



## ECKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** (subject to approval at the next meeting) of a virtual meeting of the Parish Council held Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 commencing at 7.00 pm

**Councillors Present:**

M. Hughes (Chairman), T Knight (Vice Chairman), G. Ransted, C. Yarnold, S Williamson and M. Wood.

**Also Present:** L. Yapp (Locum Clerk), County Cllr A. Hardman, District Cllr R. Davis and Mr J Field, applicant for co-option and one parishioner

Item	Minute Recorded	Action
254	<b>Apologies:</b> Cllr J. Bees and Cllr Goodlad	
255	<b>Declarations of Personal, Sensitive or Pecuniary Interests and Requests for Dispensations:</b> None received.	
256	<b>Approval of Minutes dated 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020:</b> The Minutes of meeting dated 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2010 were approved as true records. Proposed acceptance Cllr Knight, seconded Cllr Hughes – all in favour	
257	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:</b> No matters arising.	
258	<b>Councillor Co-option:</b> An application had been received from Mr J Field which had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded Cllr Knight to co-opt J Field to the Council with immediate effect, subject to a Declaration of Office being signed. All agreed.	J Field to be sent a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and a welcome pack before the next meeting.
259	<b>Public Participation:</b> One member of the public was in attendance. Nothing to raise but was interested to listen in to see how parish council matters were progressing.	
260	<p><b>County &amp; District Councillor Reports:</b> Written reports as circulated.</p> <p><b>District Cllr Report:</b> Cllr Davis reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WDC budget to be presented to Executive Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> February</li> <li>• Covid Cases for Wychavon are showing signs of reducing but this there is still immense pressure of the NHS</li> <li>• Cllr Knight questioned Cllr Davis on his response to the parish councils' comments made on the traveller site application, situated between Eckington and Bredon. Whilst fully aware that this is in the Bredon Ward, previous applications on the site have been forwarded to Eckington Parish Council as a consultee. Eckington Parish Council are fully aware of the lack of traveller sites and were trying to put forward a 'strategic response' rather than a</li> </ul>	

straightforward objection. Cllr Davis replied that he would look back through his records and report back to the clerk.

**Questions to Cllr Davis:**

Cllr Knight raised issue with Cllr Davis regarding the refuse collection lorries which repeatedly mount the grass verges and making a mess of the highway, in particular Stoney Furlong, Hacketts Lane and Upper End. Cllr Davis advised he would take this up with WDC

**County Cllr Report:** Cllr Hardman reported:

- Intensive care units at Worcester and Redditch hospitals are full, but they are taking cases in from Birmingham, with an average age of 54 years
- Ashton to Defford area side of Bredon Hill is seeing very low infection rates compared with the rest of the county (77 per 100,000)
- Transmission in the over 60's is reducing, but increasing within the over 40's
- Flooding – Cllr Hardman asked if there were any flooding issues after the recent heavy rainfall. Cllr Hughes reported that Avon Drive had problems with sewerage coming up through the drains. Severn Trent had been advised of the problem but were not very co-operative, an opinion shared by Cllr Hardman. The clerk advised that she had a contact details for senior management at Severn Trent and would forward this to Cllr Hughes. Additional issues raised were flooding outside the gypsy site, sewerage going under the railway line and Avon Road.

**Questions to Cllr Hardman:**

**Lighting on the Footbridge** – Cllr Hughes reported that she was of the opinion that this was a County Council responsibility, and rather than the lights being on a pole, could they be brought lower down to a more reasonable level – to make it easier to maintain/ repair and to reduce light pollution. Cllr Hughes would get more information for the next meeting.

**Gritting of Highways** – Cllr Hughes asked Cllr Hardman if there was as 'much grit spread' generally. A lot of concerns raised with ice on the roads. Cllr Hardman replied that there were different levels of spreading dependent on the weather conditions and that there were cost implications dependant on the different levels.

**PRoW to River** – a request to add this to the list of flooding issues.

**Road Closure 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021** – Notice from WCC to parish council – email confirming notice said not to be published. Cllr Hardman advised that there will be a second notice to follow. It was ok to go ahead and publish this.

**Road adj. to Memorial** – a query raised previously regarding parking issues – Cllr Hardman reported that a solution would be to double yellow the road, but this may receive objections from residents.

As a footnote, Cllr Hardman referred to the Eckington traveller site, he was not aware of any specific legislation which identifies the site of a 'pitch'.

