

EASTON ROYAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held in the Village Hall on
Tuesday 29th August 2023
At 19:00

MINUTES

PRESENT : Anna PATTERSON (Chair), Ben COOPER (Vice Chair), Beverley HELPS, Paul NARIZZANO, Jerry KUNKLER, Peta PUYO (Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence**

TD, JdP, BT AP (Chair) reminded all councillors of their duty to attend PC meetings.

2. **Declaration of Interests**

BH and JK regarding Item 17 – Land development
BC Item 17 – Old Stores

3. **Approval of the Minutes** of the Annual PC meeting Tuesday 2nd May 2023 and Extraordinary Meeting Monday 22nd May 2023

APPROVED

4. **Report from Jerry Kunkler (Wiltshire Council)**

Jerry informed us that the Chief Constable would no longer be present at the next Area Board Meeting.

The Wiltshire Connect bus service now covers Marlborough and the Great Bedwyn area and will be extending as far as Hungerford later in the autumn. The initial service in the Pewsey Vale (Pewsey to Devizes area) has been very successful. Further information is available on the PC website.

Highways: A meeting will be held in November to which TD will be invited. Matt Perrott has been promoted and left WCC Highways. Interviews are taking place to replace him. JK is aware of the issues with regards to the Parish Steward and the lack of work being carried out in the village.

JK will speak with Malcolm Bevan (Highways Officer) in regards to cutting back the vegetation on the northern side of the B3087 to improve visibility for the four properties exiting onto that road.

TD has already reported this on the MyWilts App.

JK, who is on our Area Planning Committee, could not speak about the Land development application in ER, however AP wished to make it clear that the PC and residents found it difficult to understand how the application deadline could be extended so many times without them being informed directly. The extension applies to anyone who wishes to comment (although this is not clear on the website) however, as all responses were sent by the initial deadline for those opposing the application, it seemed unfair that these were on the table for the applicant to respond to during the extensions.

5. **Matters arising from previous meeting**

Basketball court. JK encourages the ERPFG to apply for a further grant to complete this project.

Adding JdP as a signatory on the PC bank account is still ongoing

ROW – see below

PP has made an initial contact with a SID provider and is awaiting a response

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6. Clerks report

- Hugo Fox have recently informed their clients that free provision of hosting a website for Parish Councils will soon end. The cost of hosting will be £9.99 + VAT/ month. Cookie choices have now been updated. The PC are obliged to have a website. This new expense has been **APPROVED**.
- Due to ID Verde's lack of ground maintenance since the beginning of the contract, PP wrote to them, informing them that the PC would only pay for the works effectively carried out and that the PC has cancelled the contract for the Robot Mower for Cross Lane as ID Verde have not carried out this work despite emails requesting that it be done. Consequently, the invoice presented in July was not paid. To date no response from ID Verde. The payment for August will be £154.04 + VAT representing the work undertaken. **APPROVED**
- A suggested "Request for Proposal" for the ground works maintenance contract was presented to the councillors. PP wishes for this to be sent out and responses received before the November PC and budget meeting. Ideally three contractors should be approached. **APPROVED**
- It was suggested that the PC re-join to the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) following their helpful advice with regards to planning. The annual cost is £36. **APPROVED**
- PP would like to remind all councillors that a response to her emails is necessary when requested and that all responses be "copy to all" so that everyone is up to date with all discussions.

7. Adoption of Policies

None

8. Approval of Assets Register

APPROVED

9. Defibrillator

The pads that are to be replaced in Oct 23 and have been ordered by AP. The Circuit has been updated by PP.

10. Training

The only date offered for Councillor training is not suitable for BT. Another date should be offered soon.

TD has enquired about a First Aid Response and Defibrillator course to be held in the Village Hall. More information will be obtained and a discussion will be had as to how this can be arranged, financed and presented to everyone.

11. ROW

AP read a report outlining the present position of the PC.

Firstly AP wished to thank all the volunteers who have helped keep so many of the paths in such good condition. Both Cross Lane and EROY 9 south of Cross Lane have not been cleared. Several situations have impacted their maintenance this year ;

- The contract with ID Verde to cut Cross Lane was not fulfilled
- Having contacted the landowner a response was received that only strimmers or push mowers should access the footpaths on his land (no quads or ride-on mowers)
- Some residents had voiced that they were not happy with the use of agrochemicals on footpaths.

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- We have a group of volunteers who help with ad hoc jobs but not footpaths.
- There are not enough volunteers to maintain so many footpaths.

PP had contacted Stephen Leonard (WCC) asking to give guidance on our position with regards to these restrictions. Advice was given but no strict legislation or clear-cut rules were received. It was suggested that we target the most used paths as this forms the basis of how they (WCC) manage this issue.

