenda item, Clerk is pressing WCC for repairs to be made as soon as possible.

Cllr asked if County Cllr was aware a National Park is being suggested for this area, it was in a newspaper article, he was not aware of the proposal.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Budget Proposals - Six weeks ago at full council, the budget was approved. While the outline of the proposals is well known, there were some significant changes. Various amendments from the Labour group and the 2017 group were tabled for consideration, but were unsuccessful. Given that they proposed very minor changes to the budget, they could be taken as an indication that, overall, the budget was acceptable to all parties. There was a notice of motion criticising the rates of charging for car parking at the Worcester Royal Infirmary, but this was rejected on the grounds that the problem was more one of capacity than exorbitant charging. When the hospital was built, provision for parking was limited to 75% of the numbers expected to need access to the hospital, building in an under-provision for parking.

Worcestershire Parkway and SLR4 - Since your last council meeting, we held a press briefing at the new Worcestershire Parkway railway station. We were keen to outline the progress being made towards completion of the work this summer and then, after the extensive and detailed “entry into service” process, the station should be fully functional by the end of the year. This support for public transport is just part of our county wide policy to promote public transport, seen as complementing work on roads, to accommodate private cars and goods vehicles. In the capital programme we aim to see enhancements at several railway stations and in particular improved parking facilities. In addition, work has recently started on preparing the embankments of the Southern Link Road between the Ketch and Powick roundabouts, for the

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widening of the causeway to allow the dualling of the road. This has involved removing the vegetation on the south side of the bank, done at this time to avoid the bird nesting season. Final approval of the government grant of £54.5 million came through recently, giving the project the green light to proceed towards an expected completion date in 2021. There will be a new separate Carrington Bridge, as well as one halfway along the 1.2 miles of causeway, to accommodate floodwater. The whole section will become four lane, and the path on the north side will be widened to allow for more walking and cycling. During this year, three bridges will be built over the more northerly sections of the link road, one for farm traffic and the others to allow easier and safer crossing of the road by walkers and cyclists. It is worth noting that this development will give improved travel times from the west to the M5, junction 7, and for the reverse journey. Completion of the ring road to the north, while obvious on paper, would need a further sum of around £200 million, and a large number of houses to be built to the north west of the city, to generate many millions of pounds through Section 106 agreements. This is not likely to happen in the next decade, during which time we will be able to assess the benefit to the city itself of the diversion of traffic to the Southern Link Road.

Local issues - It is good to see you are meeting in the Memorial Hall again, and I hope that progress towards replacing the hall can proceed now at pace. The graffiti on Eastham Bridge was eventually removed and you would be hard pressed to see where it had been. I hope we will all be cognisant of the damage such irresponsible acts do to our communities, and that no-one will be inhibited from reporting such actions or seeking to stop them happening. In that respect, I am very keen to see littering placed in the same category of anti-social behaviour as smoking in public buildings and drink driving. It takes so little effort to keep your litter with you until it can be disposed of properly, it is amazing how careless some people can be – and it often seems to be motorists!

I think it must have been a careless motorist who damaged the bridge parapet again. Repairs are in hand, and we must hope that drivers of all vehicles will be more careful in the future. One day, New Road will be repaired. I have asked repeatedly for it to be included in the programme and I hope to hear soon that it is to be treated.

School Funding - In the last couple of weeks, there has been national attention on the question of school funding. As a former governor of Tenbury High School and Great Witley Primary, I am familiar with the pressures schools are under, and I am sure we would all agree that they should be supported in all feasible ways. This Monday I took an assembly at Bayton C of E primary school on the subject of Humanism. The 100 or so children sat in rapt attention on the floor, and were brilliant at answering questions on all sorts of subjects. Three weeks ago, I gave a RE lesson for year 6 pupils at Oldbury Park Primary School in St John's, on the same subject, and the attention and interest shown by these 11 years olds was impressive. They were all very polite and well disciplined, making it a highly rewarding experience. At the same time the Guardian published a long piece on school funding, giving instances of the sort of measures some schools have had to follow to make ends meet. They wrote: *In North Yorkshire, one secondary school is raising funds by holding extra non-uniform days – six a year, at the end of each half term – potentially earning an additional £3,000 for the school's funds.* Guardian readers clearly know that it costs each pupil a pound a day to be allowed not to wear a school uniform! I did not...*Hours are being reduced at both the start and end of the day to save money. In Birmingham many primary school pupils are being sent home at lunchtime on Fridays; pupils at one Kent grammar school are being asked to come in late one morning.* I do not understand why money is saved if pupils attend for a shorter week. Staff are all bound to be on full time contracts, heating costs would be barely altered, and the amount of variable costs in paper and pens saved would be trivial. We know that school pupil numbers are going up, but how much more does it cost to teach a class of 30 over one of 29? Then some of you may have heard a head teacher on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme saying how tough their financial position was. She was cleaning toilets and helping serve lunches because of the financial difficulties. The Times later revealed three important facts that the BBC had missed. 1. The cleaning contract had been increased from £30,000 to £57,000 in the last year. 2. The head teacher's salary had gone up by £10,000 in the same year and 3. That meant she was paid between £125,000 and £130,000 a year. However strong the case is for more school funding; I think this teacher was not a good example to use for the general public. Please note that all schools in Worcestershire have had increased cash funding in the last financial year. I don't normally make political points, but in this crucial area, I would advise clear thinking and fact based reporting. Oldbury Park and Bayton Primary Schools seemed to me to lack nothing in resources or staff and was smart, well supplied with materials, and apparently very successful. I hope they are typical of all Worcestershire schools.

Cllr Ken Pollock, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire