

# CASTLE EATON PARISH COUNCIL

**THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING and AGM of the PARISH COUNCIL held on THURSDAY, MAY 26, 2016, at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.**

## MINUTES

### PRESENT

Cllr W Hughes (chairman)  
Cllr L Saunders  
Cllr D Sainsbury  
Borough Cllr Mrs M Penny  
8 residents  
A Gorton (clerk)

### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

#### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr and Mrs B James

#### **2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAY 14, 2015**

The Chairman explained that these Minutes had been circulated previously, had been published on the website and signed off at the Meeting of August 27, 2015

#### **3 REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The Parish Council has been dominated by the Community Benefit payments during the last year. The initial elation of receiving the money was soon suppressed when the responsibility of what had arrived was fully realised! This small Council is not used to such large sums and does not have the infrastructure. It took many days of research and careful deliberation to establish what the money could be spent on, how it could be paid out and the criteria for deciding what qualified for payments.

We tried desperately hard to encourage consultation with residents and asked for suggestions for how the money should be spent. We received quite a lot, not all of which would be possible, but when we went back to people and asked if they could elaborate on their suggestion and do a bit of research we got – silence! The only people who responded with firm proposals were the Village Hall and the Play Area. Consequently that is where the money has been spent so far. There is still plenty of money left in the fund so if there are any firm proposals we would be pleased to receive them.

Our Clerk, Alan Gorton, has again had to sit through several meetings and plough through many reports from the Borough and other bodies, with great patience. His comprehensive advice to Councillors has again been very valuable, not to mention sometimes entertaining! He has also again persistently chased down the people responsible for maintaining our roads and achieved some results, despite the severe budget constraints placed upon Councils.

I am very pleased to see fresh faces getting involved with the Village Community

Committee and rejuvenating it. This has meant that the VCC could take back responsibility for organising the Village Fete and a great job they have made of it. We have continued our financial support to help to maintain the Village Hall and the Post Office. It is pleasing to see that they are still being well used. We have changed the contract for maintaining the Playing Field and I am pleased to see that David Newman Contractors are doing a good job.

Unfortunately we have lost one of our Councillors, as David Price has stood down after many years of service. I thank David for all the hard work and dedication he has put in. This means that we have a vacancy for a Councillor, as elections are not due for 2 years and nobody has called for a casual election. We have advertised the vacancy and will co-opt some-one in due course, although we have not been flooded with applications!

I would like to thank our Borough Councillor, Maureen Penny, and all my fellow Councillors for all their help and support during the year.

I believe that the Parish Council has again fulfilled its function in looking after the interests of the village.

W H Hughes, chairman

#### **4 REPORT BY THE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

The purpose of a Borough Councillor attending a Parish meeting is to offer advice and help wherever it is deemed necessary, and I hope you agree that I have done that in the last year. It is also to bring news of what is happening in Borough that may affect the Parish – I have advised you of grants that you can apply for and what help the Localities team can offer; I also helped on the legalities of spending the donation from the solar park. For me these are quite simple tasks as there doesn't seem a lot for me to do most of the time: however I have helped where roads and drains have been a problem.

I am also here if parishioners have problems that they feel they need help on, and I have had some of these this year. I have supported your residents in finding leaks, having a bungalow reconfigured to provide for a disabled bathroom, as well as advising on planning issues – I may not always give the answers or support that people expect but I have always tried to be honest in my appraisals on any given situation.

Unfortunately I have not been able to attend all your meetings as my commitments with SBC sometimes clash and this could get worse in the next couple of years as I take up my role as Deputy Mayor, thence Mayor of Swindon. I am always available be it by phone or by email if you need to contact me.

I hope you feel I have assisted you appropriately in the past year and I look forward to supporting you in the year ahead.

Mrs Maureen Penny, Borough Councillor

#### **5 REPORT BY VILLAGE COMMITTEES/GROUPS**

##### **Village Hall Trustees**

The Village Hall continues to function successfully due to the efforts and dedication of the management team, the general committee and certain villagers who are always willing to assist when required.

