

# **EASTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Email: [clerk@eastington-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@eastington-pc.gov.uk) ~ Tel: 01453 799616

## **Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.00pm in Eastington Village Hall**

1. **Election of Chair:** Cllr Linforth nominated Cllr Bullock, seconded by Cllr Farnden. Cllr Bullock was unanimously elected as Chair. Cllr Bullock signed the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
2. **Election of Vice-Chair:** Cllr Spencer-Phillips nominated Cllr Devcich, seconded by Cllr Pitcher. Cllr Devcich was unanimously elected as Vice-Chair.
3. Appointment of officers and representatives to the EPC committees / working groups / external bodies item was moved after item 12.
4. Review of council policies and procedures covered in item 16.
5. **Attendance and apologies for absence** In attendance Cllrs Bullock (Chair), Farnden, Spencer-Phillips, Linforth, Pitcher, Maisey, Ward (joined following co-option at 7:15pm) and District Cllrs Davies, Jones. **Apologies** noted from Cllrs Spencer, Coombs, Devcich and Cozens. **Also present** Clerk Marianne Simpson and 2 members of the public.
6. Cllr Bullock welcomed Cllr Richard Maisey onto the council following his co-option at the April meeting. He had signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office prior to the meeting.
7. **Declarations of interest or dispensations in items on the agenda** None.
8. **Chairman's announcements** None
9. **Approval of the minutes of the meeting** held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were proposed by Cllr Spencer-Phillips, seconded by Cllr Farnden, and Council RESOLVED to accept the minutes.
10. **Review outstanding actions from previous meeting:**  
All outstanding actions covered in agenda items.
11. **Changes to the order of business:** Councillor appointments to committees and working groups was moved after item 12.

**The meeting was adjourned for members of the public to address the council.**

There were 2 members of the public present. None wanted to speak.

### **Report from the County Councillor**

None.

### **Report from the District Councillor**

District Cllr Davies reported SDC had a full council meeting, two motions were supported, one on tackling violence against women and one motion to object to the immigration policy. The Local Plan Examination should complete in mid-June. The Grove Lane site would be objected to as it is outside the settlement boundary but may be considered if the Local Plan must be re-written if another site is thrown out. Cllr Davies added that he is now on the Stroud Valleys Canal Company board and the Connected Canals project, so can help with any canal issues.

Cllr Jones had a meeting with the case officer for the Grove Lane application and he is summarising notes, so Whitminster Parish Council can put together a detailed objection to both the planning applications after its June meeting. Highways have asked for a 6-month referral of this site.

12. Council considered applications for co-option onto the council to fill the casual vacancy. Two applications were received for one vacancy. The candidates outlined their background and skills and then left the room while the councillors voted. They noted it was a great shame there were not 2 vacancies as they were both strong candidates. Councillors voted and unanimously voted Phillip Ward onto the council. They thanked the other applicant and encouraged him to apply again when another vacancy arises. Cllr Ward signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.
13. **Appointment to EPC committees, working groups and external bodies**
  - 13.1 Councillors appointed officers and representatives to the EPC committees and working groups as follows:  
**Appeal/Hearings Panel** (responsible for all matters relating to staff appeals regarding discipline and grievance.) All Cllrs are members.  
**Planning Committee:** Cllrs Bullock, Farnden, Linforth, Maisey  
**Resources Committee:** Cllrs Bullock, Farnden, Maisey  
**Finance Committee** Management, administration, and control of financial affairs (accounts, audit, investments) including risk assessment and insurance: Cllrs Bullock, Farnden, Spencer, Linforth.

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**Churchyard and Burial Ground Group:** Cllrs Spencer-Phillips, Farnden, Pitcher

**Getting Around Group (Roads, PROW etc):** Cllrs Farnden, Devcich, Spencer-Phillips

**Playground at the OHMG:** Snakey Park volunteers check over the play area, however, it is useful if a couple of councillors help with that. Cllr Ward volunteered to periodically check the play area and to attend the Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association training on inspecting and managing play areas.

**Strategic Planning Working Group** (2 Cllrs minimum plus members of public): Cllr Coombs (*in his absence continue from last year, subject to his agreement*). Further members of the group will be considered when the Eastington NDP is reviewed.

