

The Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting of the Parish of Edington held at the Parish Hall Edington on Monday 28th April 2014

Present: Messrs Mitchell, Pollard, Swabey, King and Hinton and Mesdames Dorgan, Greening, Pike, Bromhead, O'Donoghue and Watts, Mr Wickham (Wiltshire Councillor), PC Darren Foulger and PCSO Caroline Wright and 58 members of the public

Apologies were received from Mrs Pinson and Mr Jones

The Chairman of the Parish Council Mr Eric Mitchell welcomed all to the meeting

The Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on the 22nd April 2013 were adopted as read and signed. There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report.

He began by thanking all the Parish Councillors and the Clerk for all their efforts and commitment throughout the year. He reminded all present that this was a Parish Council (PC) with four new members since the previous year, so had a different flavour to it compared with previous councils. Unfortunately one of the new members had decided to resign for personal reasons and it was only recently that a replacement councillor had been co-opted - Chloe Watts. The new PC now fairly represented all the major areas of the Village. In passing he wished to comment that the Clerk - Malcolm Wieck - would complete 40 years in that role in May. He considered that to have been a remarkable achievement and unlikely to be repeated and expressed his thanks to him.

He also wished to thank PC Darren Foulger and PCSO Caroline Wright for their regular attendance at PC meetings and for their continuing contribution to keeping Edington a safe and pleasant place in which to live; and he extended those thanks also to Luke Breedt the previous PCSO who had been so much engaged in the village and highly respected, but was now assigned to other police duties. He was also pleased to report that the Edington Community Speed-Watch was now back up and running thanks to Debs Hinton volunteering to take on the co-ordinator role for the village.

The PC continued to be active on all matters, which included footpaths, highways, planning issues, the playfield, emergency planning, policing, and more. Each Councillor had a portfolio of responsibility to ensure that issues were properly addressed in the overall interests of the village. It was worthy of note that the farm shop was now one year old and both this and the Three Daggers had proven to be a great asset to the village, providing local employment, encouraging use of local suppliers and bringing income to the village from visitors to this beautiful village. That led him on to announce that the PC had endorsed an application to enter the 2014 Best Kept Village Competition after several years of not doing so. The initiative had been led by George Fraser and Michael Jones. It was felt that the village was in better shape to succeed in this endeavour. It was really now up to the villagers to make that enterprise a success by looking after the village. The judging would be happening shortly but would not be announced in advance.

Wiltshire Council had recently appointed a village steward to look after the interests of Edington. These were early days in this new process, but should make the decision

making between the PC and Wiltshire Council more coordinated and slicker.

Recently certain issues had arisen regarding the sale of two plots of land at Tinhead Road and Court Lane.

Early on in the proposed sale a number of local villagers in the Tinhead Road area had agreed to offer to purchase parcels of land in the field as garden extensions. The PC decided to make an expression of interest in purchasing the remainder of the field for community use. After many months the vendors had decided to sell parcels of land to the local residents for garden extensions, but to retain the rest of the field in their ownership for the time being. The offer from the PC for the remainder of the land had not been accepted.

The Court Lane sale had been as interesting, with offers from local residents to buy the complete field, and also apparently with offers from others to purchase the land for different purposes, totally unknown to the PC. The vendors had decided to sell a small corner of the field to a local developer, but to retain the remainder of the field in their possession for the present time.

In both these land sale issues the PC could only wait to see the outcome of the proposed sales between private parties. If planning/change of use issues were eventually brought to the PC they would be dealt with in the usual way. In the meantime, these remained private arrangements about which the PC should not and would not be engaged in.

In parallel with these issues the PC had had to think more deeply about the needs of the village and to work towards a new village development plan to replace the existing one which had served well over the previous few years. Key to this was the Wiltshire Core Strategy which was itself still being developed and would help to shape Edington's Neighbourhood Plan (NP) as it would be known. To this end the PC had initiated a Housing Needs Survey in conjunction with Wiltshire Council in order to determine the views of the villagers regarding what they perceived were the housing needs for the future, in particular for the elderly and the village young. The survey would apply to every household in the village and it was important that there was a good response so that the Survey took account of the majority view and not just the vocal minority. He encouraged everyone to complete the Survey when it was delivered..

