

LITTLE EASTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27th January 2016 at 7.30pm in the Garden Room at Easton Farm, Duck Street

Present: Chris Audritt (Chairman), Doug Wyatt (Vice-Chairman), Jess Rush, Chris Hindley, John Freeman (UDC), Jackie Deane (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sue Gilbert and Simon Walsh (ECC). There were no declarations of interest on agenda items.
2. Minutes of the last meeting were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. Public Forum – None
4. Councillor vacancy – Andy Dodsley was co-opted onto the council following the resignation of Eileen McKendry-Gray. He was proposed by Chris Audritt, seconded by Chris Hindley and duly made his declaration of acceptance of office.
5. Recreation ground – A quotation of £820 to install a concrete base for the basketball hoop was accepted. Soil excavated from the works will be moved to repair the goal mouth area. A lime tree adjacent to the enclosed play area is considered to be a safety hazard as the sap makes the safety surface slippery. S Gilbert provided a written background report and recommended the removal of the tree and a replacement tree planted elsewhere. The tree has previously been reduced but has regrown. It was decided that, subject to an acceptable quotation, should be removed. It was agreed that a new gate should be fitted, at a cost of £64 plus Mr Holden's labour, was also approved. Safety surface tiles are in need of repair and quotations will be sought for the next meeting.
6. Neighbourhood Plan – a discussion took place on the merits of forming a working group concluded that UDC's assessment of sites put forward for the local plan would better inform the council. The item was deferred until the July meeting.
7. Charities – a donation previously made to the Alexia Wilson Trust was not needed and it was decided to donate the £25 to Little Easton Good Companions. The Memorial Hall Trustees requested a donation towards electrical works in the hall and a sum of £200 was agreed. John Freeman asked to be put in touch with the trustees with a view to making a donation from the New Homes Bonus fund.
8. Community events – Queen's 90th birthday celebrations - It was agreed that the Clerk would register the beacon to be lit on 21st April discussion on a June celebration was deferred until the next meeting. As there is a quiz night in March, in aid of the Gardens of Easton Lodge, it was agreed to do a fundraising event in the autumn, with details deferred until later in the year.
9. Transparency Code – the Clerk attended a briefing and prepared an expenses claim. All agreed to submit the claim for £1,700, which includes additional time the Clerk has taken to provide all the information required, website costs and a sum for a suitable computer and software.
10. Precept request: a Precept of £15,256 was agreed. This represents a decrease of 3.7% and a cost to band D households of £76.70.
11. Representatives' reports: S Gilbert circulated her report ahead of the meeting. A large hole in front of goal mouth has worsened. Remedial action is dependent on having the soil taken from the site of the basketball net as infill, when it is paved. New safety matting for the goal mouth area is being stored in the cricket pavilion. The slippery safety mat under playhouse in children's playground had been reported to Mr Holden. Regular inspections have been carried out in the play area. Damage to the gate post had occurred in between inspections and an accident had been reported to the Clerk by a resident. A temporary repair was carried out on the gate and frame.
Gardens of Easton Lodge - the first open day for snowdrops is Sunday, 21st February.
A quiz night will be held in the Memorial Hall on Friday, 11th March at 7.30 pm to raise funds for the restoration of the 1902 Harold Peto treehouse.

12. Clerk's report and correspondence – The county councillor's report was circulated. Community Speedwatch meeting will be held on Thursday 25th February at 17.00 (5pm). An update was requested for the outstanding planning appeal decision on Easton Park and the Department for Communities and Local Government has responded to say that they will contact the Clerk prior to sending out the decision notice and no timetable has been set for the decision.
- Speed limit reduction requests have been re-submitted to Highways, along with a footpath request for the Alms Houses.
- The 313 bus service has been saved for the next 4 years. The next transport representative meeting will be held in Foakes Hall on Tuesday, 23rd February, 10.00 to 12.30.
- The Clerk met with two representatives from Southon Engineering, where measurements were taken for curved railings along the rear boundary of the war memorial garden. A change to Stansted Airport flight-paths takes effect on 4th February, when the Dover Route, which overflies part of the parish, will cease to be used during daytime as it was restricting use of Heathrow routes.
- Legal advice is being sought from NALC regarding the rent agreement for the gate behind the village hall, to access the Glebe Land.
- The local plan Call for Sites was explained and councillors were asked to view the potential development sites for the parish and neighbouring parishes in preparation for comment on them later in the year.
13. Planning - Applications for consideration – UTT/15/3698/HHF: Retrospective application for the erection of a 2.4m high and 13.6m long brick wall at White Rose Cottage Duck Street – no comment was made by the parish council – approved
- Decisions made – UTT/15/HHF – The Willows, Manor Road, demolition of garage and erection of porch and single storey extension - approved with conditions
- Appeal decision - Tower House, Easton Lodge APP/C1570/D/15/3133929 Proposed demolition of garage and replacement with new building comprising garage and leisure facilities, revised design from approved plan - Appeal allowed
14. Finance – monthly report and payments:
- Balance on 1st January - £17,813.17
- Payments made prior to meeting: Gt Easton Playground Fund £35 (Xmas party), Foakes Hall £33.37 (replaced void cheque for hall hire), UDC £103.37 (election fee), CPRE £36 (subscription), E-On £59-82 (street lighting), A&J Lighting £46.20 (street light maintenance)
- Payments agreed at the meeting: EALC £20 (Transparency fund application), R Board £25 (rent for beacon), Stop Stansted Expansion £10 (renewal), J Deane £584.70, Little Easton Good Companions £25, Memorial Hall £200
- Payment is due to Mr Board for rent of the beacon site and to the village hall for annual hire costs. Invoices will be sent to Mr Board and the Cricket Club on existing agreements.
- C Hindley has met twice with the Clerk/RFO to review the current procedure and to assist with
- C Hindley proposed that the current level of telephone expenses should no longer be claimed monthly as an expenses payment but should, effective 1st January 2016, be added to the Clerk's salary as an allowance.
- The Clerk's salary incremental increase to SCP 27 was agreed, with effect 1st January. This will include an allowance of £2.50 per week in lieu of telephone expenses.
15. Items for the next agenda – Review of community assets, gate behind the village hall, Cricket Club – permission for line to be fixed between the trees for a removable mesh curtain, Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations (including beacon)
16. Date of next meetings – 9th March 2016 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall, Annual Parish Assembly on Wednesday 20th April, 7.30 in the Memorial Hall.
- Meeting closed at 9.40pm