

CASTLE EATON PARISH COUNCIL

**MEETING of the PARISH COUNCIL held on THURSDAY,
August 31, 2017, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Cllr W Hughes (chairman)
Cllr D Sainsbury (vice-chairman)
Cllr L Saunders
Cllr D Naidu
Cllr S Gruszka
Borough Cllr Mrs M Penny
4 residents
A Gorton (clerk)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were given.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No specific declarations made but the general interest by association was declared.

3 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND PARISH COUNCIL AGM OF MAY 18, 2017

The Minutes, previously circulated, were accepted as a fair and accurate record, and signed by the Chairman and clerk

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

4.1 The clerk reported repairs to the C114 road, and thanked Cllr Penny for her intervention on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Councillors AGREED that the partially re-surfacing was an improvement but noted that this did not include all the pot-holes being filled.

4.2 The Chairman noted that the 'Give Way' sign at the junction with the C117 had not been re-aligned. The clerk was instructed to emphasise to Wiltshire Council the danger involved and the time this sign has been inoperative.

5 DISTRIBUTION OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT

The clerk reported receipt of a document from SBC asking which formula

the Parish Council would prefer for future distributions.
It was AGREED that the preferred formula was the one used at present.

6 ADOPTION OF SERVICES FROM SBC – ARRANGEMENTS FOR CARRYING THEM OUT

6.1 The Chairman noted the services concerned, ie
Grass cutting, for which steps had already been undertaken
permission to carry out tree maintenance
street cleaning – litter picking, sweeping of pavements
litter-bin emptying, which a volunteer was undertaking
graffiti and fly-posting removal
washing road signs and bollards

It was AGREED to defer this agendum until next year, when further discussion will be held to decide how to make arrangements for carrying out the services. This could involve a ‘Village clean-up day’.

6.2 The Chairman noted that in discussions earlier in the year, SBC StreetSmart had promised to provide two litter-bins to stand on the Village Hall car park area, and which would be emptied along with other refuse. The clerk was instructed to ask SBC for these bins.

RECESS

A resident (BW) described work done on the Village Hall office area, and the supply of computing/printing equipment.

Cllr Sainsbury reported erection of a new name plate at Blackford Lane, which Cllr Naidu had instigated with SBC, but wondered if it was on the wrong side of the road as it was not visible travelling from the major part of the village. Cllrs Sainsbury and Naidu will discuss this with SBC.

Cllr Saunders drew attention to the number of excessively heavy lorries ignoring the 7.5 ton weight limit signs and travelling through the Conservation Area.

It was AGREED that the clerk should inform Swindon Borough Council Highways Dept that the signs at the junction of School Lane and The Street were not clearly visible, and Wiltshire Council that the ones at the junction of the C117 must be made more visible.

The Chairman asked all present to note the names and registration numbers of offending lorries and report these to the police.

Cllr Penny will arrange for the SBC Director Highways to meet with Cllr Saunders on site.

7 FUTURE BUDGET – PRECEPT REQUIREMENTS

7.1 Cllr Naidu circulated two papers illustrating differences between parishes within the Borough in population sizes and precepts made on SBC (addendum 1). He noted that this Parish Council had the lowest precept per capita. He asked for this to be borne in mind when this

Parish Council sets a precept for 2018-2019 financial year. He also advised the necessity of increasing the precept to meet the cost of services adopted by the Parish Council.

Cllr Sainsbury wondered why it had become almost a tradition with this Parish Council not to make increase in precept even when this appeared necessary.

The Chairman noted the time-table for agreeing a budget for the 2018-2019 year and setting a precept, and asked Councillors to think carefully about it from now on.

A resident (AB) asked about rate capping and the Chairman explained.

8 INVESTMENT OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

Cllr Naidu drew attention to the fact that all the Community Benefit Fund was in a non-interest bearing account and questioned whether this is wise use of a substantial amount of money, as interest was being lost. He suggested that the whole of the Fund could be placed on deposit, assuming the inter-account transfer was straightforward and without penalty.

The clerk explained that Cllr Saunders had on three occasions recommended this but no action had been taken and outlined the procedure according to the current bankers.

Following discussion the Chairman considered 50% of the balance could be transferred to an interest-bearing account.