The condition of the Village Hall is currently being improved with the assistance of the available Community Benefit grant. A new boiler, new double glazing and the installation of LED lighting throughout the building will make the Village Hall more environmentally friendly and definitely more cost-effective to run.

The Hall continues to be used by villagers and local groups on a regular basis.

The Post Office continues to operate and contribute to a popular Coffee Morning which is still being organised by a few ladies in the village and continues to provide a very welcome income to the Village hall.

Finally, a thank you to the Castle Eaton Parish Council for their assistance and patience in connection with our Community benefit applications and related issues.

A Trinder, chairman

## **Ladies Club**

The Ladies Club has had another successful year. New members have joined the group, replacing some who have left. Therefore the number of members has been maintained.

Once again the members of the club have enjoyed varied and entertaining meetings, with speakers from outside and with fellow members.

Last June we had a wonderful evening painting on silk scarves. It was fascinating to learn how to use salt with paint to create particular patterns and we were all pleased with our creations.

In July we had an interesting talk about acupuncture, including its origins, history and uses. It was a most thought-provoking evening!

Lynda Warren spoke about her association with the Wyvern Theatre during the September meeting. She told us about the many famous people she met at the Theatre and she gave us a number of 'behind the scenes' anecdotes.

We all had to do exercises at the October club meeting because the talk and demonstration was about Pilates! We learnt that this type of exercise is extremely beneficial as long as the teacher is well-qualified and monitors each person closely when the exercises are taking place.

The title of the talk in November was 'My Life in Uniform'. It was given by one of our members, Margaret, and it gave us all an insight into the working life of a prison officer. It was a captivating evening!

In December the ladies enjoyed a meal together at 'The Old Boathouse' in South Cerney. This was a very successful evening.

The Annual General Meeting took place in January, when it was agreed by the majority of members to increase the annual fee. This was due to the fact that many speakers have raised their charges. However, some members were opposed to the increase and it will be reviewed at the next AGM.

Luke, a charity worker for an organisation in Ghana, spoke to us in February. The charity helps people to start and improve their businesses. Some of the products from these businesses were displayed at the meeting. There were some beautiful fabrics and artefacts available to view and to buy.

In March the group heard about a wildlife charity which is based in Cricklade. Barry and Andrew brought some of the wooden items which they make to sell in order to help to provide funds for the 'Oak and Furrows Wildlife Rescue centre'. We were made aware of the worthwhile work that is carried out by this charity.

'Lady She' provided an extremely entertaining evening at the April meeting. She told us about interesting episodes in her life and she showed us some lovely vintage clothing and jewellery.

Finally, at the beginning of this month, we spent a very pleasant evening making flower arrangements. Sheila, one of our members, demonstrated how to make three stunning arrangements, then we all made our own versions of one of the displays. We all thoroughly enjoyed the experience!

Mrs Judy Parker, treasurer and convenor.

## **Gardening Club**

The Gardening Club has had another very successful year. The Club membership has increased slightly but new members are always welcome.

Our speakers last season were varied and very well attended.

Once again the Club members contributed to the Village Fete and we had a successful but tiring day.

The annual Flower and Produce Show was as usual very well attended and supported by the members and villagers; the exhibits were a credit to all the exhibitors and received credit from the judges.

Our annual trip was to the RHS garden at Wisley where we had a very pleasant day.

Finally, a thanks-you to all the Garden Club Committee members and the Club members who have made this another enjoyable and interesting year.

A Trinder, chairman

## **Church Warden's Report**

We have now completed four of our ten year contract with English Heritage (now known as Historic England); it does not seem that long since the roof was completed and indeed Jean joined us.

It is always somewhat confusing in as much as the yearly accounts are to December 31 whereas this report is from one Annual Church meeting to another. That being the case, apart from having the lightning conductor tested (now biannually) and the regular servicing of the boiler, fire extinguishers and organ tuned we have had a relatively quiet year. Although just before the Carol service in December we experienced unusually high north winds which hit the rear roof causing some of the plaster to be blown down from the ceiling. We are extremely grateful to Mike Theobald for repairing the hole. Fortunately it was just wind and no rain entered the building although there is a further suspect area which needs to be watched should we have winds from the north in the future.

