

EASTON ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held in the Village Hall on
Tuesday 14th November 2023
At 19:00

MINUTES

Present : AP (Chair), BC (Vice Chair), TD, BH, PN, BT, PP (Clerk) and 4 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence – James de Pass
2. Declaration of Interests – None
3. Approval of the Minutes of PC meeting Tuesday 29th August 2023 – **APPROVED**
4. Report from Jerry Kunkler (Wiltshire Council)
 - JK provided a flyer and informed the councillors of a Prostate Cancer Check programme being provided in the county.
 - A Highways Matters Meeting is to be held on 27th November 2023 in Bouverie Hall, Pewsey and as many people as possible are encouraged to be present. Any particular questions can be sent to the board by 20/11/23 to be added to the discussions.
 - The work of the Parish Steward continues to be an issue. There has been a little improvement and we understand he is being monitored. WCC are fully aware of the problem and is endeavouring to resolve.

Andy Cad-Wallander has replaced Matt Perrot as Head of Highways.

 - AP raised three particular issues with JK:
 - the state of the main road to Burbage. Response that this is being dealt with and is being treated as urgent.
 - was there any provision to fund the defibrillators previously distributed by Claire Perry MP at the time and which SW ambulance have informed that they will no longer fund. JK responded that there was no plan in place for this and that fundraising or Area Board grant may be the solution.
 - update on election costs. The PC received that morning an email outlining the estimated costs of an election in ER and this would amount to approx.. £390.
5. Matters arising from previous meeting
 - Signature at the bank for JdP – the necessary forms have been provided by Lloyds Bank and are in the process of being completed and signed
6. Clerks report – see Budget Proposal below.
7. Finance – Renewal of SLCC subscription **APPROVED**.
 - Subscription to the CPRE had been approved at the last meeting but when it came to paying, the amount had increased significantly. The PC has therefore reviewed their decision and the subscription is **REFUSED**.
 - It was **AGREED** that payments to IDVerde should only cover the work that has actually been carried out. The two robot cuts of Cross Lane have never been done and the number of grass cuts has been monitored and is well below the contract. Bins have only been emptied since June.
 - The payment of £500 to the Holy Trinity Church was **APPROVED** as per the 2023/24 budget.

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8. Budget Proposal 2024-25

Each item line of the budget was discussed and agreed as attached.

There are two main items that affect the overall costs: the clerks salary and the ground maintenance contract.

The clerk's contractual salary is NALC Scale 6 and a national increase has just been reached and should be applied and backdated to April 2023. It was **AGREED** with the clerk that this would only be implemented from November 2023.

Three responses were received to the Request for Proposal regarding the annual groundworks contract for 2024/25. All councillors agreed that, given the major issues with IDVerde this year and despite their quote being the lowest, the proposal made by Last Landscaping, Burbage was **APPROVED**.

Given the advised cost of elections, it was **AGREED** to put aside a reserved amount of £100 annually.

It was **AGREED** that a donation of £275 be made towards a replacement defibrillator (see below).

Last year, the Internal Auditor highlighted that the approved budget and Precept amount did not cover the total of real costs and that this unsustainable. This year therefore, the PC **AGREED** the amount of the Precept is to be raised to **£9960** (an increase of 20%) which will cover all the forecasted costs apart from the sums to be placed in ringfenced reserves. This will be reviewed next year to incorporate and include these reserve costs.

The precept increase of 20% was **APPROVED** by the councillors taking the amount to **£9960**

9. Adoption of Policies – ER Planning Applications Procedure – **APPROVED**. To be added to the website **Action PP**

10. Approval of Assets Register – bench donated by Jeremy Booth's family added – **APPROVED**. It was agreed that the bench should be situated next to the Village Hall and will be installed on a slab base.

11. Defibrillator – The council have been informed that the defibrillator on the church wall will no longer be funded by the SW Air Ambulance Trust. The cost of replacement is between £1500 and £1800. It was **AGREED** that this needs to be replaced but the PC cannot cover all of the cost. A participation of £275 was **APPROVED**. Donations will be sought from the residents and, if needed, an application for an Area Board grant will be made.

