

EASTON ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held in the Village Hall

Monday, 14th November 2022

at 19:00

MINUTES

Present: Ben COOPER, Anna PATTERSON, James de PASS, Paul NARIZZANO, Tom DOYLE, Beverley HELPS, Peta PUYO (Clerk),

2 members of the public were present.

The Clerk opened and chaired the meeting until Item 2 had been discussed.

1. Apologies for absence

Jerry Kunkler (Wiltshire Council)

2. Appointment of Chair

AP was proposed by PN and seconded by BC, TD and BH. AP accepted the position, signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and took the Chair.

AP wished to thank Margaret Holden for her years of service and said she would be sorely missed. AP expressed her hopes that all members of the council could move on from the past issues, work as a team, aiming for the same positive results.

3. Appointment of Vice Chair

BC offered his services as Vice Chair and this was seconded by TD and approved by all present. BC signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

4. To receive Member's declaration of interest

AP declared a conflict of interest regarding the planning application for 58 Easton Royal.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday, 8th September 2022.

The Minutes were approved and signed by AP

6. Report from Jerry Kunkler (Wiltshire Council)

JK sent his apologies by email.

He confirmed that the White Gates had been installed at the entrance to the village and thanked Margaret Holden for working with the group on this matter.

7. Councillor Vacancy Co-option procedure

A Notice of Vacancy in Office of Councillor has been published on the new website and affixed to the notice board. We will know on the 24th November if there will be a by-election or a filling of this casual vacancy by the co-option procedure.

The council has confirmed that the details regarding co-option will be posted as soon as we know the situation and that anyone who may be interested in this position should contact the Clerk directly.

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8. Matters arising from previous meetings:

ROW

BC continues to collect names of people willing to volunteer for working parties. Please contact the Clerk should you wish to be included.

EROY 1 - A temporary solution has been carried out by JdP regarding the gate posts. By the next meeting he hopes to have righted the posts more permanently. **Action**

JdP

AP is to contact the landowners regarding the possibility of replacing the style with a gate on their property along EROY 1. **Action AP**

EROY 2 - JdeP will attempt to provide a permanent solution the gatepost issue. **Action**

JdP

EROY 10 - Thanks were expressed to PN and BC for clearing these paths.

EROY 11 – Some concern has been given regarding “frisky” cattle in this field through which the path runs. Please contact the Clerk if you have any valid concerns.

EROY 15 - On one occasion, quad bikes have been seen using bridle path. Please report to the Clerk should this happen again.

EROY 16 (Harris Lane) - Thanks to BH who has twice cleared the leaves on Harris Lane for the benefit of everyone.

EROY 22 - Chris Needham-Bennett was thanked for his continued strimming of this path. In the past this route has been used for the Rough & Tumble Run and Terminator Run with very damaging consequences to the surface. The Council has asked the Clerk to contact Wiltshire ROW team and Steven Leonard to ensure that this is not authorised again. **Action PP**

White gates at entry to village

The gates were installed last week. The Speedwatch team will be asked to report on their effect to traffic speed along the main road.

Speed Monitoring Device

AP was able to report that the COEVAL dispute has been resolved and that COEVAL have accepted to write off the invoice as bad debt. A fresh discussion regarding a SMD will be held in the new year.

9. Finance -see below

PP sent, prior to the meeting, a bank reconciliation end October and budget expenditure to all members of the Parish Council showing the position to date.

10. Budget and Precept 2023/24 (Annex 1)

The draft budget and precept increase were **approved**, subject to a couple of lines of proposed expenditure being checked and under the understanding that the increase would not exceed 10%. Grass-cutting and clerk salary cost increases as well as further work devolved from Wiltshire Council explain this need. Precept represents a very small part of everyone’s overall Council Tax bill. This should therefore amount to a nominal amount per household.