13.2 Councillors appointed officers to external groups and bodies as follows:

Eastington Community Centre (OHMG) representative – attends meetings and reports back to Parish Council on matters of the OHMG as the Parish Council is a custodial trustee. **Cllr Bullock**

Canal Consultative Working Group representative – attends meetings and reports back to Parish Council on matters of the canal **Cllr Coombs** (*in his absence continue from last year, subject to his agreement*).

Community Land Trust Group representative – attends meetings and reports back to Parish Council on matters of the CLT. **Cllr Bullock, Farnden**

Eastington Village Hall representative – attends meetings and reports back to Parish Council on matters relating to the village hall as the Parish Council is a custodial trustee. **Cllr Bullock, Farnden**

Friends of Snakey Lane Play Park representative – keep the Parish Council informed as to the running of the play park and any problems that need to be addressed. **Cllr Ward**

The Eastington Allotments Society representative – keep the parish council informed as to the running of the allotments and any problems that need to be addressed. **Cllr Spencer-Phillips**

## 14. Planning

14.1 Council considered planning applications:

Application no.	Address	Details	Decision
S.23/0840/ADV	Site Of Former Shell Oldbury Chipmans Platt	Installation of multiple signage	Support
S.23/0844/FUL	Fromebridge Self Service Fromebridge Whitminster	Erection of store building	Support

14.2 To note planning decisions made by Stroud District Council:

S.23/0542/HHOLD Beech House, Westend - Erection of a two-storey side extension. Permitted

S.23/0405/FUL Nastend Grange, Nastend Lane - Horse manege & turnout. Permitted

S.23/0726/AFP Alkerton Green Farm, Alkerton - 2 Silage Bunkers. Permitted

14.3 Council updated on the request from Boyer Planning for an online meeting to discuss the Examination Hearing Matter 6c (Stonehouse Cluster) which is on 18th May. The Clerk reported a meeting was held with Lawrence Turner and Olivia Davis from Boyer Planning today at 2pm with Cllr Spencer-Phillips and the Clerk. Lawrence will circulate a list of bullet points to focus on at the hearing next Thursday, which the councillors can comment on. The main points raised were: is the additional 22 hectares of employment land required, is there evidence of this need, and have brownfield sites been considered.

14.4 Cllr Spencer-Phillips updated on the proposed diversion of public footpath EEA 13 at Brunel Way. He had met onsite with GCC and the business owners. Lister Shearing want to make their site secure and reduce the risk to the public from trucks turning etc. The owner of the land has not responded to attempts to get them to clear it. Proposal is to move the footpath to the other side of the brook. An accessible new bridge will be built over the brook. Cllr Spencer-Phillips proposed we agree the new route with some conditions and note that the council are concerned about a footpath being diverted. All agreed.

8:00pm Cllr Bullock paused the meeting to move to the Annual Parish Meeting

8:10pm Annual Parish Meeting finished and council resumed AGM meeting

## 15. Groups / Reports

15.1 Getting Around Group

Cllr Spencer-Phillips reported the sign and post at the entrance to the bridleway at Westend are damaged and need replacing. Clerk to report to the GCC PROW officer. Also, the broken stile on Nupend Lane on the footpath to Great Oldbury has still not been replaced with a kissing gate. Clerk to contact Robert Hitchins. Also, Cllr Farnden added that the damaged fencing and the wooden stile at the end of Broadfield Road, owned by Stroud District Council has not been repaired. Clerk to contact Keith Gerard at SDC. Action: Clerk to follow up on these issues.

Clerk reported further quotes for the work on the Bath Rd pavement widening have been gathered following the exploratory works arranged and paid for by the PC. The quotes were for work to widen the existing tarmac footpaths

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to 1.4 - 1.5m width. This will not be along the full length as there are hedges and fences extending into the edge of the footpath in places. The top surface of the footpath is to be planed off and then the full width of the path overlaid with new tarmac, and the new back edge with be made up. The quote includes traffic management to highways specifications, which is costly. The quote for all works is around £55,000. Clerk has approached various sources of funding to consider contributing to this project.