Finally, the not so good news was that the precept, previously £6000, had been raised to £6500 after six years of being held at the lower rate. This would mean that a typical Band D property would see a rise from £17.56 in 2013/14 to £19.64 for 2014/15. He was pleased that even so this still remained one of the lowest in the area.

Two points were raised in connection with the report. The first was regarding the Housing Needs Survey and the development of a NP. Mr Swabey explained briefly that the Housing needs Survey would provide the information that would indicate how the Village might see its future development as distinct from simple infilling and that a NP once approved would be a document that would have to be taken into account when planning applications were submitted and it would need to be consistent with the wider planning

issues that would be in the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The problem was that the Core Strategy had not itself been finalised.

The second point was that a resident of the Court Lane field area confirmed that in fact no offers had in fact yet been received.

Policing and Community SpeedWatch

PC Foulger explained the work of the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) which covered the villages of Dilton Marsh, Hawkeridge and Heywood, Bratton, Edington and Coulston and the Policing policies set by the Neighbourhood Tasking Group (NTG) on which the PC's had a representative. Recent priorities had been Antisocial Behaviour which was largely under control and Community SpeedWatch/traffic issues. He was pleased to be able to confirm that in the main there were no great causes of concern in the village but he did remind villagers of the continued need for vigilance, and notification to the police of unusual or suspicious activity was also always useful in building up intelligence in relation to criminal activity. The regular 'drop-ins' continued to be very helpful.

On behalf of the PC and the parish generally the Chairman reiterated his thanks to PC Foulger for his team's regular presence in the village.

Community SpeedWatch. This had been covered in the Chairman's report.

Wiltshire Council (WC)Report.

Mr Wickham said that this was a new experience for him. He had not previously been on WC and had been allocated the 'Rubbish'Portfolio! His concerns were the state of the B3098 both as to the need for repairs and heavy traffic using it. He supported SpeedWatch and he spoke briefly about the WC Core Strategy in particular in relation to housing and planning. Edington would be a 'small village' and as such development would in the first instance be limited to Infill but it was also clear that Government priorities were requiring significant housing development in the region of 44000 new homes for the County. He encouraged the Village to pursue the Housing Needs Survey. The Core Strategy was out for consultation and he hoped that by the end of the year it could be adopted if it complied with Government requirements. On the issue of wind farms there were to be no distance limits and as to a Westbury Bypass there was no chance of an Eastern route.

Three points were raised:-

- As to repairs to the B3098. He acknowledged that previous repairs had been substandard, but simply done to put the road into a relative safe state. The Highways budget would be upwards of £20m to get the most important roads up to a proper standard of repair.
- Criteria for Housing. There were pressures created by military returnees and also simply people wanting to come to Wiltshire. Affordable housing was to be encouraged by the imposition of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on new developments by the way of Section 106 agreements.
- Generally on Neighbourhood Plans. There was a criteria that had to be followed and before it could be finalised there would have to be a Parish poll

to ensure that there was village support. There would also be a not insignificant cost but some Government grants were available.

The Chairman thanked Mr Wickham for his input and also for his regular attendance at PC meetings.

ERLAC Report/Website.

Mr Pollard explained that ERLAC had met 3 times in the year co-ordinating various organisations events and between 90/ 95% of groups attended.

As to the Website this had been going for a couple of years and there were about 1500 hits each month of which 50% were new. He encouraged people to try and make more use of it.

Edington Villagers Enhancement Squad (EVES).

Mr Hinton confirmed that it largely consisted of Parish Councillors but had really come to a natural end. He wished to thank all who had taken part over the years.

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 8.21pm.