The PC is therefore faced with the following challenges and decisions:

- Do we ask the landowners to avoid using agrochemicals? **RESOLVED** Due to complaints, BC said he was no longer willing to volunteer to maintain these paths in this way.
- Do we try and maintain all of the footpaths despite there being so many and some are used very little by few people? **RESOLVED** that a decision will be made regarding their maintenance according to the number of volunteers who step forward.
- How do we set about finding volunteers? **ACTION PP** to try an “Adopt a Footpath” scheme where volunteers take on a specific length (or all) of a path and commit to maintaining it for a year.
- Should the PC invest in equipment? It was **RESOLVED** that the PC should invest in two petrol trimmers with safety equipment. **ACTION PP/BC**

Some gate posts require replacing. WCC are able to provide them as well as the postcrete (for which there is a charge). **APPROVED. ACTION PP/BH**

The PC have been informed of a motoring event (Exercise Magnum Spirit 2023) that will take place on the 2nd December and that the route may use vehicular public ROW passing through or bordering ER.

The PC would remind residents to contact the Clerk in writing with any concerns regarding ROW.

12. Highways and Parish Steward

4 bags of salt will be ordered from WCC for the village. **ACTION PP**

13. Village Hall bookings

- The VH committee have asked for a permanent agreement with regards to the use of the area between the hedge and the village hall for private rentals. The PC **AGREE** to this understanding but insist that anyone renting the hall cannot “privatise” the playground or Rec equipment and that all rubbish must be collected and taken away from the site. The restrictions with regards to the car park and Rec remain in place and any other use of the Rec needs prior agreement from the PC.

14. External meetings

Nothing to report

15. Coronation

The PC wish to thank all of the organisers of the Coronation event which so many residents attended and enjoyed. The PC acquired a CIII flag and a donated tree (thanks to the de Pass family) was planted and a plaque purchased (thanks to the donation from the monthly Coffee Morning group).

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Any leftover funds allocated to this event will be repurposed by the PC. **APPROVED**

16. Items from the general public

Parking at the Village Hall has been highlighted as an issue. Some visitors to the Rec or Village Hall do not understand that the car park is for their use and therefore park outside in the road. It was **RESOLVED** that the PC would replace the gate sign to encourage use of the car park by these visitors. A second sign will be ordered advising that the PC accept no responsibility whatsoever for loss, damage or injury to persons or property whilst using this car park. **APPROVED**
The lack of parking space remains an issue. The PC will look to address this problem again at the next meeting.

17. Planning - see overleaf for latest applications

Residents are reminded that a planning application is required for all works on trees as we are in a conservation area.

Land at Easton Royal – development. The decision deadline for this application has again been extended to 27.09.2023. As above, AP raised the issue with JK that no one is informed directly of these extensions which we feel is unfair. As soon as the PC has been made aware of any change AP has contacted the Planning Officer for an explanation and these are then conveyed to group of neighbours immediately impacted by this project.

A resident has raised their concerns with the process of planning applications and how the PC deals with them. AP outlined how the process has always taken place (also on the PC website) and that the council always responds to WCC with the clerk collating the responses from the councillors in one response from ERPC. AP confirmed that a councillor should not restrain from giving their objective and impartial comments to the Clerk even if they know any party involved in a social context.

To clarify the procedure and to avoid any misunderstandings, the way planning applications are processed by the PC will be written out and posted on the website. It was also **RESOLVED** that, instead of a councillor informing a resident of a recent planning application that may affect them, a notice will be put through the letterbox of adjoining properties bringing the application to their attention. This will inform them on how they can comment and the contact details of the Clerk should they wish to raise any concerns with the PC. **APPROVED**

18. Finance – Approval of payments – see overleaf

All councillors were sent a copy of the latest bank reconciliation and budget situation.

19. Proposed dates of next meeting:

Tuesday 14th November 2023, 7pm

Meeting ended 20h55

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PLANNING:

New Applications since last meeting:

2023/03421	Land at Easton Royal Erection of 3no. detached dwellings, car parking and associated works (Outline application relating to access)	Objection ERPC Decision Pending WCC
2023/03753	The Old Stores Householder planning permission	No objection ERPC Approve with conditions WCC
2023/04800	Cobbetts Tree works in conservation area	No objection ERPC No objection WCC
2023/06150	The Old Stores Tree works in conservation area	Comment ERPC No objection WCC

FINANCE:

Payments made:

03.06.23	TRICIA DUNCAN - CORONATION	30.43
27.05.23	WALC SUBSCRIPTION	109.16
27.05.23	PETA PUYO - CORONATION	15.00
03.06.23	RACHEL EDWARDS - CORONATION	36.63
03.06.23	FIONA DE PASS - CORONATION	126.22
03.06.23	COMMUNITY FIRST - INSURANCE	350.47
27.05.23	CLERK SALARY - MAY	257.43
30.05.23	IDVERDE - GROUND MAINTENANCE	231.00
27.06.23	CLERK SALARY - JUNE	257.43
20.07.23	IDVERDE - GROUND MAINTENANCE	231.00
24.07.23	FIONA DE PASS - CORONATION	17.99
27.07.23	CLERK SALARY - JULY	257.43
19.08.23	IDVERDE - GROUND MAINTENANCE	Unpaid £231 in August 0.00
27.08.23	CLERK SALARY - AUGUST	247.43

Payments to approve:

NONE	
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Payments received:

NONE	
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