The Clerk reported that a ditch in Westend had been causing problems for a resident. Highways looked at this and have spent money on CCTV and root cutting which has highlighted an issue with the ditch. The CCTV located a second pipe which discharges into the ditch and it was full of roots which has now been cleared. The report has highlighted that a parish council-owned ditch needs to be cleared as the outlet is below the water level and hence clearing the ditch will make this pipe function as it should do. The Clerk has asked a contractor to quote for clearing the ditch. Cllr Spencer-Phillips said the water table is very high now, so that may be adding to the problem, and it may reduce when the weather improves.

District Cllr Jones noted Grove Lave has sunk between the bridge and Westend farm in Eastington so there is a significant dip in the road. Cllr Farnden proposed the Getting Around Group do a drive around to check for issues this month.

Cllr Bullock requested GCC highways are asked if a 'beware of the hedgehog' sign is allowed on the grass verges. The path from Nupend Lane to Alfred Underwood Way has 2 bollards at the end to prevent unsuspecting cyclists (particularly children) from exiting directly into the path of cars and farm vehicles. The Clerk asked David Wilson Homes to install a chicane barrier at this exit. They confirmed they are overseeing the adoption of the roads and footpaths on the David Wilson Homes development with GCC through a Section 38 Agreement. The approved design for this junction between the path and road originally did not show any measure to minimise the risk of this issue occurring so they proactively installed the bollards. This was signed off by GCC Highways department prior to them being installed and has since been reviewed and considered by a Road Safety Audit where it was further recommended that corduroy paving should be installed for visually impaired persons. This has now been done. David Wilson Homes have referred our request for a chicane-type barrier to Highways, who have the ultimate decision on what needs to be installed.

## 15.2 Update from the Churchyard & Burial Ground Group

Cllr Farnden noted it is difficult to get the blue bin collected as it is difficult to push down the rough stone path. The Clerk responded that the top stone for the burial ground path has been delivered and the path should be finished by Wednesday next week. Cllr Farnden noted the old bench in the burial ground needs refurbishment or replacement. Cllr Bullock asked that the council ensures that it has not been donated in memory of someone, before considering any repairs or replacement. Action: Clerk to check the ownership of the bench.

The Clerk noted the fence along the orchard will soon need to be moved back a few rows to increase the width of the burial ground. Action: Clerk to notify the orchard group that the fence needs to be moved.

The Clerk reported that a row of daffodils are growing in the middle of 'the next in line' plot and there is nothing in the records for this plot. Council agreed not to use the plot for the time being.

## 15.3 Report from the Great Oldbury Group

Cllr Ward asked for access to the Great Oldbury parish council notice board. Cllr Coombs has the key. There has been some vandalism, the bus stop bin was kicked over and some perspex was damaged. Cllr Bullock recommended it is reported to the neighbourhood warden and the PCSO as well.

## **Finance / Procedures**

- 15.1 Council approved the April bank reconciliation, sent separately. The accounts will be considered at the next meeting, after the internal audit has been completed.
- 15.2 Council approved the payment of expenses for April 2023, sent separately.
- 15.3 Council received the staff timesheets for April 2023 (confidential and not for circulation), sent separately.
- 15.4 Clerk updated that the top layer stone for the burial ground path has now been delivered and the contractor has confirmed he will complete the job next week.
- 15.5 Council noted the full cost of the Bath Road pavement widening is £56,697 from a combined quote from 2 contractors. The Clerk has requested potential funding from several sources; SDC cycling and walking fund, SDC CIL funding, funding from the developer of the proposed Frocester solar farm, and GCC highways. This project will be discussed at the next highways meeting on 22 May.
- 15.6 Council has received the annual RoSPA play area inspection report and authorised the Clerk to arrange repairs as outlined in the report and repairs previously reported. It is mostly ground erosion issues at both the skate ramp and play park. Some fencing repairs are also required and some missing parts eg caps need replacing and some equipment needs a re-paint. Council to get 3 quotes for the work and ask our contractor for a quote to repair the fence and minor re-painting tasks.
- 15.7 Council approved the list of direct debits:  
Microsoft (EPC Office 365) monthly

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NEST (Clerk pension) monthly  
 Grapevine Telecom (mobile) monthly  
 Public Works Loan Board £2761.48 twice per year Apr/Oct  
 Information Commissioners Office (data protection) £35 (annual in July)  
 Easyspace domain name for NDP 2yearly billing period Feb

15.8 Council reviewed the Council's bankers and authorised signatories.

Lloyds Bank – Cllrs Bullock, Farnden, and agreed to add Cllrs Spencer and Linforth  
 Barclays Bank (Charlie Bullock Fund and Solar Farm Fund) – Cllrs Bullock and Farnden

15.9 Council approved the updated inventory of assets, same as last year with the addition of the 3 benches and 3 kissing gates. Clerk to add to the website.