Cllr Gruszka put forward an amendment that 75% of the balance could be invested.

The Chairman decided that until the budget had been finalised, 50% of the balance should be transferred to an interest-bearing account.

The clerk was instructed to find out the terms and conditions on which this transfer could be made.

9 COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND APPLICATIONS

The Chairman reported receipt of two applications for assistance from the Fund, viz

- 1 a request from the Village Hall Trustees to enable them to buy four small tables, to be purchased from the manufacturer at a cost of £518.00. The Chairman proposed that this be agreed and it was AGREED unanimously;
- 2 a request from a group of residents intending to establish a village website seeking a grant of £2,000 to buy computer and printing equipment and for on-going annual expenditure. The Chairman and Cllr Sainsbury drew attention to the Parish Council's policy to consider meeting capital expenditure but, to date, not on-going costs.

Cllr Gruszka questioned the costings given and made clear he could not support the project as currently proposed, especially purchasing hardware which was not necessary; he did support, in principle,

assistance with on-going costs but not initial purchase of hardware.

Following discussion it was AGREED that the Parish Council felt able to support this project in principle but the Parish Council would require the VCC to report with a detailed, costed proposal, with

- a. an assurance of the long-term governance of the scheme, and
- b. a report about how the VCC will deal with the issue of on-going costs.

10 PLANNING MATTERS

The clerk reported receipt of several planning matters, ie.

- 10.1 S/17/0171, S/17/0178 – Castle Eaton Farm biomass plant – retention of earth bund and 2m high security fencing – approved 6.7.2017
- 10.2 S/17/1178 – Castle Eaton Farm – extend period of land used as solar park – comments sent to SBC 4.8.2017
- 10.3 S/17/1260 – land opposite 1, Long Row – comments forwarded to SBC 4.8.2017
- 10.4 S/HOU/17/0031 – Appletrees – notice of appeal to Housing Planning Inspectorate.
- 10.5 S/17/0718TB – Bio Methane Castle Eaton Ltd – erection of carbon capture plant, etc – granted 11.8.2017

11 FINANCE

11.1 Banking arrangements

Cllr Naidu reported that internet banking was now a possibility for the Parish Council and outlined its benefits of streamlining and speeding up payments. He was supported by Cllr Penny.

It was AGREED that this should be investigated further with a report to the next meeting.

11.2 Current balances and cheques for payment

Balance on account 01529286 as at 29.8.2017		£50,197.72
Cheques for signature		
Castle Eaton Village Hall (VCC secure cupboard)	£280.70	
Castle Eaton Village Hall (grant and room hire)	£756.00	
Village Community Cttee (cupboard)	227.78	
(bunting)	472.00	
(lights)	218.92	£918.70
Mrs E Newman (internal audit)		30.00
A Gorton (salary)	342.05	
(expenses)	34.10	£376.15
Post Office Ltd (PAYE to HMRC)		70.45
 Total cheques		 £2,432.00
Balance after cheques presented		£47,765.72

(after payments:

- i defibrillator a/c stands at £542.00
- ii Community Benefit Fund stands at £47,812.86
- iii transfer of services a/c stands at £562.50)

next tranche of precept due Sept 30 = £2,655.61

VAT repayment of £2,348.83 has been credited to the Parish Council and is additional to the above bank balance figures.

It was AGREED unanimously that these accounts be received and payments made.

12 CORRESPONDENCE

Public Sector Executive – twice weekly

What’s On In Cricklade – Monthly

WALC Newsletter – May, 2017, June, 2017, July, 2017, August, 2017

SBC Members Bulletin – weekly

Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group – monthly

Prepared Media – twice weekly

Parish Online Live – weekly

Local Government News – weekly

Clerks Direct – monthly

Police & Crime Commissioner’s Community Action Fund – 4.7.2017

North Swindon Community Policing Team – 5.7.2017

Community First Headlines – August, 2017

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 13, 2017, at 7pm. Should applications come forward for the Community Benefit Fund, it may be necessary to hold an Extra-ordinary meeting in October.

Signed (Chairman)

..... (clerk)

..... (date)

PLANNING MATTERS

S/17/1178 – Castle Eaton Farm - extend period of time for use of land as solar park until December 31, 2054 (NB: only Condition 2 of planning approval notice has changed)