12. Training – no suitable date has been offered to date for BT and her councillor training. Ongoing.

13. ROW – Adopt a Footpath and volunteers received a very encouraging response with over 20 names coming forward to help with maintenance. A meeting is to be arranged to discuss arrangements and designating stretches of footpath to volunteers. The purchase of a mower was discussed and **APPROVED** in principle. Further enquiries will be made before acquiring one suitable for use on the paths (without side exit due to spreading undesirable seeds onto the crops). The need for storage is to be addressed. An application for an Area Board grant may be considered.

Improving the muddy sections of EROY 22 was again discussed. It was **AGREED** that neither planings nor broken bricks were suitable on this path. PP is to contact Stephen Leonard to see if they can provide any suitable stones for this path as this would be more acceptable to everyone. Enquire if WCC can help in any way. **Action PP**. The PC cannot justify costs for any work on this stretch of path and feel that walkers are aware that it is often very muddy in places (including the bottom) and an uneven track due to the natural spring and the incline.

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Replacement gateposts have been received from WCC. Their installation will hopefully be carried out by volunteers... **Action volunteers.**

14. Highways and Parish Steward

The grit boxes are full of salt and extra bags are available when needed for the public benefit. Contact the clerk if needed.

It was confirmed by WCC that no cutting of private hedges can be carried out by WCC, even if this has taken place in the past. They do not have the resources. A private arrangement may be possible with one of the farmers.

15. Village Hall car park. Due to the number of car spaces required for Village Hall and Rec users, there is a proposal that the car park area by the Village Hall be **enlarged*** to avoid parking on The Street. AP is to renew a previous enquiry as to the need for planning permission. **Action AP.** It was **AGREED** that a proposal be put to the village in the form of a discussion and consultation after research into the best size and layout of any changes to the car park as well as an idea of costs.

16. External meetings – Nothing to report.

17. ER Playground Group - Request for approval of basketball court surfacing to be carried out following an acceptable quote was **APPROVED.** The cost is covered by the funds raised and ringfenced for this purpose.

18. Items from the general public

A resident has asked that a lower step be installed on the stile at the bottom of EROY 11 (into the “cow field”). BC offered to do the necessary. **Action BC**

A request was received regarding placing a banner on the Rec fence on the main road. The PC have **AGREED** that permission must be sought from the PC for this and that the maximum period for such a banner is 1 month.

19. Planning

The PC discussed the planning PL2023/08969 and have **AGREED** that there is No Objection to this application.

20. Proposed dates of next meetings:

PC Meeting - Tuesday January 23rd 2024

Annual Community Meeting – Tuesday 16th April 2024

ANNUAL PC Meeting – Tuesday 7th May 2024

Further two dates to be agreed

The ended 9.25pm

*** Correction noted during approval of minutes PC meeting 23.01.24**

ANNEX : APPROVED BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2024-25

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PLANNING:

New Applications since last meeting:

2023/07394	Priory Cottage Tree works in conservation area	No objection ERPC No objection WCC
2023/08655	Upper Cross Tree works in conservation area	No objection ERPC No objection WCC
2023/08969	Holiday Lets, Conygre Farm Full Planning Permission	TBD at meeting Decision pending WCC

FINANCE:

Payments made:

21.09.23	IDVERDE - GROUND MAINTENANCE	184.85
14.09.23	HUGO FOX (MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION)	11.99
22.09.23	CLOUD NEXT (ANNUAL DOMAIN NAME)	9.58
22.09.23	CLOUD NEXT (ANNUAL HOSTING)	59.98
22.09.23	P.PUYO (BANNER BUZZ SIGNS REC)	28.31
27.09.23	CLERK SALARY - SEPTEMBER	257.43
02.10.23	ROSPA (PLAYGROUND INSPECTION)	119.40
04.10.23	COMMUNITY HEARTBEAT (DEFIB PADS)	140.34
07.10.23	HUGO FOX (MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION)	11.99
27.10.23	CLERK SALARY - OCTOBER	257.43
30.10.23	IDVERDE - GROUND MAINTENANCE	210.60

Payments to approve:

SLCC – subscription renewal	£80
HOLY TRINITY CHURCH grant 23/24	£500

Payments received:

Hugo Fox refund monthly subscription Sept	£11.99
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