15.10 Council approved the annual insurance premium of £1,016.76 with Zurich Insurers. The policy is due for renewal on 1st June.

15.11 Council considered purchasing a Mindray C1A Defibrillator and External Defibsafe2 Unlocked Heated Cabinet with additional telephone box fittings for location in the Nupend telephone box at a cost of £1,341.00. Cllr Maisey to check with his Nupend neighbours that they agree to losing the book share in the phone box to enable the defibrillator to be installed in the phone box. Clerk to check if the defibrillator can be fitted on the outside of the phone box.

9:00pm Suspend standing orders.

15.12 Council considered another defibrillator for Nastend, to be fitted on an outside post to a property. Council approved to purchase a defibrillator for Nastend.

15.13 Council agreed to appoint GAPTC to carry out the internal audit 2022-23 and noted they provide a competent and independent internal audit service.

15.14 Council to complete the internal audit and circulate the accounts 2022-23 to all councillors prior to submission to the external auditor PKF Littlejohn by 3 July.

15.15 Council noted internal financial control checks are carried out by Cllrs Bullock and Farnden. The invoices are checked against all bank payments.

15.16 Council ratified the payments made between meetings:

Inv Date	Payee	Details	Net	VAT	Gross	Budget
27/04/23	Salaries & Expenses	Salaries & Expenses March 2023	£1303.74	£0	£1303.74	Admin

15.17 To approve the accounts for payment:

Inv Date	Payee	Details	Net	VAT	Gross	Budget
04/05/23	HMRC	PAYE & NI April 2023	£475.48	£0	£475.48	Admin
04/05/23	A Loveridge	Grass cutting (April)	£1135.00	£0	£1135.00	Burial ground
17/04/23	RoSPA	Annual Inspection - Snakey Park & Skate Area	£209.50	£41.90	£251.40	Play area
04/05/23	GAPTC	GAPTC Annual Membership Subscription for 2023/2024	£692.75	£0	£692.75	Subs
19/04/23	SLCC	Annual membership of Society of Local Council Clerks	£80.24	£0	£80.24	Subs
07/04/23	npower	Electricity 1/4/22-31/3/23 for Nupend phone box	£63.25	£3.16	£66.41	GAG
04/05/23	M Simpson	Reimburse Clerk for purchase of coronation banner	£59.75	£11.95	£71.70	Coronation
04/05/23	M Simpson	Reimburse Clerk for RBL coronation bunting	£58.98	£6.08	£65.06	Coronation
<b>DIRECT DEBITS/STANDING ORDERS UPDATE</b>						
24/04/23	Microsoft	Microsoft 365 Licenses	£45.40	£9.08	£54.48	Office
02/05/23	Grapevine Telecom	Office mobile	£39.99	£7.99	£47.98	Office
11/04/23	NEST	Clerk's pension March 2023	£113.13	£0	£113.13	Pensions

An invoice was received today from Stonehouse Town Council for the purchase of 3 x councillor training for a total of £30. Council agreed to pay this and ratify it at the next meeting, as it has previously been approved.

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15.18 Payments received: VAT reclaim £2695.15, interest £48.88, Precept (half) £48540, CIL £1,920.50

16. To review and adopt policy documents:

- Council briefly discussed the Risk Management Schedule, updated in 2022. Cllr Maisey to review this policy further and circulate any changes.
- Council approved the Financial regulations, updated to the latest NALC template July 2019.
- Council approved the Code of Conduct, updated May 2023 based on the latest NALC template. Council noted the parish council adopted the Gloucestershire Unified Code of Conduct in March 2023.

17. To note correspondence.

Notice: The next meeting of Eastington Parish Council is Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023. 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 at [clerk@eastington-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@eastington-pc.gov.uk).

Meeting closed 21:17

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