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11. Asset Register (Clerk)

Nothing to report

12. Clerks Report

- The administrators access to Lloyds is to be modified following the departure of Margaret Holden. It was agreed that the remaining 3 signatories on the account are sufficient for future business.
- New website and email addresses are working well. It was suggested that a link from the Parish Council website be made to the Village Website. **Action PP.**
All correspondence to the PC should be addressed to the Clerk who will forward to the appropriate Councillor.
- AP asked that all councillors respond promptly to any correspondence from the Clerk when email states "Response Required".
- SSE Lease review (every seven years) is due this month. SSE will be contacted once the November index is available for the calculation. **Action PP**
- A reminder was sent to the village regarding the Use of Public Spaces following an incident where fireworks were let off from the Rec. This is illegal in public areas.

13. **Policies:** A draft Volunteers Policy and Procedures was presented to the council by the Clerk. Further amendments are required before adoption. **Action PP**

14. IDVERDE Grass Cutting Contract

PN has contacted the new contract manager for IDVerde (Kevin Bowler) to obtain a quote for the forthcoming year. He has asked for the emptying of the dog poo bin outside of Home Farm and two cuttings of part of Cross Lane to be included in this year's quote. Feedback has been very positive concerning their services over the past year.

15. Lead reports and changes of responsibilities

The roles have been re-distributed following Margaret Holden's departure as follows:

Church - AP

Defibrillator – AP and TD (who is to be added to the online Webnos Governance System for the weekly reporting)

Employees – AP and BC

External Meetings: PCAP – BH, LHFIG – TD, Area Board – AP

Highways & Parish Steward – TD

Open Spaces & Playground – PN

ROW – BC, BH, JdP

School – BC

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Reports

Employees – As the employer of the Clerk, the PC has been advised by NALC of the national agreement on the 2022/2023 rates of pay applicable from April 2022. The ER Clerk contract is governed by the NALC scales and has to be revised accordingly. Peta has agreed to only apply this increase from her November salary. This was **Approved** by the Council.

Highways & Parish Steward – ongoing issues regarding water accumulation on Ram Alley and down the Main Street. The Parish Steward is contacted regarding these problems but claims the waiting list is long for repairs. TD to remain in contact for follow ups. **Action TD**

Playground – The Easton Royal Playground Fundraising Group applied for two further grants in the hope of obtaining the shortfall for the basketball hard court but were sadly unsuccessful. They are looking for ways to raise the further £1.5k to £2k so as to complete this project satisfactorily. The group will look at another fundraising event in the spring and are open to any other suggestions!

In the meantime, the area where the old swings were has been levelled off and seeded.

The ROSPA inspection was carried out and highlighted the need to repair some of the wood on the old part of the playground. Until this has been carried out, this item of the playground has been cordoned off.

16. Items from the General Public

Request from ER Academy to have a sponsored banner on the fencing at the top of the village.

The councillors would like to show their support to the village school, however they all had reservations regarding a permanent banner on the fencing to the main road, especially as we are within an AOOB. The council understands that the financing received from such sponsorship is appealing but cannot support this request. BC to speak with the person who requested this from the school to see if there are any other options. It was accepted, due to the Highway Regulations of Wiltshire Council (S178), it is unlikely there could be anything permanent placed close to the highway. **Action BC**

The council agreed, however, that temporary banners would be acceptable for local events. A letter should be addressed to the Council asking for authorisation and specifying how long the banner would be in place. The owners of the Burbage banner will be informed of this for next year. **Action PP**

17. Planning Applications- see below

Two letters were received regarding the planning application PL/2022/08094 exposing the ongoing boundary issue between the Parish Council (Recreation Ground) and the

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owners of this property. As the planning application is not related to this, the Parish Council agreed that they had no objection to this particular application but accepted that the unresolved dispute regarding the boundary be minuted.

18. Dates of next meetings

Tuesday, 24th January 2023

The dates for the following meetings will be published on the Parish Council website and noted at the January meeting.

