

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for the Parish of Edington held at the Parish Hall Edington on Monday 24th April 2017

Present: Messrs Swabey, Pollard, Johns, Lupton and King and Mesdames O'Donoghue, Greening, Lewis, Watts, Dorgan and Pike, Mr Wickham (Wiltshire Councillor) and 22 members of the public.

Apologies were received from Mrs Perkins.

The Chairman of the PC Mr Swabey welcomed all to the meeting.

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 25th April 2016 were adopted as read and signed. There were no Matter Arising from those Minutes.

Chairman's Report

Before starting his report the Chairman invited the meeting to hold a few moments of silence in memory of Simon Hunt who had sadly died in September 2016 and had been a long standing Parish Councillor and former Chairman.

The past year had been another busy year for the PC. Much of what had been achieved would not have happened without the help and assistance of residents and the close links between the various organisations within the village.

A major task during the year had been the launch and initial development of a Local Development Plan for the village. This had brought together many sections of the community and would be considered later on in the agenda. Development of this plan was an important step towards creating a full Neighbourhood Plan for the village and would help shape its future. The PC was therefore very grateful to all who had been involved.

That work had helped reinforce that the village continued to be a thriving community with much support from neighbours and friends who welcomed newcomers and provided them with help and assistance needed to settle in. Part of this process was the Welcome Pack produced and delivered by Chloe Watts and it was important that neighbours let her know of new arrivals in order to make them welcome.

The PC had worked hard throughout the year to ensure that village amenities and fixtures were maintained and replaced where necessary. This had all been achieved within the annual budgets set and Malcolm's budget management and advice had been greatly appreciated by the council. Unfortunately, residents would have noticed that the village precept had again increased. This was due to changes in the grants received from Wiltshire Council and the rising costs of maintain village assets. Wherever possible grants and donations had been sought from a number of sources and the generosity of community groups had been vital in ensuring that improvements in the village could be carried out in a timely way. Recent examples included new play equipment, new signage and improvements to the footpath network and the council expressed its thanks to all who had helped make those improvements possible.

Once again, successful community events had included the annual Christmas Tree switch on, which seemed to get bigger and better each year; the annual parish litter pick and the Newcomers Coffee morning which would take place on Saturday 6 May.

The village also entered the Best Kept Village competition again with some success and it was hoped that with help from residents to ensure litter, dog mess etc. was disposed of

properly the village might do even better. With improvements as mentioned earlier, plus the work carried out on the pond by Geoff Lupton the village had a lot to be proud of.

Reintroduction of Wiltshire Council's Parish Steward scheme dealing with areas of concern had also helped enhance the general environment and to ensure this continued he asked that the PC be notified of any concerns.

The PC had continued to be represented on wider local groups including Westbury Area Board and the Community Area Transport Group and had looked to develop closer links with neighbouring parishes over common problems such as fly-tipping, road safety, transport and concerns regarding the B3098 and a possible freight strategy for a number of roads within the village.

Clearly it had been a busy year and he wished to close his report by thanking all of the Parish Councillors for their help, support and advice throughout the year. Particular thanks to the clerk Malcolm Wieck and Wiltshire Councillor Jerry Wickham for working proactively with the PC. And finally he thanked all of the village organisations, the Community Policing Team, the Parish Stewards and West Wiltshire Ramblers for helping make Edington such a special place to live and work.

He then invited the other councillors to give a brief update on their areas of responsibility in the village.

Mr King summarised the Planning Applications that had been received. Of the 28, 13 related to tree works and the rest to alterations and extensions which to some extent were by their nature eroding the stock of smaller houses in the village.

Mrs Greening dealt with Highway issues liaising regularly with WC and the Parish Steward who came to the village dealing with various matters such as some potholes, verges and leaf clearance.

Miss O'Donoghue maintained the Village Emergency Plan which was reviewed annually.

Mrs Pike ensured that the Burial Ground was maintained currently by Tim Goode from Bratton. She regularly removed plastic flowers which were not in keeping. In addition she also prepared the note for the News of PC activities.

Mrs Dorgan was responsible for the Play Field. Moles continued to be a problem. An Area Board grant of £7000 had enabled the PC to install the new equipment. The needs of those using the PF were kept constantly under review.

Mr Johns responsibility was for footpaths. Minor improvements had been carried out during the year particularly to Footpaths 19 and 20.

Mr Pollard was the PC Chair of ERLAC which had met but attendance had been declining partly perhaps due to increased use of the Website. Its future would be reviewed by the PC. As to the Website there was an average of 2500 hits per month with an average of 7 pages per hit. March had 1920 first time visitors. The most popular pages were local history, events, the PC and walks. He would refer to the Development Plan (DP) and Neighbourhood Plan (NP) as per the Agenda.

