

The Minutes of a Meeting of the Edington Parish Council held at the Parish Hall on Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Mesdames Greening, Watts, Pike, O'Donoghue and Dorgan and Messrs Pollard, King and Swabey and Mrs Wickham (WC)

Apologies were received from Messrs Hardman and Johns

1. **The Minutes** of the Meeting held on the 11th December 2023 were adopted as read and signed
2. **There were no Matters Arising**
3. **Precept and Finances**
 - a. The PC needed to consider the Precept requirement for 2024/2025. 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 to date was £34726 but there were other expenses yet to be invoiced to the PC for the current year which were noted in the consideration of the Statement of Finances in (f) below.
 - b. Interest rates had increased during the year and to date £237.54 had been received compared with £59.19 for the whole of the previous year
 - c. The PC considered Grants and Donations for the current year and it was agreed that the following be made:-
 - i. £50 to the Independent Living Centre
 - ii. £50 to Dorothy House
 - iii. £50 to Bobby Van
 - iv. £50 to Splash
 - v. £50 to Youth Action
 - vi. £50 to CAB
 - d. The PC agreed as Establishment expenses the following grants be made:-
 - i. £50 to Parish News
 - ii. £30 to Three Villages Minibus
 - e. The following invoices had been received:-
 - i. Refund Mr Pollard Website Host charges £77.40
 - ii. CPRE Subscription - increased to £60
 - f. 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 levels that some may consider unacceptable. Resources needed to remain available to cover not only longstanding needs such as verge protection and the proposed Permissive path from the Car Park to the Kissing Gate just beyond No. 41 Westbury Road but other unplanned matters. It was noted that the PC had been fortunate in the past for many projects to be assisted by grants and donations received but these could never be guaranteed. Ordinary expenses were increasing with cost of living and inflationary pressures particularly; and the cost of grounds maintenance would increase from some £2100 to £3824 due to the retirement of Bob Miles and the taking up of a new (and cheapest contract of 2 that had tendered). In

addition WC was increasingly expecting traffic calming measures to be subject to a significant contribution by PCs.

The PC then considered the draft Budget in detail and decided to increase the precept from £16000 to £21000 noting in doing so that the Precept had not been increased in the previous year due to the PC's concern at the then high fuel prices. This would give for a Band D property a Council Tax of £62.06 pa (£1.19pw) compared with £47.28 pa (£0.19) for 2023/2024).

- ii. The Clerk's Salary would continue to be in accordance with NALC guidelines and Local Government scales which had been agreed for this current year
- iii. After further discussion especially it was proposed by Mr King seconded by Mrs Dorgan and carried unanimously that the Precept be made in the sum of £21000 and that the Grants and Donations listed above and the invoices referred to in paragraph (e) above and that a grant of £50 be made available if required for the forthcoming Wassail event, be paid.
- g. A donation of £400 had been received from Edington Station Yard for Fingerpost repairs

4. Planning

- a. Neighbourhood Plan. There was nothing further to report since the last meeting
- b. The following applications had been received and there were no objections to either of them:-
 - i. PL/2023/10365/LBC Provision of solar panels to motor barn at The Priory Inmead for Mr Chad Pike
 - ii. PL/2023/10814/FUL - Single storey side extension (Amendment to PL/2023/00313 to allow changes to fenestration and roof form) at Old House, 63 Westbury Road, for Mr and Mrs Ian and Susan Gibson
- c. Concern was expressed regarding the use of the field on the northern side of Lower Road opposite Greater Lane and the resultant parking on Lower Road
- d. The following decisions had been received:-
 - i. PL/2023/09769 - Use of building as a garage for the storage of motor vehicles and associated equipment, and associated works to reconstruct the garage at Former Garages at Little Court Lane, for Ms Julia Dorsett - Refused

5. Policing

- a. Neighbourhood Watch. There was nothing to report since the last meeting
- b. SID data. The latest data had been circulated. It confirmed that excessive speed was a regular issue. The Chairman was seeking a new location at the eastern end of the village

6. Playfield.

- a. Mrs Dorgan reported that some 60+ had attended the lighting up of the Christmas tree which had been very successful with the Band. Thanks were expressed to the Three Daggers for the tree and the refreshments..
- b. Land Swap. A further discussion was awaited with The Three Daggers
- c. New equipment. New WC rules meant that the PC would not be able to apply for an AB grant. However it was thought possible that the Under 5s could make an application and that would be investigated
- d. Permission was given for the May Ball to use the PF on the 25th May

7. Wiltshire Council (WC) Report

- a. The next AB meeting would be on the 15th Feb with the Chief Constable attending
- b. Mrs Wickham outlined the Housing Minister Mr Gove's proposals to amend the national Land Supply provisions. As a Small Village they did not directly affect Edington
- c. The AB was increasing funding for 13-19 year olds

8. Highway matters/Footpaths/CATG

- a. B3098 Speed calming. Discussions were ongoing in connection with the AHE's suggestions and the PC's opposition to them
- b. Traffic calming on Lower Road. Mr Pollard outlined the proposals being made by the AHE
- c. Mrs Wickham was trying to find out what was happening about the provision of stiles at the northern end of Lambourne Lane
- d. Village Litter Pick. This was fixed for 9th March

9. Car Park.

There was nothing further to report yet on the proposed Permissive path though Mr King was looking for an opportunity to have a further discussion with Mr Cochrane on site

10. Coal Path Field. It was intended to carry out the hedge replanting in February

11. Casual Vacancy. Due to other commitments on what would now be regular Monday evenings Mr Burgess had had no option other than to tender his resignation. He would however continue to be involved with the Neighbourhood Plan and provide reports to the PC. The PC expressed its thanks to him for his time as a Parish Councillor especially with regard to the NP and the proposed PF land swap.

12. Correspondence

- a. Clerks & Councils Direct - January 2024.
- b. WALC November 2022 Circular

13. News items

Consideration was given to items to be included.

14. Date of next Meeting

This was fixed for Monday 12th February 2024.