

EASTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Email: eastingtonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2015 at 7.00pm in Eastington Methodist Hall

- 1 **Attendance and apologies for absence** In attendance Cllrs Bullock (Chair), Corrie (Vice-Chair), Allen, Loveridge, Simmons, Bomberg, Evans, and Edis-Bates. There were 14 members of the public. Apologies were received from C.Cllr Williams. No apologies were received from Cllr Cozens.
- 2 **Declarations of interest in items on the agenda.** The register of interests' book was signed by Cllr Loveridge (DPI finance, Personal interest Ecotricity item 9.3), Cllr Bomberg (Personal interest Ecotricity item 9.3).
- 3 **Chairman's announcements.** Cllr Bullock hoped that people were able to attend one of the Ecotricity public consultations, about 180 people attended. St Michael's and All Angels Parish Church is holding a Village Quiz on 25th September at OHMG - Cllr Bomberg, Cllr Corrie and Cllr Bullock volunteered to form a team on behalf of the Parish Council. St Michael's and All Angels Parish Church is providing "Tower Tours" on Saturday 12th September.
- 4 **Election of Vice-Chair for the ensuing year:** Cllr Allen nominated Cllr Corrie, seconded by Cllr Simmons. Cllr Edis-Bates proposed Cllr Bomberg, seconded by Cllr Evans. Vote was 4 in favour of Cllr Corrie, 2 in favour of Cllr Bomberg. Cllr Corrie was elected as Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.
- 5 **Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th and 25th August 2015:** RESOLVED to accept the minutes of 11th August. It was further RESOLVED to accept the minutes of 25th August with the following amendment requested by Cllr Evans to item 3.1 after the second sentence: "Cllr Edis-Bates stated that a motion has been placed without any discussion".
- 6 **Outstanding actions from previous meeting:** 11th August meeting item 5 – Cllr Evans to provide Lloyds Bank contact details to the Clerk (this may not be necessary depending on outcome of agenda item 10.9). Item 7.4 Cllr Evans to convene a Strategic Planning Working Group meeting to add to the questions to ask Stroud District Council planning officers. 25th August meeting item 3.1 – Clerk still to contact neighbouring councils and local organisations regarding Ecotricity proposals.
- 7 **Changes to the order of business** None

The meeting was adjourned at this point for members of the Public to speak.

Mr Low queried the inclusion of the Parish Council in the potential list of beneficiaries in the draft Solar Fund Grant Policy; the Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council could receive money from the fund if it was spent on items that were for the benefit of the community.

Mr E. Davies noted a comment made at the Ecotricity consultation that Grove Lane will be closed which will prevent the road being used as a rat run.

Mr E. Davies also commented on an unsigned notice placed on the Westend Notice Board regarding the Chair of the Parish Council's comments at a Strategic Planning Alliance meeting which Mr Davies felt was an unfair representation of what was said at the meeting.

Mrs Rank-Broadley read out a letter she had sent to the Parish Council following the meeting on 11th August regarding Ecotricity proposals, highlighting her concerns at the Council's neutrality towards the proposals which seemed to infer the Council was supportive of the proposals. The Chair answered that the Council has to retain a neutral position so there are no accusations of pre-determination. The Chair has also requested that copies of the plans be made available so that a public meeting can be held. The Clerk further clarified that the Council has formed a view at its meeting on 25th August and felt that the

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negatives outweigh the benefits of the proposals.

Mr Parry: Can we have a public vote (referendum) on the Ecotricity plans? This question was passed to D.Cllr Davies.

Mr Parry: there has been vandalism to the gate lock at OHMG so it won't lock; Cllr Bomberg will deal with it asap.

Mr Low: The training mentioned in the Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee should be attended within a lesser period than a year given the term of office for the Committee is one year.

Mr Low: suggested a word change to the Strategic Planning Working Group Terms of Reference item 5 as this should be to propose initiatives for tree preservation orders etc rather than commenting on planning applications to maintain protected trees.