Mr Lupton was in charge of Police Liaison and Speedwatch. Changes to Policing arrangements meant that the Police could not get to all PC meetings but they were always welcome and the PC acknowledged the involvement of PCSO Caroline Wright in the village.

He was also in charge of the Pond and was planning to make improvements and to that end a grant had been sought from Wessex Water.

Mrs Watts had the role of welcoming newcomers to the village providing them with a welcome pack and organising a Newcomers Coffee Morning.

Wiltshire Council (WC) Report

Mr Wickham opened by thanking the PC for dealing with so many issues that affected the village and appreciated his regularly being able to be at PC meetings. His WC portfolio had changed from Waste to Highways and was now Adult Social Care/Public Health.

WC had a budget of £1bn of which £600m had been 'red circled' for schools. Of the rest his portfolio had £175m. Of the Council Tax Levy WC was 1.99% but there had also been an Adult Social Care Levy of 3%. WC had been able to make savings of £100m since 2010 but there was continuing pressure on the budget especially with Government support going down year on year.

He was currently chairman of Westbury Area Board and was able to confirm that grants to the villages had been good and would support applications for a defibrillator in the village.

There was continuing concern about the B3098. Traffic seemed to be travelling faster and in several cases the type of vehicle using the road was inappropriate. He would be pressing that the Freight Survey should be completed as soon as possible. In addition he was exploring for residents the possibility of a 20mph speed limit at The Weir.

In closing he reminded the meeting that the WC election was due on the 4th May and that there were 2 candidates: himself and a liberal democrat.

A couple of questions were put:-

1. The problem of Fly tipping. WC was committed to doing what it could to alleviate the problem and would pursue those responsible if they could be identified.
2. The possibility of signage to prevent HGV's using Lower Road. This would be covered by the Freight Survey

Edington Development Plan (EDP)/Neighbourhood Plan(NP)

Mr Pollard explained that having circulated a Questionnaire in 2016 the PC was planning to draft a new EDP. An initial meeting had resulted in 5 groups being formed each to consider a specified issue. These had been meeting during the year and were in a position to give an interim report to the meeting. It was anticipated that the final reports would be completed by September 2017 with a new EDP 2030 being drafted and completed by April 2018. This would be a precursor to the drafting of a NP which would define how residents saw the village developing over the next decade. He then invited the groups to outline their interim reports:-

1. Amenities and Facilities, Social and Wellbeing. This had looked at the Parish Hall, Farm shop and Pub (seen as important to the life of the village), the Playfield suggesting provision of exercise equipment, the possibility of a teenage club, the future of the Post Office, the Three Villages Minibus and the Link, Mobile Library, the Village Website and communication generally
2. Business and Employment. There were continuing broad band and mobile phone problems, the need for more business opportunities, better promotion of existing businesses, promotion of tourism, village history, scenery and walks.

3. Environment including footpaths. This had been looking generally at enhancing the village and ensuring that footpaths were well maintained, minimising litter, maximising the amenity of the village pond and the preservation of green spaces within the village.
4. Highways, traffic and transport. Key issues of the B3098 and its use by heavy vehicles, speed limits and signage, the lack of public parking and road safety.
5. Housing. This had taken on board the results of the Housing Needs Survey and had identified several sites that could be used to meet the criteria of the Survey. Future development should militate against large executive houses.

Policing and Community Speedwatch.

There had been a continuing liaison throughout the year with the Police but unfortunately PCSO Wright or her colleagues had not been able to attend PC meetings as often as in previous years. However there had only been a few incidents during the year. Hare coursing had been quite a serious problem. Parking remained a problem in the village and the Police would put polite notices on cars to try and encourage better parking.

As to Speedwatch Mr Lupton had taken this on together with Police Liaison. Having received formal training he was able to report that the first session had been held in February.

Any Other Business.

1. Mr Hailstone raised the issue of parking in Tinhead Road. There was little that could be done but the PC regularly considered the matter.
2. The siting of the defibrillator was considered. The Chairman reported that discussions had taken place with the Three Daggars with a view to its being sited at The Farm shop or Pub.
3. Mr Perkins wished to state that he had been impressed with the enthusiasm in the village and PC.

The Chairman then thanked all who had attended and to the catering team who had provided the refreshments; and Miss O'Donoghue thanked the Chairman on behalf of the PC for his work; and the Meeting was formally closed at 9.05pm