

# EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Eastham Parish Council Held in Eastham Memorial Hall at 7.15pm on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2014

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

**In Attendance:** Clerk, 2 members of Public.

1. **Election of Chairman:** All agreed Cllr Inge be elected and a Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.
2. **Apologies:** None.
3. **Election of Vice Chairman:** No Cllrs wished to stand for this position. Clerk advised it is not a legal requirement.
4. **Declaration of Interest:**
  - a. Register of Interests – Cllrs are reminded of the need to update their Register of Interests.
  - 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) –
6. **Public Question Time** – No matters were raised.
7. **Standing Orders** (circulated) – to be discussed at August meeting.
8. **Financial Regulations** (circulated) – to be discussed at August meeting.
9. **Code of Conduct:** Cllrs all have copies 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:** Felt all PC should be involved in this. Cllr Horsfall to oversee Bank Reconciliations on a regular basis.
11. **Risk Assessment:** Risk Assessment circulated. It was agreed for Chairman to sign.
12. **Insurance** – It was agreed to renew insurance with Came & Co present provider total £159.00.
13. **To appoint individual Volunteers to following:**
  - a. Footpaths Officer – Cllr Arnold to continue.
  - b. Tree Warden – to be done by Footpath Officer.
14. **To nominate Cllrs to the following outside bodies:**  
WCALC Area Meetings – Any Cllr to go to meetings if relevant to PC.
15. **Minutes of last Meeting:** Minutes of meeting held on 1st April 2014 were agreed and signed by Chairman.
16. **Progress reports for information:**
  - a. **Tree survey** – It was advised ivy be cut at base. Local person will undertake, Clerk to action.
  - b. **Defibrillator for Parish** – Outcome of grant still unknown. Update at next meeting.
17. **Reports on meeting attended by Clerk/Cllrs: -**  
Clerk - WCC Conference 30<sup>th</sup> April details will be circulated by CALC.

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### 18. Finances –

- a. **Payments made** – Mrs P Howell (Internal Audit see item g) = £50.00, Mrs S Burrows (CiLCA fees see item f) = £75.00, Eastham Memorial Hall (rent 13-14) = £56.00, Mrs S Burrows (Clerks expenses see item e) £462.39, WCALC (see item d) = £93.21, Adrian Hope Tree Services (tree survey item 16a) = £60.00, Broker Network Ltd (Insurance 2014-15 see item 12) = £159.00, Mr I Mapp (LM April 2014) = £187.20.
- b. **Payments received** – Current Account - WCC LM March 2014 £187.20, MHDC Precept/Grant £3450.00. Investment Account Interest - £0.34.
- c. **Bank Reconciliation** – March/April 2014 signed for Current/Investment Accounts. Balances agreed as Investment Acc = £2014.54, Current Acc = £11181.95.
- d. **Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils** – to agree to join for 2014-15 cost of £93.21.
- e. **Clerks Expenses 2013-14** (circulated) – It was agreed to pay expenses of £412.24 and Printer ink/staples costs of £50.15 total paid £462.39 (VAT would be reclaimed).
- f. **Clerks Training costs for Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)** – it was agreed to pay 50% costs of registration (£75.00) and 50% of training meetings with CALC (£200 approx).
- g. **Internal Auditors Report 2013-14** – no queries were raised.
- h. **Accounts 2013-14** - It was agreed to sign accounts for year ending 31st March 2014. Total balance of £9957.49 is being carried forward to 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- i. **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.

### 19. Planning:

- a. **Plans received:** None.
- b. **Decisions received:** None.
- c. **Plans for comment tonight** – None.
- b. **UPDATE - 12/01721/FUL** – Oaktrees Caravan, Highwood – Retention and resiting of mobile home (Retrospective). Enforcement action ongoing.

### 20. Road Report:

- a. **Lengthsman** – to meet jetting lorry 28<sup>th</sup> May, Orleton Road, Rhyse Lane, Chimney Park/Oakwood drains need clearing. Rhyse Lane – could water be directed to drain.
- b. **Problems to report** – outstanding problems still to be resolved.
- c. Robins End Corner – Clerk awaiting update from Environmental Services.
- d. Astley Orchard – Clerk awaiting update from Housing Association.

### 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.

Payments – 20th April – LM March 2014 = £187.20,

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

Agenda items – Defibrillator Machine, Clerks Review.

### 24. Date of next meetings: 26th August 2014

### 25. Meeting closed 7.50pm.

Signed-----  
Chairman

Date 26th August 2014

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## COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT 20<sup>th</sup> May 2014

### 1. Introduction

It is good to have the chance of reporting on the year just gone. The Tenbury Division covers a lot of territory and 18 different councils, so it is difficult to meet residents regularly. I

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endeavour to attend most Parish and Town Council meetings and send written reports if not, which are often published on the internet.

I hope I have been appropriately responsive to enquiries, ideally coming by email, but I am happy to deal with queries from letters or phone calls. Please let me know if the communication is not working properly.

