

**The Minutes of a Meeting of the Edington Parish Council held at The Parish Hall, Edington on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at 7.30 p.m.**

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

Apologies were received from Mr Wickham (WC)

PCSO Caroline Wright was also in attendance for part of the meeting

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th December 2014 were adopted as read and signed.

2. There were no Matters Arising.

3. Planning:-

(a) The following decisions had been received:-

(i) 14/10492/FUL – Alterations and extensions at The Laurels, 36 Westbury Road for Mr Phillip Hampson - approved

(ii) 14/10676/TCA – Fell Elm Tree at 2 Bonshommes Cottage Monastery Road for Mr Michael Jones - approved

(iii) 14/10329/TCA – T1-reduce crown of cypress leylandii by 15 feet; T2-reduce crown of cypress leylandii by 8 feet; T3-remove dead cypress all at Becketts House 19 Tinhead Road for Mrs Susan Bromhead - approved

(b) Neighbourhood Planning/Housing Needs Survey. It was agreed to place the Survey results on the Website

4. Policing.

(a) (i) The Police Report for December had been received. A man had been arrested for being drunk and disorderly and another for criminal damage to a Police vehicle. PCSO Wright also said that in the NPT area there appeared to be an increasing number of break ins of unattended vehicles and that hare coursing and poaching was continuing. She again asked that vigilance was maintained and unusual activity reported.

(ii) The Chief Constable and Police Commissioner had launched the Wiltshire & Swindon 'Community Messaging' giving free updates about Policing and crime matters in the area. Details would be made available in the Post Office.

(b) Speed Watch. Even with the road works currently under way Mr Hinton reported that the recent checks had resulted in 8 vehicles speeding. PCSO Wright said that 'Operation Harness' would shortly be put in place involving both Speed Watch and Police camera checks. The PC expressed its thanks again to Mrs Hinton as the co-ordinator.

(c) Mr Hinton had agreed to take over the Policing and Neighbourhood Watch Liaison.

(d) The Police Commissioner was proposing a 6p per week increase for a Band D property

5. Playfield (PF).

(a) New Swings. The work was due to start on the 26<sup>th</sup> January.

(b) State of surface at Pub gate. Mr Hinton reported on a discussion he had with Mr Sheridan on behalf of the Pub. Plans were being prepared with a detailed quote and would be passed to the PC shortly. The cost would be in the region of £1000.

(c) Mrs Voss had asked for a bench which she would pay for to be placed in memory of her late husband.

6. Finances.

(a) The PC needed to consider the Precept requirement for 2015/2016. 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 together with an

explanatory note prepared by the Clerk. It was noted that the balance in hand taking into account expenses (including grants and donations referred to below) to be paid by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 would be in the region of £9100 together with a VAT refund of £278.72 that was anticipated and a potential refund of the VAT on the new swings of £904.80.

(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 to:-

- (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 renewing of PF equipment (as currently being undertaken) . It was noted that the PC had been fortunate in the past for many projects to be covered by grants and donations received (such as for the PF swings) but these could never be guaranteed. Nevertheless ordinary expenses were increasing (such as the cost of Village Maintenance; and the Clerk's hours on which his salary was based) and so it was suggested that the Precept be increased to £7300 (rounded down from the budget figure of £7313). Taking into account the WC grant referred to in point (iii) below the Council Tax for a Band D property would be £21.90 compared with £19.65 for 2014/2015).

(ii) The Clerk's Salary would continue to be in accordance with NALC guidelines but based on 5 hours per week. This was to be a phased rationalisation with SLCC guidelines of a minimum of 7 hours for a Parish with one meeting a month (which this PC had plus the APM) and limited services (i,e Playfield, Burial Ground, Village green and Car Park)

(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 201/15 and would reduce to nothing over the next couple of years. For Edington the grant would be £190.85 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 2015/2016 would increase to £7300. Taking into account the £190.85 referred to above the amount to be included in the Precept requirement would be £7109.15.

(e) The following invoices had been received:-

(i) Refund Mrs Dorgan for additional Christmas lights from B&M £55.97 and refund of cost of packets of biscuits as a prize for youngsters from the village decorating the Christmas tree £8.91

(ii) Refund Mr Pollard for the cost of Masterplug and Weatherproof Box Kit for the Christmas tree £52.47

(iii) Miles & Francis for Village maintenance £180

(iv) Playdale Playgrounds Ltd £2714.40 the 50% deposit including VAT for the new swings

(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 Mrs Watts seconded by Mrs Bromhead and carried unanimously that the Precept be made in the sum of £7300 and that the Grants and Donations listed above and the invoices referred to in paragraph (e) above be paid.

The AB grant towards the Swings project in the sum of £2262 had been received.

#### 7. Highway Matters/Footpaths/CATG.

(a) The handrail along the path to the Parish Hall had been installed.

(b) Mrs Greening reported that a highways Community Day would take place in the coming week and that she had provided a list and map prioritising work to be done in the coming year to include triangle cutting.

(c) Mrs Dorgan was concerned that the cross roads at Crossroads Farm were potentially dangerous with vehicles sometimes just crossing from Bratton to Steeple Ashton without regard to vehicles travelling to and from Edington and West Ashton. She considered that part of the problem was that there were only 'Give Way' signs rather than 'Stop' signs. Mr Swabey said he would raise it at the next CATG meeting.

(d) Mrs Greening had raised with the AHE the question of the clearing of drains and manholes in Tinhead Road.

8. Car Park (CP). The PC was concerned that the contractors currently carrying out the road works for BT had used the CP to store materials rather than simply for parking and that the CP surface was suffering. They had been told to remove the materials and the matter had been referred to WC. The PC would expect full reinstatement.

#### 9. Wiltshire Council (WC) Report :-

(a) The AB meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> December had been mainly about the Westbury Campus but had also considered and approved the grant application for the swings.

(b) The road works currently being carried out along the B3098 were for the superfast broadband paid for by WC. When the work was completed individual connection to it and the cost would be down to the individual house holder.

10. Annual Parish Meeting. This was fixed for Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

11. Civil Emergency Plan. Miss O'Donoghue confirmed that updating the Plan was in hand.

#### 12.. Correspondence.

(a) SPTA News Sheet – January 2015

(b) The WALC AGM was fixed for 27<sup>th</sup> January at Devizes Town Hall

(c) Clerks & Councils Direct for January 2015 had been received.

13. News Items. Consideration was given to what could be included in the News.

14. Date of next Meeting. This was fixed for Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at the Parish Hall at 7.30pm.