After having the bell wheels changed it was suggested that one of the old ones be stained and hung in commemoration. In July it was positioned on the wall facing the door and Dawn compiled a brief description for any interested visitors. In fact we do have many visitors, being on the Thames Path, not all sign the book but it still makes for interesting reading. The bell ringers, though few in number, have now joined forces with those from Ashton Keynes and still ring for a service once a month.

We hosted a concert with the Kentwood Choir in August and the Harvest Supper in October: both were a great success and again many thanks to our band of helpers.

We are very fortunate in having the backing of the village when it comes to not only fund raising but also keeping both the building and the church yard tidy. So again I would like to thank all those who help in many ways. I think there are two people who deserve a special thank you: our treasurer, Sheila, who along with doing an outstanding job is also our Pastoral Care Officer and chief fund raising officer, and to Barry James for persuading people to join the mowing rota and keeping an eye on both the outside of the building and the grounds.

I trust that the coming year will continue to see our congregation grow and keep the general happy atmosphere that we are currently enjoying.

## **Police**

Below are the crime figures from April 2015 to March 2016:

April	1 public disorder/2 drug offences
July	2 Road Traffic Collisions/1 Traffic offence (not RTC)
March	1 theft non-dwelling/2 burglaries

## VCC

The VCC continues to run one fund-raising event a year to avoid conflict with other much-needed fund raising on behalf of the PCC. More events would not be viable for such a small community.

Items of significance in 2015-2016 period:

- 1 2015 hit a significant low point with the need to cancel the Barn Dance due to very poor ticket sales by the villagers.
- 2 The Playground inspection was carried out to ensure we keep on top of any issues and maintain our responsibilities regarding the upkeep of the Park. The same items were identified as in previous years.
- 3 The VCC were very grateful to receive a donation from the Parish Council from the Community Benefit Fund to enable an upgrade of the swings to cater for toddlers, and to install a larger flatter swing. These were installed in the Spring and some items identified in the safety inspection have been resolved.
- 4 Following requests to the village community the VCC now have additional volunteers on the Committee and consequently have taken back responsibility for co-ordination of the Fete from the Parish Council. This was held on May 21 and raised £1,100 profit for the village groups.
- 5 The VCC would like to thank all the Committee for their support and to all those who made the Fete a success.

Following the Barn Dance cancellation in 2015 some villagers voiced disappointment and as a result we have decided to try again. The Barn Dance will be held on July 16: the VCC would ask the village community to please support the event this year.

D Price, chairman

## 6 RECESS

6.1 The clerk reported receipt of an email from a resident concerning the number of foxes which come into the village and the trouble they are causing. All present agreed that that this was an increasing problem. The Chairman described several contributing factors but especially how plastic bags containing food were left at the sides of bins and this was attracting scavenging. It was reported that some people are also feeding the foxes.

It was AGREED that an item in the next Newsletter would draw attention to this problem and ask residents to take care with food in bags and not to feed the foxes.

It was reported that there is also an issue with rats, which seems particularly in places where residents keep poultry.

6.2 Cllr Saunders noted an increase in fly-tipping in recent months. Cllr Penny would ask the Cabinet Member to include a note in his Newsletter about both foxes and fly-tipping.

## **PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

### **1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR-PERSON**

The clerk called for nominations for Chairperson for the coming year. Cllr Saunders proposed Cllr Hughes and this was seconded by Cllr Sainsbury. There were no other nominations and Cllr Hughes took the chair.

### **2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

It was proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Saunders that Cllr Sainsbury be the Vice-Chairman for the coming year.

There were no further nominations.

It was AGREED that Cllr Sainsbury become a signatory to cheques to replace former Councillor D Price.

### **3 3.1 REPORT OF RESIGNATION OF CLLR D PRICE**

The Chairman reported the resignation of Cllr D Price and outlined the procedure for replacing the councillor. There had been no call for an election. The Parish Council would therefore move towards co-opting a member.

### **3.2 CO-OPTION OF A COUNCILLOR**

The Chairman proposed and it was AGREED unanimously that Stuart Gruszka be co-opted as a serving Councillor.

### **4 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

The Chairman referred to the generic declaration of interest by association, which remains extant.

