



ECKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES (subject to approval at the next meeting) of a virtual meeting of the Parish Council held Tuesday 16th February 2021 commencing at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

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

Also Present: L. Yapp (Clerk), County Cllr A. Hardman, District Cllr R. Davis

| Item | Minute Recorded | Action |
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| 269 | Apologies: None received | |
| 270 | Declarations of Personal, Sensitive or Pecuniary Interests and Requests for Dispensations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Williamson – Confidential Business – Minute 275 | |
| 271 | Approval of Minutes dated 20th January 2021: The Minutes of meeting dated 20 th January 2021 were approved as true records. Proposed acceptance Cllr Williamson, seconded Cllr Knight – all in favour | |
| 272 | Matters Arising from Previous Minutes: No matters arising. | |
| 273 | Public Participation: No parishioners in attendance | |
| 274 | <p>County & District Councillor Reports: Written reports as circulated.</p> <p>County Cllr Report: Cllr Hardman had sent a full report prior to the meeting and was circulated to Cllrs. In addition, he reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covid – confirmed cases of Covid are now reducing. Worcs. Currently stands at 212 cases per 100,000 with the West Midlands recorded at 259, and the national figure is 203 per 100,000. Locally, the rate for the three wards south of Bredon Hill is 77 per 100,000 with just 6 cases in the past 7 days. Care homes are still a concern but WCC are working with care homes to limit visits from visitors except in exceptional circumstances. Lockdown and the vaccine are starting to have an effect. It is hopeful that schools will start to re-open on 8th March. Weather – the gritting programme worked well, and some flooding was reported between the two Bredon’s Norton turns. Some works carried out by Network Rail on the embankment seems to have blocked a drain. Nafford Road – It has been identified that non-existent ditches are causing the surface water to run down the sides of the roads, eroding at the grass verges. This has now been referred to Land Drainage Officer at WDC – and whilst it is not possible to have site visits at the moment due to Covid restrictions, a series of mitigations have been put in place. It was reported that there is an illegal access across the ditch which has been referred to planning enforcements – the clerk was asked to chase this up. It was suggested that when we get WDC Land Drainage Officer to visit, we ask him to take a look at the issues in Hacketts Lane at the same time. Lighting on Eckington Railway Foot Bridge – Cllr Hughes has been in | <i>Action Clerk</i> |

