

## EASTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013 in Eastington Methodist Church

Present Cllr Andrew Niblett (Chairman), Cllr Muriel Bullock, Cllr Simmonds, Cllr Edis-Bates, Cllr Evans, Cllr Allen, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Greenaway

Not present Cllr Cozens (no apologies received prior to meeting)

### **Chairman's opening remarks**

The Chairman opened the meeting to advise that the Clerk, Mary Gribble, had resigned and to express his deep regret and to extend his thanks to her for her consistent hard work during the last 7 years. Mary had transformed Eastington PC to the strong council it is today. She had also overseen some major projects including the problematic transfer of land to the Bullock Fund, the community centre, the purchase of land for allotments, the establishment of the orchard group, Sophie's pitch and had also been involved when Eastington won Vibrant Village 2010. She has been a great support to all councillors and gave excellent advice to the council. She will be greatly missed and he wished her well in the future.

### **1. Compliance with Code of Conduct**

Following the Clerk's resignation, Cllr Andrew Niblett outlined the reasons given by Mary for her resignation. As a result of the reasons given, there were concerns that the council had not complied with its Code of Conduct as well as not meeting its duties as an employer, and the issue was discussed at length. IT WAS RESOLVED to hold an exit interview with Mary, to be conducted by Cllrs Niblett, Bullock and Greenaway at a date to be agreed. Several Councillors expressed their great sadness at her resignation because of her exemplary service to the Council and hoped that she would reconsider.

As a result of Mary's resignation, she felt unable to take the minutes at this meeting and a Clerk, Anita Sach, had been brought in from another parish to carry out this role. IT WAS AGREED (7 for plus 1 abstention) to pay Anita £8.92 per hour plus mileage for her work.

An acrimonious situation had arisen at the end of the 8 January Parish Council meeting between two members of the Council, and this had again caused concerns about compliance with the Code of Conduct. The issue was discussed at length and IT WAS RESOLVED (5 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention) to bring in the Monitoring Officer from Stroud District Council, who is responsible for overseeing the compliance with the Code of Conduct for all Parish Councils in Stroud District, to investigate and offer clarification, guidance and resolution.

Councillors were asked to help out during the period in which the Council was without a Clerk and Cllrs Bullock and Evans would be responsible for communicating with Ian Stewart, with Cllr Evans leading on technical issues. Any meetings with the consultant should always have 2 Councillors present. Cllr Bullock would take over the Council laptop until a new Clerk was in post.

The meeting concluded at 8.27pm

Signed .....

Chairman/Responsible Officer

Date .....