No further declarations were made at this time

### **5 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF FEBRUARY 18, 2016, AND EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF APRIL 7, 2016**

The Minutes had been circulated previously and were AGREED as a fair and accurate record. They were signed by the Chairman and clerk.

### **6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

6.1 Road to Kempsford and chevron sign. The clerk reported his unsuccessful attempts to ensure both the chevron sign and the 'Stop' sign onto the C114 were replaced.

The clerk was instructed to impress on Wilts CC that this road was an official overflow for RIAT and also to inform Marston Meysey Parish Meeting of the problem.

Cllr Penny noted that there was no cross-county co-operation on highways but would take the matter up appropriate staff in SBC.

### **7 COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND**

The Chairman reported that nothing was outstanding.

Cllr Saunders noted that the outstanding sum of money had still not been placed into an interest-bearing account and stated that advice was needed on this.

## 8 PLANNING MATTERS

The clerk reported (a) application S/TC/15/1869 – erection of a monopole on Droveaway – refused, March 4

(b) application for erection of a single-storey dwelling on land opposite 1, Long Row – approved

## 9 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chairman drew attention to recent decisions concerning SBC Local Plan and certain Parish Neighbourhood Plans and to the on-line petition that had been circulated to all Councillors. He reminded Councillors that the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Castle Eaton had been discussed some years ago when it had been decided not to go ahead but clearly the issues surrounding the existence of a Plan had changed. Now, if a Plan is in place it is evidence to be taken into account in any planning decision. He asked if Councillors thought the time had come to re-consider the creation of a Plan for the parish.

Cllr Penny explained the processes which Highworth Town Council had been going through, emphasising the complex legal requirements.

It was AGREED that SBC Planning Dept (Forward Planning Section) should be invited to the meeting in August to explain what was involved.

## 10 FINANCE

9.1 The clerk submitted the Annual Accounts 2015-2016 for approval – proposer and seconder needed.

It was proposed by Cllr Sainsbury and seconded by Cllr Saunders that these Accounts be accepted. This was AGREED unanimously.

9.2 The Chairman signed the appropriate section of the Annual Return

9.3 It was AGREED that Mrs Eleanor Newman should be asked to undertake the Internal Audit on behalf of the Parish Council

9.4 Bank balances

<b>Bank account (01529286) balance as at May 24, 2016</b>	<b>73,175.14</b>
Cheques for signature	
Community First – insurance	150.78
WALC – subscriptions	95.72
SBC - grounds maintenance	335.90
Castle Eaton Village Hall (Miles Windows)	474.00
Castle Eaton Village Hall (JC Electrical)	214.00
Lockmasters	534.17
Village Internet (ink cartridge)	14.50
Castle Eaton Village Hall (grant + room hire)	756.00
Castle Eaton Village Hall – PO rental	250.00
Meysey Hampton PCC – grant for magazine	50.00
A Gorton – salary	342.05
- expenses	14.87
Post Office Ltd – PAYE to HMRC	70.45
Castle Eaton Village Hall ( DWH Gas Services)	3,230.14
Miles Window Systems	1,896.00
OSE Security Systems Ltd	1,926.00
WALC Swindon Cttee – subs	14.50
Total cheques	10,379.08
<b>Balance after cheques</b>	<b>62,796.06</b>

**11 CORRESPONDENCE**

- Prepared News Media – What’s New in the Public Sector – weekly
- Public Sector Executive – weekly
- Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group – Newsletter – weekly
- Government News - weekly
- What’s On in Cricklade – March 2016
- WALC Newsletter – March, 2016
- WALC Newsletter – April, 1026
- WILD Project Newsletter – Spring, 2016
- Parish News Online – weekly
- Clerks and Councils Direct – monthly
- WALC Newsletter – May, 2016
- Police & Crime Commissioner – Newsletter, Spring, 2016

**12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was AGREED that a meeting would be held on June 22 in order to sign off the Governance section of the Annual Report following the Internal Audit, and to sign any cheques relating to the Community Benefit Fund  
It was AGREED that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on August 25 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

SIGNED ..... (Chairman)

..... (clerk)

..... (date)