Mr Low: suggested that memorial trees could be accommodated within the orchard adjacent to the burial ground. Cllr Allen will include this with the review of the burial ground regulations.

Mr James stated that Ecotricity is a big issue for the parish. Mr James is concerned that there is a significant political force building up support for this application. Traffic is going to be a big problem with the almost at saturation. The Eco-Park will provide business units for local businesses that had left the area, which will increase local traffic. Transport and Access Surveys haven't been carried out by Ecotricity yet. Mr James felt that the Parish Council should be putting pressure to receive the Transport Surveys to allow time to comment. Cllr Bomberg commented that he has written to Stroud Green Party regarding the proposal, but the Party stated that it does not comment on individual planning applications.

Mrs Rank-Broadley added that she had attended the Ecotricity consultation today at Stroud – they state it will be ethical etc, and built from locally-sourced materials but the staff at the consultation were unable to give further details of how the development will be sustainable.

Mr Low commented on agenda item 9.2 to appoint a traffic consultant to look at the impact of Ecotricity and felt that this was premature. The Clerk responded that this is to authorise the Clerk to act in a timely fashion when traffic information available from Ecotricity otherwise there can be up to a 3-week delay waiting for a Council meeting to approve expenditure.

County Councillor's Report Cllr William was unable to attend the meeting.

District Councillor's Report Cllr Davies spoke about Ecotricity and that he has been advised to remain neutral until all the information is available. He is however concerned about infrastructure, the proposals are not in the Local Plan, and the potential impact on William Morris House. The West of Stonehouse infrastructure improvements information is available but does not take into account Ecotricity. If Highways England opposes the road improvements (they manage the motorways) then the improvements cannot go ahead. The Ecotricity Scoping exercise is unlikely to finish until October/November. Stroud District Council Planners are unlikely to be able to consider the application until March 2016. The transport study by Ecotricity is going to be undertaken by the same traffic consultants used for West of Stonehouse. The Local Plan has not yet been ruled upon by the Inspector; however the current Local Plan has adequate employment need for the District. D.Cllr Davies feels that we need to talk with William Morris House about the planning proposals. A local referendum will cost money and sadly Eastington parish is not the only view relevant to this application so will carry limited weight. D.Cllr Davies offered to request the minutes of pre-application meetings with Ecotricity, which the Clerk has previously requested without response.

D.Cllr Davies then went on to talk about West of Stonehouse and discussions have commenced about the

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masterplan looking at sports facilities, schools, percentage of affordable homes, the size of the gap between the development and the hamlets, etc. D.Cllr Davies encourages everyone to see the masterplan and make comments, and urged the Parish Council have a meeting with Stroud District Council.

D.Cllr Davies noted that the Canals Trust has a strong case for funding with the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Cllr Evans asked D.Cllr Davies for further details of the West of Stonehouse road improvements, which D.Cllr Davies outlined briefly and suggested that the Parish Council requests the information from Stroud District Council.

Cllr Bomberg noted that Ecotricity is stating that the proposals will “create 4000 jobs” but this is incorrect, these are ‘recycled’ jobs where businesses re-locate to the area.

Cllr Bomberg also noted that Ecotricity made donations to two political parties very close to the elections and asked if these should be investigated. D.Cllr Davies noted that the donations were made nationally and not to Stroud District Councillors.

Cllr Bullock commented that Mr Vince stated (in a radio interview) that if road improvements are needed then Ecotricity will pay for them.

Cllr Allen asked D.Cllr Davies why work has not started on the junction 13 bridges; this is not within D.Cllr Davies area but will find out.

