

Easterton Parish Council Meeting

Monday 25th October 2021 7.30 p.m.

Minutes

Present: Cllr Chris Saunders (CS) (Chair), Cllr Ben Myerscough (BM) (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Judy Boyt (JB) Cllr Richard Brooks (RB) and Cllr Andy Colley (AC). In attendance: Gill Tatum Parish Clerk, 2 Parishioners. The meeting started at 7.30pm.

- 1 **Absence apologies and Declaration of interests** Members are bound by the provisions of the Code of Conduct and are required to declare either personal or prejudicial interests; Apologies: Cllr Anthony Snook (AS) and Wiltshire Councillor Dominic Muns.
- 2 **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 4th October 2021.** The minutes were agreed by all Councillors present and signed on behalf of the Council by the Chair as a true record.
- 3 **Adjournment for Open Meeting;**
2 Parishioners present, no questions.
- 4 **Planning – to gain Statutory View of the Parish Council as Consultee**
 1. **PL/2021/09083 Court Close Farm, 2 White Street, Easterton, Devizes, Wilts, SN10 4NZ Installation of Sky satellite dish to gable end of kitchen extension.** Clerk
After discussion resolved “No objection”. Action Clerk to inform Wiltshire Council
- 5 **Governance Issues**
 1. **ROSPA report for the playground; actions following recommendations from the recent inspection of the playground.** The Chair ran through the identified actions from the report; Cllrs AS (previously agreed), Cllr RB & AC will help with the weeding, moss removal and vegetation cutting/soil adding requirements identified and the Chair will address the tightening of bolts for the loose swing seat eye-bolts. The additional “watch” maintenance area identified for the chain bridge will be again checked during the regular checks carried out at the playground. Chair, Cllrs AS, AC & RB
 2. **Required nomination of Cllr Chris Saunders to be the official Parish Council representative on the Village Hall Management Committee (following legal guidance issued on the relationship of Parish Councils and separate Village Hall Trusts).** The Clerk had previously circulated guidance issued from ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) which had identified under Local Councils and the Standards Regime (or “ethical framework”) the need to when issues relating to a Village Hall management committee are raised of council members who sit on that committee may have to declare an interest. If they are however nominated representatives of the Parish Council on the Village Hall management committee this does not have to be declared. **A motion to nominate Cllr Chris Saunders as the official PC reps for the Village Hall was proposed by Cllr JB, seconded by Cllr RB and unanimously (from Cllrs present) agreed. Action: Clerk to inform Village Hall Management Committee that Cllr CS is its official PC reps.** Clerk
- 6 **Wiltshire Climate Strategy and Natural Environment Plan “Towards a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Wiltshire”; supporting the resilience of our communities, businesses and wildlife in a changing world.**
How can Easterton Parish respond to implementing a response towards Climate Change?

What projects can we instigate/support locally?

What can we do to encourage change of behaviour, make it more cost effective or just easier to help change?

Cllr JB circulated a briefing paper (based upon the Wiltshire Community Environmental Toolkit) with guidance on creating a community plan, which she talked through. Some of the main aspects highlighted; need to engage with our community, need help and volunteers beyond the P Cllrs to help put ideas into action, consideration of a Community Interest Company (CIC) in the longer term to help with grants and funding, need to survey/information gathering of our existing environment to identify biodiversity, soils & geology, greatest assets, to identify an Action Plan and Vision for our Parish. Funding; it was noted that crowd funding could be a successful route.

Initial ideas discussed; build a network of biodiversity (lot of hedgerows, wildlife corridors associated with our rights of way network), water; stream and dewponds on the Plain can we enhance them protect newts and re-establish pond life, any areas for additional ponds? Solar Panels – should we be encouraging street purchasing, any good for Village Hall (unfortunately has been looked out but wrong facing aspect), should we encourage plant native tree planting, hedgerow planting, small areas on farm land (related to forthcoming ELMS opportunities), emphasis on keeping grass lawn areas (grass absorbs 34% of carbon), encourage to save water (sponsor water butt provision), encourage to drive less (electric charging point at the village hall), encourage better cycle routes and discourage motorbikes using tracks/bridleways.

Other partners that could help us were identified; Wiltshire Community Land Trust, Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Climate Alliance, plus more national organisations such as Centre of Ecology and Hydrology and Wildlife Trusts. It was also noted that we have (and possibly more yet to be discovered) specialists who live in the Parish such as a retired agronomist (grasslands). Who is out there and prepared to help?

Implementing a Community Environment Plan; survey required habitats and species, to identify current ecological values. Link a plan to regional networks, link to landowners for longer term strategy. Our Parish was known for Walnut growing in the past should we be re-establishing orchards and walnut trees?

The meeting also discussed case studies and projects engaging specific areas of the community like schools (www.ridian.co.uk) food composters in schools for food waste and associated growing your own via allotments.

One immediate idea (and Statutory duty of a PC) is to review the interest in creating allotments on the PC owned field adjacent to the School and Burial Ground at Drove Lane. Would there be interest particularly lots of new community at Strawberry Fields? Help with encouraging seasonal food eating, local produce sharing and even supply to pub etc. It is also known Market Lavington Parish Council also looking at finding land for allotments, so a potential partner for this.

What can we do individually? Discussion on providing information via the Echoes/website to help inform our Parishioners i.e./ if you have low income below £30k and lower Energy Performance Certificate for your house you may be eligible for home improvement grants (insulation etc.) www.swindonwiltshire-lad-applications.com , switch to a green supplier, turn your heating down, LED light bulbs, 30 degree washing cycles. Also known parishioners are already establishing “No dig” gardens within the Parish that could help encourage others.

It was then discussed about local groups within the Parish we could engage and help encourage/set pledges towards environmental improvements; Village Hall (Smart meter investigation?), Bowls Club (walk/car share to Hall?). School already have a focus on environmental issues and this could be encouraged and supported.

Ideas for next steps;

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start a regular feature within the Echoes (and website) on what individuals can do to enhance and improve their environment, increase their wellbeing and maybe even save money. To start with a Chair/PC Vision for the Parish 2. Consider an event (first one in new year, second in Spring?) held at the Village Hall for a First drop in over a Saturday; can you volunteer to help (initially surveys?), skills you can offer?, ideas you can offer?; large maps in detail of the Parish we can get parishioners to fill in i.e. / known habitat feature, old trees, pond, hedgerow needing replanting, known bat area, etc. etc. Aim to gauge interest, help identify volunteers and priority areas for first actions and encourage New Year’s resolutions/pledges for changes in behaviour. 3. Second event; (Spring?) could get an ecologist to conduct a guided walk around our Parish, bigger event with trade stands (solar panels, wildlife trusts), speaker?? To engage our Parishioners and scope out what specialist support might be available. To help identify priority projects. 4. As statutory duty and as known ML PC also interested in establishing allotments, see if field adjacent to burial ground could be suitable and start to canvas any interest with creating areas for allotments. 5. “Do Nation” national brand https://www.wearedonation.com/en-gb/ (make a pledge or run a campaign to encourage pledges). See if we can promote and add an Easterton PC Pledge. PC to commit to an Environmental Policy – to be drafted for consideration next meeting. | <p>Cllr
JB/Chair</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> |
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The Chair thanked Cllr JB for all her hard work on this to date, for the 2 Parishioners attending for their views and encouragement and to all the Cllrs/Clerk for an interesting discussion and start on this process for the Parish.

7 **Next Meeting**
Monday 22nd November at 7.30pm Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm. Signed as approved: Chairman
Chairman Dated: 2021