261	<p><b>Financial &amp; Governance Matters:</b></p> <p><b>261.1 Payments &amp; Receipts for approval:</b>  Clerks Salary - £924.00  Clerks Expenses - £30  WDC – Cleansing and emptying of 2 x dog bins - £181.94  Cllr Training (CALC) - £30  David Bainbridge - £50.12 (Website Admin)  Survey Monkey - Cllr Yarnold explained the pricing and benefits of Survey Monkey. The council is currently using a free service which limits the number of surveys and depth of analysis of answers. To be able to have a limitless number of surveys and full analysis a subscription of either £99 per month or £384 per annum (plus VAT) is necessary. A proposal from Cllr Hughes that we subscribe to Option 3, at a cost of £384 per annum, seconded Cllr Williams – all in favour.  Cllr Hughes reported that Payments for October were approved but omitted from previous minutes in error</p> <p><b>261.2 Bank balances</b> were noted as £219,716.16 (incl. £200k NP reserves) &amp; £25,929.95</p> <p><b>261.3 Reserves / Budget 2021/22</b> – Cllr Hughes reminded the council of the purpose and need to hold certain reserves. Cllr Knight reported on work that had been carried out on the parish council finances with the previous clerk, predicting, where possible, the year end income and expenditure. A predicted underspend is estimated between £500 and £2,500, with a suggested put forward that this is put into a general Neighbourhood Plan reserve. It was stressed that the year end figures for 2020/21 were just a prediction and not guaranteed. This has been a difficult process due to the change in clerks over the past 12 months. Cllr Hughes suggested that the council should look at identifying certain reserves to certain purposes for the purposes of transparency at the financial year end – this was agreed by all as a useful move forward. Thanks were made to Cllr Knight for the time taken to produce this document, which had been circulated to Cllrs in advance of the meeting. Based on the draft budget a proposal was put forward to increase the budget requirement to £27,997 (precept £26865) – an increase of 2.3%. Proposed Cllr Knight, seconded Cllr Ransted – all in favour</p> <p><b>261.4 Email Accounts</b> – Cllr Hughes asked Cllrs if they had all moved over to the gmail format – as a means to separate Cllr emails from personal emails. Some Cllrs have yet to get this organised.</p> <p><b>261.5 Data Protection</b> – a comment had been made to the monitoring officer, but as yet, no response had been received.</p> <p><b>261.6 Locum Clerk / Update on Clerk / RFO</b> - The appointment of Locum Clerk was noted and adverts had been sent out for a permanent replacement. Three expressions of interest had been received.</p>	Invoices to be paid as agreed.
262	<b>Planning Matters:</b> Nothing to report	

263	<p><b>Eckington Neighbourhood Plan (NP):</b> Minutes are yet to be circulated but hope to be available for the next meeting.</p> <p>263.1 <b>Jarvis Street Development:</b> Cllr Hughes reported on confusion on reports from the school i.e., access to the playing field, type of activity and funding. A report had been received from the planning consultant and further discussion is necessary before any final decision is made. Consideration should be given to use of the facilities outside of school hours, for parishioners. Cllr Knight welcomed the input from Cllr Field at the next meeting, both using his experience and a fresh perspective.</p> <p><b>Cemetery</b> - Cllr Hughes reported that this was one area that needed some input – digitalising the information we hold and would an item for future discussion.</p> <p>263.2 <b>Survey Results</b> – 89 responses had been received but had not yet been analysed. An update would be given at the February meeting</p>	
264	<p><b>Parish Lengthsman Scheme:</b> One application had been received.</p>	Next agenda item.
265	<p><b>Reports from Councillors and the Clerk:</b> 265.1 Recreation Committee – Was unable to attend meeting of RC as it clashed with PC meeting – Minutes to be circulated’</p>	
266	<p><b>Correspondence received:</b> Correspondence has been circulated.</p>	
267	<p><b>Matters for Future Agendas / Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Committees / Working Groups</li> <li>• Digitalisation of Cemetery Records</li> <li>• Review of previous items for consideration which had been ‘lost’ during the change over of clerks, i.e., dog waste bins, grit bins</li> </ul>	
253	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b> Next meeting to be held virtually on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021.</p>	PC and Committee 2021 meeting dates to be confirmed and published.
	<p><b>There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm</b></p>	