

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for the Parish of Edington held at the Parish Hall Edington on Monday 22nd April 2013

Present: Messrs Jones, Fraser, Perkins, Mitchell, and Hinton and Mesdames Bromhead, O'Donoghue, Pepler, Dorgan and Pike, PC Darren Foulger. PCSO Luke Breedt and Sgt Gilbey and 22 members of the public, Mrs Lise Griffiths of The Wiltshire Good Neighbours Scheme and 2 of the candidates for the forthcoming WC election Linda Conley and Maurice Flanagan

Apologies were received from Mr Hunt, Mrs Swabey (WC) Mesdames Perkins, Mulligan-Scaife and Pinson and Mr Bromhead.

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and invited Linda Conley and Maurice Flanagan to make a brief presentation.

Mrs Conley outlined her position as an existing Wiltshire Councillor. Her particular interests at WC were issues of waste collection. She would make herself aware of matters affecting the villages and visit Parish Councils on a regular basis. She offered to bring experience in representing the Council if elected.

Mr Flanagan explained his background, a senior lecturer at Trowbridge College and a Dilton Marsh Parish Councillor for 30 years. He would bring all that experience to his role as a Wiltshire Councillor if elected and be pro-active on behalf of the villages. He believed in doing things economically. This was his first move into politics.

The Chairman then invited comments. To the question of attending PC meetings regularly Mrs Conley said it was her policy to attend as many as she could and Mr Flanagan said he was a 'good attender' and would try to get to them all.

Mr Jones asked what their priorities were when Government funding was further reduced. Mrs Conley explained that WC was preparing a budget for the next 4 years and would always look to reduce costs but protect services. Mr Flanagan had a small business and would bring the same ethos that he used in that to save money. He would do the right thing and efficiently.

There being no other issues raised the Chairman thanked both for their contribution and moved to the rest of the business of the meeting.

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 2th April 2012 were adopted as read and signed. There were no matters arising from those Minutes.

Chairman's Report

Normally, the Chairman said, his report reviewed the main issues arising from the preceding year. However, an article in a recent issue of "The News" had summarised most of the main points concerning the Jubilee year activities so he felt that it might be more useful, as this term of the Parish Council was coming to a close, to review the main changes and key issues that had affected the village over the last six years.

On reflection, six years for the life of a Parish Council was too long a time but this occurred because of the creation of the new Wiltshire Council in 2009. The new Parish Council would revert to the normal period of four years.

The Council was pleased to be able to keep the precept at £6000 unchanged for the whole six year period. It was able to do this by careful husbandry, voluntary efforts and various grants and donations. As a result, Edington had one of the lowest village rates in the area.

The main development had been the creation of the Parish Hall Car Park. This was a wonderful asset to the whole community as well as enhancing the road safety along Monastery Road. The very low maintenance costs, so far, had been a bonus.

The playfield had been equipped to a high standard and the new tractor had proved very popular. The fact that it was completely funded by donations from the Fair, the May Ball and several individuals showed the versatile side of Edington's village life.

This valuable asset was now proving to be useful to the pub and farm shop complex as children could safely play there whilst being overseen from the garden. The completion of the site and its recent opening had greatly enhanced the facilities for the village and the pavement was a welcome safety feature. It was only just over three years ago that the village had been faced with the closure of The Lamb and now there was a functioning pub and farm shop.

Another important development had been the creation of the community policing team. Edington had been well served by PC Daren Foulger and his predecessor the late PC Mike Johnson, and PCSO Luke Breedt . The Council had written to the Chief Constable on several occasions emphasising its support for the work that was done on behalf of all in the village which continued to be a relatively crime-free.

Unfortunately, little progress had been made with restricting large vehicles coming through the village as could be seen by the severe damage to road edges and verges. The Community Speed Watch team did their best to persuade motorists to slow down but, too often, vehicles drove through Edington well in excess of 30mph.

The current Council was coming to an end and four long-serving Councillors were not seeking re-election. Michael Jones had served on the Council for around thirty years as well as representing Edington on West Wiltshire District Council. His knowledge of such issues as planning matters and the effects of legislation changes as well as his vast experience would be greatly missed. Dave Perkins had served for about seventeen years and had been involved in many village initiatives including the operation of Edington Villagers and the nursery school. Simon Hunt had served for about fourteen years and was Chairman for three years as well as being involved in many of parish activities. The village owed them a great deal of thanks for all their voluntary hard work on its behalf. He wished to thank them personally for their efforts.

The Chairman confirmed that he too was standing down after about fourteen years including a number as Chairman. It had been a privilege to be a member of the Council for that time. He then quoted a recent obituary of an MP who had subsequently become a member of his Parish Council. The quote "Comparing life in the Commons with meetings in the village hall, he was struck by the civilised way in which parish business was conducted" reflected the Chairmans own feelings about Edington's Council. Therefore, he thanked all Councillors and the Clerk, Malcolm Wieck, for all their hard work and their friendship over the years.