Meeting ended 21h20

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PLANNING: Planning Applications since the last meeting:

2022/08094	The Old Forge Householder Planning Permission	No objection ERPC Decision pending WCC
2022/08174	Chandlers Proposed works on trees	No objection ERPC Decision pending WCC
2022/07855	Ash Tree Cottage Proposed works on trees	No objection ERPC Approved WCC
2022/06489	58 Easton Royal Householder Planning Permission	No objection ERPC Decision pending WCC
2022/06888	Easton Grange Proposed works on trees	No objection ERPC No objection WCC

FINANCE:

Payments made:

IDVERDE (GRASS CUTTING JUN - SEPT)	£360.64
PCAP DONATION	£100.00
CLERK SALARY SEPTEMBER	£235.77
JAN HOWARD PLANTS (BETTERMENT)	£103.81
CLOUD NEXT LTD (HOSTING 1YR)	£59.98
P PUYO (CLOUD NEXT DOMAIN NAME 1YR)	£8.38
CLERK SALARY OCT	£235.77
ROSPA ANNUAL INSPECTION	£113.40
SLCC SUBSCRIPTION	£80.00

Payments to Approve

None	
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Payments Received:

None	
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PLAYGROUND

Amount remaining and ringfenced for the Playground (basketball court) **£5754.81**

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ANNEX 1

EASTON ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL PROPOSED BUDGET 2023 - 2024						
TAX YEAR 22/23	Budgeted	Actual	Difference	Budget 2023/2024		
ADMIN & AUDIT	350.00	345.42	4.58	350.00		BANK RECONCILIATION
BETTERMENT	320.00	103.81	216.19	320.00		BALANCE 31/03/2022
BURIAL GROUND GRANT	1000.00	0.00	1000.00	500.00		
CLERK BROADBAND	120.00	0.00	120.00	0.00		PAYMENTS 22/23
CLERK SALARY	2800.00	1650.39	1149.61	3200.00		10556.40
DEFIBRILLATOR	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00		RECEIPTS 22/23
GENERAL REPAIRS	300.00	126.24	173.76	425.00		9217.30
GRASSCUTTING & DOG POO BINS	1900.00	601.08	1298.92	2200.00		BALANCE ACTUAL
INSURANCE	350.48	350.47	0.01	351.00		19825.65
OTHER	70.00	325.19	-255.19	70.00		OUTSTANDINGS
PLAYGROUND INSPECTN	100.00	94.50	5.50	120.00		201.78
S137 DONATIONS	125.00	100.00	25.00	125.00		BALANCE 31/10/22
Total budgeted	7485.48			7711.00		20027.43
TOTAL PRECEPT	7600.00	3697.10	3788.38			
White Gates	from reserves	25% of real costs.		600		
Playground ground levelling	from reserves			480		
Tree work - ongoing	Annual to allocated reserves			300		
Playground replacement fund	Annual to allocated reserves			500		RESERVES
Election costs	Elections possible in 2024			250		ALLOCATED RESERVES
				8761		31/10/2022
						CIL
						0.00
						ER PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE FUNDS
						5754.78
						PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT FUND
						1000.00
						ELECTION COST FUND
						500.00
						SPEED DEVICE INSTALLATION
						1382.91
						8637.69
						CASH ACCOUNT BALANCE
						20027.43
						UNENCUMBERED RESERVES
						11389.74
						Playground fund now stands at £5754.78
Largest items on budget are the Clerk's salary and Grasscutting						
Clerk pay increase should be backdated to April 2022. NALC pay agreement approx +9.5% Clerk receives a £10/month WFH allowance instead of the broadband cover.						
Increase inevitable for IDVerde contract. Cost of personnel and fuel. Question to be asked is whether we wish for the village to be kept that well maintained...						
None of the other budget lines are being changed significantly (Church Grant is being adjusted to what was agreed this year)						
It was agreed that the Council should have an amount allocated each year to Election costs, Playground Replacement Fund and ongoing Tree Works. Elections are due in 2024						
Other reserves have to cover : Training, unexpected costs, replacement costs of items on the Asset Register,... The Allocated Reserves (on the right) will naturally increase every year until the funds are required for that particular purpose. The hope is that the ringfenced amount will cover that item when the time comes...						
Conclusion : The total of these items (blue column) comes to £8761. If precept remains at £7600 the implication is that the difference would be taken from the unencumbered reserves. This is obviously unsustainable in the long term. The suggestion would be an increase of the precept to between £8200 and £8500 to mitigate this situation.						