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| | <p>contact with an officer at WCC and will chase this up. A question was asked as to why the bulbs could not just be replaced. Cllr Hughes replied that at the present location it is difficult to replace and was also causing light pollution to near neighbours. It was felt that at the moment it is dangerous with no lighting and needs addressing as a matter of urgency. Cllr Hardman was in agreement that the bulbs were a priority to be replaced, with positioning to be looked at later.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments Raised by Cllrs: • Cllr Williamson asked Cllr Hardman if street lighting was a requirement for a pedestrian crossing, (a request put to her by a number of parishioners). Cllr Hardman that it was needed but he would check legislation and report back. • Cllr Knight referred to series of comments on the 'Eckington Facebook Noticeboard' regarding speeding traffic. He had replied to the comments asking for volunteers to become involved with the Community Speed Watch Scheme with no interest received which is disappointing. Cllr Hardman advised that the police would come out to carry out speed checks, but they do need to be pressured. <p>District Cllr Report: Cllr Davies reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WDC are still finalising their budget, with a recommendation to freeze the budget, for the fourth year in a row. • Covid has caused problems with the loss of revenue i.e. car parking charges • Next council meeting on 24th February • Cllr Davies encouraged Cllrs to communicate with him between meetings. • Cllr Davies referred to a question raised at the last meeting, regarding the traveller / gypsy site at Bredons Norton. Cllr Davies reported that, at the time, he had asked the planning officer for the application to be taken to full planning committee, but this would have been a decision to be made by Cllr Hardman (as his ward). | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 275 | Confidential Business – the council went into 'confidential discussion' | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 276 | <p>Financial & Governance Matters:</p> <p>1 Payments & Receipts for approval:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Locum Clerk Salary</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£29.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Farm Grounds Mtce</td> <td style="text-align: right;">191.94</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peninsular (3 months)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">462.09</td> </tr> <tr> <td>David Bainbridge</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50.12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AA Salt</td> <td style="text-align: right;">39.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CALC</td> <td style="text-align: right;">60.00</td> </tr> </table> <p>Bank Reconciliation had been circulated to Cllrs.</p> <p>Cllr Knight asked the clerk, from April 2021, to report expenditure against the 'budget heads' as previously agreed. The clerk advised that she would meet with Cllr Knight over the coming weeks to get a full understanding of the accounts.</p> <p>2 Bank balances were noted as £217,962.04 & £25,930.18.</p> <p>Proposed acceptance of accounts Cllr Bees, seconded Cllr Goodlad – all in favour.</p> <p>3. Review of Committees – Committee structure for the Resources Committee and Eckington Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Committee had been circulated to Cllrs. This included change of members, amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Resources Committee and Terms of</p> | Locum Clerk Salary | £29.40 | New Farm Grounds Mtce | 191.94 | Peninsular (3 months) | 462.09 | David Bainbridge | 50.12 | AA Salt | 39.00 | CALC | 60.00 | <p><i>Invoices to be paid as agreed.</i></p> <p><i>Clerk / Cllr Knight</i></p> |
| Locum Clerk Salary | £29.40 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <p>Reference for the NP Committee. Proposed acceptance Cllr Knight, seconded Cllr Williamson – all in favour</p> <p>4. Data Protection – Training CALC 26th April - Cllrs were reminded that GDPR training was a recommendation made by the ICO last summer and all Cllrs should attend. Cllr Hughes asked Cllrs to liaise with the clerk if there were any additional training courses they wanted to attend.</p> <p>5. Website Statistics for Q4 2020 It was agreed that the website did need looking at, with the Clerk advising the Council that new legislation requires all local authority websites (and this includes town and parish councils) needs to have an 'accessibility feature' . Cllr Field advised that he would be happy to be involved with this. Cllr Knight reported that there were some inaccuracies on the website, and this would need corrected as soon as possible. It was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the next meeting.</p> <p>6. To Consider Provision of Additional Dog Bins It had been identified that there was a need for dog waste bins by the school and Stoney Furlong. This was agreed by all Cllrs and the clerk would investigate costs for the bin, installation and emptying. The clerk suggested that perhaps Cllr Hardman may be willing to make a donation from his Members Budget.</p> <p>7. New Homes Bonus There is approx. £24,000 of NHB monies left for Eckington, and applications need to be with WDC by 21st March. Some suggestions had been put forward including PV panels, continuation of some of the footways, outdoor gym and improvement to the small woodland. Cllr Knight reported that the community land would need extensive ground works, levelling off and drainage before it would be fit for any kind of project. This has already been identified as a valuable community space / asset in the NP but would need this work doing in the first instance. The clerk would initially ask WDC for their thoughts as to whether the NHB could be used for this purpose. It was agreed that any application could be delegated to the Resources Committee</p> <p>8. Digitizing Cemetery Records / Review of Policy & Charges: Digitizing Records - A report had been circulated to Cllrs, detailing the extensive records currently held (as hard copies) for the Cemetery, with a suggestion that a management system, which includes database of records and ground surveys would be a positive way forward. It was agreed that this was an important way forward with Cllr Goodlad supporting the survey. There were no objections to further enquiries being made and Cllr Hughes/Clerk would liaise. An offer had been received from a resident to assist. It was agreed that a 'brief' would be out together before going out to tender. Charges - Cllr Hughes reported that after some research, there were vast differences in the costs charged for burials, with Eckington being considerably cheaper than many. It was agreed that this be looked at carefully by the Resources Committee – this was agreed. Cllr Knight commented that any survey carried out would identify future need/ demand, and based on the results, consideration could be given as to whether the cemetery is closed, or for use of those with a local connection only. This would require a review of the current policy and would be looked at again once any survey has been completed.</p> <p>The Clerk had been given authority to book a place on the next available Cemetery Compliance Course.</p> <p>9. Clerk / RFO Appointment – already covered in Confidential Business. In addition, Cllr Hughes asked Cllrs for their thoughts on reverting back to</p> | <p><i>Action Clerk</i></p> <p><i>Action Clerk</i></p> <p><i>Cllr Hughes / Clerk</i></p> <p><i>Resources Committee</i></p> |
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| | the second Tuesday of the month for future full parish council meetings. This was agreed by all Cllrs. A suggestion was made that the start time of meetings be brought forward. This may be a problem for any Cllrs who work, but would be something that could be considered for the future. | |
| 277 | <p>Planning Matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20/02358 – Land rear of Roman Way / East of Pershore Road – Approved • 20/02651 – 3 Jarvis Street – Approved • 20/02340 Proposed Orangery rear of Elm House, Jarvis Street – Refused • 20/02284 – Flat 1 The Garden Flat, Woollas Hall – Approved • 21/00215 – Drakes Bridge Road, Drakes Bridge Road – Retrospective Listed Building consent for internal post. <p>Re the Planning Working Group – it was decided that Cllr Field, with planning experience would be added to the list of members, along with Cllrs Knight and Ransted. Cllr Goodlad advised that she would be happy to step down from the group. Cllr Hughes reminded the Council of the protocol / guidance that is worked to and would send this to the Clerk and Cllrs</p> | <i>Action Cllr Hughes</i> |
| 278 | <p>Parish Lengthsman Scheme Two applications had been received and they would be interviewed by Cllr Knight and the Clerk. Cllr Hughes suggested the LM be a standard agenda item, moving forward, as an opportunity for Cllrs to raise any issues that would require action by the LM</p> | <i>Action Cllr Knight / Clerk</i> |
| 279 | <p>Reports from Councillors and the Clerk: there were no reports, other than Cllr Wood had advised that he would be happy to keep an eye on village trees and report back, particularly those on any new development, so that they could be reported back to the Council, who would make contact with the developer. This was considered a good idea</p> | |
| 280 | <p>Correspondence received: Correspondence has been circulated.</p> | |
| 281 | <p>Matters for Future Agendas / Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Bees reported that he hoped to be in a position to report back on the Hydro Project at the next meeting • Cllr Ransted raised the point of excess funds being held in one account. This would be addressed by the Resources Committee now that a permanent clerk was in place • Nature Network Event - Cllrs were asked to notify the clerk if there was any interest | <i>Resources Committee</i> |
| 282 | <p>Date of Next Meeting: Next meeting to be held virtually on Tuesday 9th March 2021.</p> | PC and Committee 2021 meeting dates to be confirmed and published. |
| | There being no further business the meeting closed at 9pm | |