Finally, the next Council would have four new members. He wished to welcome Bob King, Roger Pinson, John Pollard and Mike Swabey and he hoped that they would enjoy participating in its activities.

There were no questions raised on the report but Mrs Dorgan did feel that the Chairman had undersold himself. He had been very involved and proactive in the village and as Chairman of the PC and she felt that should be recognised. She wished to thank him for all that he had done and this was echoed by all present.

Policing and Community Speedwatch.

PC Foulger reported that the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) priorities for the year had been set at the quarterly Neighbourhood Tasking Group (NTG) meetings and had comprised of rural crime patrols; anti-social behaviour (ASB) and road safety issues.

The past year had been one which had been quite peaceful and this was reflected in the Crime Statistics for this area.

The anticipated spike in rural crime, especially over the previous summer, had not fully materialised in that only a few dwelling and non-dwelling burglaries and thefts had been reported to the Police. Regular rural patrols had been carried out by the NPT, and would continue to be carried out, as a priority, to deter crime in remote areas/farms and villages as a whole. The NPT had also conducted many night time Operations to detect and deter rural crime. They had worked with partnership agencies in order to target repeat and volume crime offenders.

ASB had been kept to a minimum with reduced incidents being reported. All villages reported a reduction in this area. Again the ASB patrols in all the villages would continue to be carried out, especially in the summer months when more residents were out and about. Road Safety, which encompassed speeding; dangerous or inconsiderate riding or driving; and the use of pavements or bridleways by vehicles remained a priority within the NPT. A few reports were still being received in this regard and intensive patrols would continue in the villages, the White Horse area and Salisbury Plain as a whole. They had had some success in gaining funding through the Community Area Transport Group (CATG) to allow kissing gates and equestrian style gates on selected footpaths and bridleways in order to discourage and prevent motor vehicles using those routes.

Community Speed Watch (CSW) had played an important part in reminding motorists to adhere to the speed limits and helping to improve road safety.

Several reports had been received of dogs not being kept under proper control which had resulted in livestock, including chickens, being attacked or killed. The NPT conducted patrols and investigated allegations where persons responsible had been identified.

The NPT wished to thank the members of Speed Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch, Horse Watch and the NTG members for their continued efforts and commitment to their communities.

The chairman thanked him and PCSO Breedt for their attendance and to so many of the PC meetings.

Neighbourhood Watch (NW). Mr Perkins as co-ordinator confirmed what PC Foulger had said about ASB. That had been the villages major concern in the past but with the introduction of the new NPT in 2006 a wonderful job had been done by the team. Mr Perkins was also the PC representative on the NTG. Its priorities had been ASB but more recently the threats of rural crime and traffic and speeding had taken over. Both or either of PC Foulger and PCSO Breedt were regular attenders at the Drop ins and also came to Edington Fair. NW as a network enabled people to report suspicious incidents but also its very existence let potential criminals know that residents were alert to their activities. He encouraged more people to get involved. Anyone becoming aware of crime or criminal activity should notify the Police on 999 or if non urgent 101 and let other people on NW know. He thanked everyone for their support in keeping crime and ASB low in the village.

Speedwatch. Mr Mitchell reported on Community speed watch. It had been running now for 3 years and had driven down speeding but it did need to be regular. It depended on the

goodwill of volunteers whom he thanked. One problem was that despite the wholehearted support of PC Foulger and PCSO Breedt the administration of the scheme left a lot to be desired and meant that drivers who had been speeding were not always being followed up.

Good Neighbours Scheme.

Mrs Griffiths reported that the scheme now covered the whole of Wiltshire and that her area had extended to include Dilton Marsh and Heywood. Part of her role was to help people maximise their incomes and benefits – fuel bills were increasing - as well as advising on issues of personal safety in the home, internet and other scams. Social isolation was a concern for the elderly and disabled. The scheme had introduced 'Warm homes, healthy lives' and a Surviving Winter grant scheme. There was also the Wiltshire Voices project and a video available. Between April and December last she had had 83 new Clients across her area and made 58 visits to various groups explaining her role. She thanked the PC for its support and interest.

Diamond Jubilee and Edington Recreation & Leisure Advisory Committee (ERLAC).

Mr Mitchell encouraged all organisations in the village to be involved in ERLAC. The success of the Jubilee celebrations confirmed its raison d'être and ensured so far as possible that events throughout the year did not result in unnecessary clashes.

Edington Villagers Enhancement Squad (EVES)

Mr Hinton reported that its activities were dropping off. Despite the vibrant community that was Edington there seemed to be no new blood willing and able to carry out the various jobs around the village that kept it in good trim. In the absence of being able to do things on a voluntary basis necessary works would need to be put out to tender which would put pressure on the PC precept that the Chairman had referred to.

There being no Other Business or matters for the Meeting the Chairman thanked all who had attended and to the catering team who had provided the refreshments; and formally closed the Meeting at 8.20pm