8 Policy and Procedures

- 8.1 The Council received the following updated Council Policies and RESOLVED to adopt as drafted:
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|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Communications Policy | Health & Safety Policy |
| Expenses Policy | Grievance Policy |
- 8.2 The Council RESOLVED to publish draft minutes within one week of the meeting taking place providing it is made clear that the minutes are unapproved. **Action: Clerk.**
- 8.3 The Council RESOLVED to publish the full council meeting papers on the website excluding confidential items. **Action: Clerk.**
- 8.4 The Council agreed to purchase Nitro Pro 10 at a cost of £130.79+VAT to simplify the process of creating the meeting packs. **Action: Clerk.**
- 8.5 The Council considered the draft terms of reference for Parish Council Committees and Working Groups and after making some amendments approved the terms of reference which will be published on the website. Cllr Bullock requested a work plan from the Strategic Planning Working Group to be produced for the Parish Council to explain how the Group will go forward. All agreed. **Action: Cllr Evans.**
- 8.6 Cllr Evans withdrew his request to join the Planning Committee.

9 Planning

- 9.1 The Council authorised the appointment of the Planning Consultant to respond to West of Stonehouse at a maximum cost of £1900. **Action: Clerk.**
- 9.2 The Council authorised the appointment of Traffic Consultant to assess Ecotricity proposals at a maximum cost of £1820. Cllr Bomberg raised concerns that the appraisal will only focus on the A419 and needs to include the impact on surrounding roads. Cllr Evans and Allen reassured Cllr Bomberg that the transport consultant used previously has a holistic view of the area and will consider all impact. **Action: Clerk.**
- 9.3 The Council authorised the appointment of the Planning Consultant to respond on the Ecotricity planning application when received if it's not significantly changed from the concept design

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proposals up to a maximum amount of £2000. **Action: Clerk.**

- 9.4 The Clerk gave a brief verbal update on the Neighbourhood Development Plan progress and the Group's aim to complete by 30th November in order to meet Stroud District Council's deadline for referendum in 2016.
- 9.5 The Council considered the request from Newland Homes to place showhome directional signage along Spring Hill. There were concerns that HGVs will follow the signage too. The Council denied the request. **Action: Clerk.**
- 9.6 The Council noted the following planning decisions from Stroud DC:
- S.15/1491/COU – KB Coaches, Claypits. Change of Use. PERMIT 21/08/15
 - S.15/1594/FUL – Eastington Trading Estate. Erection of commercial building. PERMIT 18/08/15.

10 Finance

- 10.1 The Clerk circulated an update on 2015/16 budget versus spend, and bank reconciliation.
- 10.2 Council RESOLVED to pay the Clerk's expenses for August 2015 at £78.91 and these will be paid with the September payroll.
- 10.3 The Council approved the accounts for payment, schedule circulated prior to meeting:

Payee	Details	Chq No	Amount	Budget
Salaries & Expenses	July 2015 Expenses agreed 11/08/15 processed through Payroll plus August 2015 Salary	1659	£1062.29	Parish Admin
Post Office Ltd	PAYE & NI payments to HMRC for August 2015	1660	£102.87	Parish Admin
GAPTC	Planning Training 30.07.15 £30.00	1661	£42.50	Training
GAPTC	Local Council Award Scheme Guidelines copies £12.50			Training
Alan Loveridge	Grass cutting & grounds maintenance	1662	£580.00	Ground Maintenance
Eastington Methodist Church	Council meeting room hire 11/08/2015 £12.50 Replace missing cheque 1637 dated 9/6/15 £39.50	1663	£52.00	Parish Admin
TW Hawkins & Sons SGMS	Contract Mowing OHMG	1664	£768.41	Ground Maintenance OHMG
Muriel Bullock	Paper & Ink (printing planning applications for offline councillors)	1665	£36.00	Parish Admin
Grant Thornton UK LLP	External Audit Costs	1666	£360.00	Parish Admin
Vodafone	Parish Telephone	DD	£48.99	Parish Admin
Nest	Pensions	DD	£61.49	Parish Admin

- 10.4 The Council noted the Clerk's timesheet for August 2015.
- 10.5 The Council received an update on the un-presented cheques dated prior to April 2015. Cheque number 1407 is not to be re-issued. Cllr Allen suggested that the un-presented cheque for Royal British Legion for £100 be re-issued, the rest of the cheques to be purged from the accounts. This was agreed by all, and the Clerk was thanked for resolving this matter.
- 10.6 The Council adopted the amended Financial Regulations.

