

The Minutes of a Meeting of the Edington Parish Council held at The Parish Hall, Edington on Monday 11th January 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Mesdames Watts, O'Donoghue, Greening and Dorgan and Messrs Pollard, King, Swabey, Johns and Hinton

Apologies were received from Mrs Pike who had that evening had a fall at home and would be needing hospital treatment. The PC wished her a full recovery

Also in attendance was Mr Wickham (WC)

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th December 2015 were adopted as read and signed subject to the noted amendment.

2. There were no Matters Arising.

3. Planning.

(a) The following applications had been received and there were no objections to either of them:-

(i) 15/12234/FUL Demolition of an integral garage and construction of a two storey side extension and single storey extensions at 2 The Weir for Mr & Mrs P Whiffin

(ii) 15/12691/TCA Crown lift Lime tree by 2 meters at Ashlington House 1 Inmead for Mrs S Pinson

(b) The following decisions had been received:-

(i) 15/10778/FUL Conversion of garage to 1 bedroom annex/garage at 12 Inmead for Mr Philip Davies – approved

(ii) 15/09399/TCA Ash tree – reduce by approximately 40% and reshape crown at The Plough Lower Road for Wessex Tree Care – no objection

(iii) 15/09400/TCA Fell Beech tree and fell Cedar tree at The Old Vicarage Westbury Road for Mr J N D'Arcy – no objection

(c) Neighbourhood Plans and Housing Needs Survey (HNS). There was still no response and Mr Wickham said he would make further enquiries.

4. Policing.

(a) There was no report. Mr Hinton confirmed that a Speedwatch session had taken place and was ongoing.

(b) The Police and Crime Commissioner was carrying out a public consultation with a view to an increase in the Police element of Council Tax of about 6p per week for a Band D property

5. Playfield (PF).

(a) Mrs Dorgan would make contact with a mole catcher as soon as possible.

(b) The Christmas tree had been removed

(c) The invoice for the work to the entrance to the PC from the Three Daggers was expected for the next meeting, but the work of dogproofing the gates was still needed.

(d) Mrs Dorgan asked that the PC consider a further piece of equipment. It was agreed that she would see what was available. The PC would seek to offset the cost with Grants.

6. Finances.

(a) The PC needed to consider the Precept requirement for 2016/2017. This would be the PC levy under the Council Tax. The Chairman and Clerk had met to prepare a Budget and Statement of Finances which had been copied to all Councillors. It was noted that the balance in hand taking into account expenses (including grants and donations referred to below) to be paid by 31st March 2014 would be in the region of £9700.

(b) Once again, because of the extremely low Bank interest rates, interest on the Deposit Account would only be in the region of £7.50

(c) The PC considered Grants and Donations for the current year. It was reminded of its long standing policy of making grants and donations out of interest received. In view of the small amount received the PC needed to consider whether it was right to maintain its usual list of recipients and if so the amounts to be donated. After discussion it was agreed to continue to make grants especially where they would be of potential relevance to parishioners and their needs and it was therefore agreed that the following be made:-

- (i) £40 to the Independent Living Centre
- (ii) £50 to Dorothy House
- (iii) £40 to Bobby Van
- (iv) £40 to Splash
- (v) £40 to Youth Action
- (vi) £45 to CAB

The PC agreed as Establishment expenses grants be made of:-

- (i) £100 to Parish News
- (ii) £50 to Four Villages Link
- (iii) £30 to Three Villages Minibus

(d) The Statement of Finances and Budget as proposed was then considered.

(i) The PC was unanimous in its view that it was essential that healthy reserves be maintained in order to provide the facilities that were from time to time identified for the village without having to borrow the money or raise the precept to a level that some may consider unacceptable. Resources needed to remain available to cover not only longstanding needs such as verge protection and a footpath between Monastery Road and the Three Daggars but also such matters as the possible acquisition and development of the additional land extending the PF and the potential cost of a Neighbourhood Plan (though Grants may be available to cover the bulk of the cost). It was noted that the PC had been fortunate in the past for many projects to be covered by grants and donations received but these could never be guaranteed. Nevertheless ordinary expenses were increasing (such as the Clerk's hourly rate on which his salary was based which was due to increase by just under 1%; and the hours spent were increasing as a result of a vast number of emails received) and so it was suggested that the Precept be increased to £8100. Taking into account the WC grant referred to in point (iii) below the Council Tax for a Band D property would be £24.68 compared with £21.90 for 2015/2016).

(ii) The Clerk's Salary would continue to be in accordance with NALC guidelines.

(iii) The Government would again be making a grant to WC to assist in the effect its changes to Council Tax Benefit by the Benefit no longer being paid out of central funds; and part of this grant would be paid to local councils. This would be less than previous years and would eventually reduce to nothing. For Edington the grant would be £34.35 and effectively be held on account of the Precept the PC would make.

(iv) The Clerk then explained the proposed Budget and after discussion it was agreed that the Precept for the year 2014/2015 would increase to £8100. Taking into account the £34.35 referred to above the amount to be included in the Precept requirement would be £8065.65.

(e) The following invoices had been received:-

- (i) Parish Hall for Room Hire 2015 £150
- (ii) Miles & Francis for PF maintenance, repairing fence, supplying and placing bark to path, strimming triangles and cutting grass £410

(f) The PC noted that there was still a risk that the Government would impose capping of Precept increases unless in a referendum the Parish approved the Precept.

After further discussion it was proposed by Miss O'Donoghue seconded by Mrs Dorgan and carried unanimously that the Precept be made in the sum of £8100 and that the Grants and Donations listed above and the invoices referred to in paragraph (e) above be paid.

7. Emergency Planning. There was to be a meeting at WC on the 21st January and the Chairman and Miss O'Donoghue hoped to be able to attend.

8. Highway Matters/Footpaths/CATG.

(a) Hand over of WC Speed Indicating Devices. Mr Wickham had been able to supply further detail of the finances relating to a group of PC's taking over one SID and sharing its use. 5 Parishes had shown an interest and the cost was estimated at £103 each plus £220 for one volunteer to undergo a training course. Ongoing costs were minimal but new batteries would be needed every 3 years at a cost of £100, £20 per Parish. The PC was minded to proceed if the other Parishes were and so it was agreed that a final decision be made at the next meeting assuming Mr Wickham was able to get the agreement of those other Parishes.

(b) The PC again discussed the essential repairs to the B3098 through the village. No firm date had yet been given. The PC was concerned that its Car Park was not to be used by the contractors.

(c) Salisbury Hollow was to be temporarily closed between 2 March and 4 April to carry out carriageway reconstruction

(d) Some further Highways matters were raised which Mrs Greening would take up with WC, namely a fallen dead elm near 22 Westbury Road, excessive water in Baynton Way and a new spring near the Village Pond.

9. Wiltshire Council (WC) Report

(a) There had been no AB meeting, the next one was fixed for the 4th February.

(b) Fracking proposals were likely to be of public interest.

(c) There was to be a Public Transport Strategy Review running from 7 January to 4 April in order to identify potential savings

(d) Superfast Broadband. Although the Village now had it, it seemed that not all areas of the village were benefitting

10. Correspondence.

(a) SPTA News Sheet – January 2016

(b) WALC Newsletter – December 2015

(c) Clerks & Councils Direct – January 2016

11. News Items. Consideration was given to items to be included in The News.

12. Date of next Meeting. This was fixed for Monday 8th February 2016 at the Parish Hall at 7.30pm.