### **2. General Economic Situation for WCC**

At the Parish Conference last month, the outgoing and incoming Chief Executives gave a summary of the situation concerning the Council. In general, the financial situation is serious but under control, although how we are to save the £25 million or so in a couple of years is not clear.

Fundamentally, Children's Services and Adult Social Care are demanding more money, making it difficult to maintain services in the other sectors. The aim is to keep those two areas below 60% of total expenditure. Broadly speaking, the Council wants to shift from being a provider to being a commissioner of services, using a variety of organisations to take over the services.

This is part of the Act Local approach where we seek to involve other operators and District and Parish Councils, expanding schemes like the lengthsman. The important aspect of that scheme is that it is administered locally but paid for by the County, indicating that solutions don't need to mean other people paying for the work.

Whatever scheme is used, it will not remove the County's responsibility for being the accountable authority and a lot of work is going on to see how this can be organised to be effective. There has been a task group studying the whole operation, and its report will go to the Cabinet on the 9<sup>th</sup> June and it can be read on the WCC website now.

### **3. Digital Council**

At present some 85% of all contacts between residents and the Council are by telephone. It is the aim of the Digital Council project to switch to digital reporting through the website, so that in future 85% of all such contacts are by that route.

A new system of reporting problems is being trialled starting last week, as a way of replacing the verbal reports to the Hub. It will make the system much easier, allowing multiple reporting at one visit, easier location of faults be they potholes or faulty street lights, and the system will keep those who report problems up to date with emails that will detail every step of investigation and remedy.

It all happens under the same "Report it" section of the website and can be tried out now. The Council would welcome any feedback on how it is working before the public announcement in June

### **4. State of the Roads**

One of the most commonly reported problems concerns the state of our roads. Recently the public satisfaction with the state of the roads has fallen and the County conducted a study last autumn to find out why. This was in the context of the objective measurement of our principal roads being of an improving standard.

The results seemed to indicate that various factors, like being held up by road works, poor information about road works and poor signage, all influence the public's attitude. Regrettably the study did not seek to find out how much the impression is influenced by the state of roads elsewhere in the country and in particular in neighbouring counties with significantly worse records on road maintenance.

The repair work on the A456 at Broombank has been completed, and the whole stretch will be surface dressed this summer. There will be additional signage to seek to slow traffic and prevent any further accidents. I have been pressed to urge a review of speed limits, as requested by Mamble Parish Council.

### **5. Responsiveness of WCC and the Utilities**

Whatever the state of the roads, the Council needs to be responsive to complaints and comments. We need to be kept up to the mark in such matters, and I would like to hear from anyone who feels that they have not been adequately treated when reporting problems. It can be that the response is excessively bureaucratic.

The same applies to the utilities. The Overview and Scrutiny panel that I chair has examined this problem recently and have made clear to a representative of Severn Trent, who also sits on a national committee of all the utilities, that performance and responsiveness has not been good.

### **6. Bus Subsidies**

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The final report of the group looking to save the cost of subsidising bus routes will be published in early June. The public consultation resulted in the planned savings being reduced from £3 million to £1.9 million. My O&S panel will examine the report on the 6<sup>th</sup> June. I do not know the result of the review but the principles underlying any decisions give cause for optimism. The three main priorities are fulfilling the statutory duty to get children to and from school, to reflect the problems of rural isolation and to help people get to work. From that you may deduce that the 291 is well placed to continue.

### **7. Broadband Penetration and Importance**

The progress of the rural broadband roll out was also discussed at the Parish Conference. The BT contract, signed last August, will be rolled out in 8 phases up until mid 2016, and the first two have been announced. It is important to note that Worcestershire is unique in insisting that businesses should be included in this roll out, as well as residences, as we recognise the importance of broadband for businesses, especially in rural areas. Abberley should soon be benefitting from the DEFRA scheme, where the £1.147 million will be channelled through BDUK. Here in Bayton, you are part of the North West Consortium and the introduction of your service beat the DEFRA one by at least a year.

The next phases will be announced as they are determined, according to the results of surveys, value for money and demand. In January 2013, just 3% of Tenbury households had expressed an interest. That number had risen to 4.5% by January this year, which is not very impressive when compared with the figures of 66.4% for Little Witley and 54.9% for Abberley. It is certainly worth seeking to increase the percentage of households registering an interest, as BT respond in part to demand!

The map can be seen on the Superfast Worcestershire pages of the WCC website. The next phases will be announced as they are determined, according to the results of surveys, value for money and demand.

More money has been allocated to increase coverage from 90% to 95% and we hope this will be forthcoming. WCC and BT will be working on a sequence of coverage in that sector and I can only suggest continued increase in demand from households and businesses that are not well covered as yet, to seek to get into the 95% sectors.

### **8. WCDF**

As of the start of the new financial year, my Divisional Fund has been replenished to £10,000 again and I am very keen to hear of suitable projects on which to spend it, apart from the highway scheme mentioned above. My principle is to give relatively small sums to as many groups as possible, ideally involving a large number of beneficiaries and for projects that can be self-sustaining in the long term.

**Cllr Ken Pollock**

**Martley,  
Worcester**