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- 10.7 The Council RESOLVED that it meets the eligibility criteria to adopt the General Power of Competence.
- 10.8 The Council RESOLVED to adopt the draft Solar Fund Grant Policy and application form.
- 10.9 The Council authorised the opening of two bank accounts with Barclays bank; one for the Charlie Bullock Fund and one for the Solar Panel Fund. Cllrs Corrie, Bullock and Allen to be the initial authorised signatories. **Action: Clerk.**
- 10.10 The Council decided against attending the GAPTC training on budget and business plan production.
- 10.11 The Council considered Stroud District Council's request to contribute to the annual cost of emptying Parish Council-owned dog waste bins in Eastington at a cost of £222.03. The Council did not agree to voluntarily make the payments as this has not been budgeted and will consider again when the budget is set for next year. **Action: Clerk.**
- 10.12 The Council noted that the external auditor advises that the Council's management of the Charlie Bullock Fund is not in accordance with guidelines and the Council is in the process of opening a separate bank account for the Fund to meet guidelines.
- 10.13 The Council RESOLVED to appoint Tree Management to carry out visual safety checks and map and tag all the trees in the churchyard and burial ground at a cost of £382+VAT plus £38+VAT per 100 tree tags. **Action: Clerk.**

11 Request for a memorial tree in the burial ground

The Council considered the request from Mrs Davies to have her husband's ashes interred beneath a memorial tree. The Council approved the request and delegated the Burial Ground Working Group to deal with the details. **Action: Clerk.**

12 Strategy Workshop

Councillors were reminded that the Strategy Workshop is taking place on Tuesday 15th September at 7pm to consider a 3-year strategy to aid budget setting. Cllr Edis-Bates requested that the Clerk find out if Westend Suites is available at the same rate as the Methodist Church as it is a more comfortable setting for a workshop. **Action: Clerk.**

13 Groups

- 13.1 No report received from the Play Park Group.
- 13.2 Cllr Allen gave a verbal report from the Getting Around Group; the bicycle racks having been installed outside the Co-op and Highways have re-painted "Keep Clear" in an attempt to stop obstructive parking.
- 13.3 No report from the Churchyard & Burial Ground Group
- 13.4 The Council received a report from The Eastington Allotments Society, circulated prior to the meeting.
- 13.5 The Council received the notes of meeting with Gloucestershire County Council regarding re-development proposals of Claypits Farm. Cllr Allen noted that it would be helpful if the development could also include a proposal for reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph on the main road.
- 13.6 Cllr Edis-Bates gave a verbal update on the latest Strategic Planning Alliance meeting. The meeting reviewed the draft submission reports to the Local Plan consultation and it was agreed by SPA that the reports be submitted which includes a previous submission included for ease of reference. **Action: Clerk** will submit the reports to Stroud District Council.

14 Correspondence

- 14.1 Council received a list of correspondence received since the last meeting for information. There was an email from the planning consultant dealing with the Leonard Stanley Solar Farms application requesting to meet with the Parish Council to discuss the Council's concerns. It was agreed to invite the consultant along to the Parish Council meeting on 13th October for 10 minutes

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at the start of the meeting. **Action: Clerk.**

- 14.2 The Council considered the draft letter of support for the Canal Project Phase 1B and agreed to send as drafted. **Action: Clerk.**
- 14.3 Mrs Rank-Broadley had read out her letter regarding Ecotricity during the public session.

Any other business for the next meeting.

Pre-application protocol with SDC.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Notice: The next Full Council Meeting of Eastington Parish Council will be on Tuesday 13th October 2015. Anybody with an item they wish to bring to the attention of the Council, should forward details, in writing, to the Clerk to the Parish Council, no later than Monday 5th October 2015.

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