

LITTLE EASTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26th November 2014 at 8.00pm in the Memorial Hall

Present: Sue Gilbert (Chairman), Eileen-McKendry Gray (Vice Chairman), Chris Audritt, Doug Wyatt, Lawrence Smith (UDC), Jackie Deane (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

1. **Apologies and declarations of interests** – Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs John Willson and Simon Walsh (ECC). Eileen McKendry-Gray declared a pecuniary interest on the planning item as she a close neighbour to the Tower House property.
2. **Minutes** of the last meeting were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Public Forum** - No new items were raised.
4. **Planning Appeal APP/C1570/A/14/2213025** by LS Easton Park Investments Ltd – C Audritt reported on closing statements and the outcome will be known on or before 15th June 2015. The Chairman expressed her thanks to all members of the public, members of the Council and the Clerk for all work contributed to the Public Inquiry.
5. **Co-option of a new councillor** - Following the resignation of Rob Boulton the vacancy has been advertised and no applications have been received. Local council elections will take place next May.
6. **Memorial Hall booking fee for council meetings** – A letter was received from the Memorial Hall Committee on 25th November. An agenda item was added so potential increased costs can be taken into account in the budget item. Councillors would like the opportunity to discuss the matter further with the Hall Committee. The Clerk was asked to write to the Hall Secretary ahead of their next meeting on 12th January, so that they are aware the 2 councillor representatives will attend to discuss it with them.
7. **Clerk's annual salary review** – (partially held in private session) – It was agreed that the Clerk's salary would increase by one increment on the LGA salary scale to SCP 26. There was a pro-rata one-off payment included with the NJC award, which was also approved.
8. **Review of standing orders and committees** – There was a brief discussion over the merits of introducing committees for certain functions and specifically for staffing. It was agreed that all councillors would comment on the draft updated standing orders in the week commencing 15th December, paying particular attention to that section, with answers back by 22nd December, so that they can be prepared for adoption at the January meeting.
9. **Budget review and precept request** – Updated budget allocations were discussed and new sums will be allowed for extra work to the war memorial and a sign near the newly planted Jubilee Wood, alongside the hall car park. It was agreed that the Precept should be raised by £1,000 to allow for increased day-to-day running costs and this will be drafted for the January meeting. Arrangements for risk assessment and internal finance review will be made early in the New Year.

10. **Children's Xmas Party** – 2-4pm on Sunday, 7th December. Advanced enquiries were fewer this year so councillors would publicise directly with local families.
11. **Quiz night** – A new provisional date and other details were discussed, with S Gilbert, C Audritt and E Mckendry-Gray making arrangements for the fundraising event, with proceeds to go towards costs of the planning appeal.
12. **Sign on the recreation ground** – No suggestions were received from members of the public so it was agreed that the sign would go where the indicative post has been sited.
13. **Request for speed limit reduction** – Doug Wyatt has had some feedback from the County Council about possible speed checks and he will be sending some more information about other areas in the district which might be in a similar location but has a lower speed limit.
14. **War Memorial garden refurbishment** – Doug Wyatt reported that the railings and wall were both in a worse condition than had been anticipated. The Clerk's notes on finance showed that general reserves were still available, to a limit of £1,500, to top up the cost of extra work. S Gilbert offered to supply a ideas and prices to allow a budget for enclosing the rear of the garden.
15. **Representatives reports** – website and any other reports (in addition to agenda items) if possible to be circulated prior to the meeting. E McKendry-Gray has inspected footpaths, and the Clerk has sent a maintenance request to Highways Rangers. C Audritt will be attending the next Alexia Wilson Trust meeting.
16. **Clerk's report and correspondence** – Grants and other correspondence was circulated prior to the meeting, including further correspondence about Manor Road.
17. **Planning** – Applications - **UTT/14/3100/HHF**- Water Tower, Easton Lodge - application for comment prior to the meeting – no comment. C Audritt advised that this application has now been withdrawn. An application has been made by the gravel pit company and councillors expressed concerns about a significant increase in traffic, with heavy vehicles at the junction and the local road network. There were also concerns about additional noise and if this would cause a disturbance at the weekends.
Decisions - **UTT/14/2285/OP** - New access details for 600-700 homes and associated development Land west of Great Dunmow - refused.
 Park Road Cottage – approved with conditions
18. **Finance** – Opening balance £ 21,699.54 which includes £500 donated towards the planning appeal fund. An additional £1,000 has been received from Great Dunmow Town Council, as their contribution towards the cost of employing an ecology consultant.
 Payments – MD Landscapes £78, A&J Lighting £23.10, E-On £22.55, SNH Garden Services £303.50, Poppy Appeal £15, CPRE £36, J Deane £1,269.84, Post Office (t.b.c. for tax), A Storah £3475.
 Balance after payments (excluding HMRC payment) £16,446.55
 Finance note – The Clerk has deferred the opening of a new bank account until after May 2015 because the balance will reduce significantly, negating the need for an additional account and mindful that signatories will need be reviewed after the election. An agreed overtime budget will be carried over to the next financial year.

19. **Items for the next agenda** – adoption of updated standing orders, meeting dates to the end of 2015
20. Next meeting – Wednesday, 28th January 2015