

MINUTES OF MEETING OF EASTON PARISH COUNCIL
held on Tuesday 11th May 2010
at Easton Village Hall

PRESENT Cllr T Smith, Chairman Cllr M Coney
 Cllr I Melton Cllr J Kerr
 Cllr B Eklid Mrs J McEvoy, Acting Parish Clerk
 District Cllr R Snell PSCO C Hassler
 1 Member of the public

The meeting opened at 7:00 pm

1 **APOLOGIES** Mrs C Davis, Clerk Cllr J Duggan
 County Cllr P Bellfield

2 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllr J Kerr Affordable Housing, Prejudicial

3 **MINUTES**

3.1 The minutes of meeting held on 16th March 2010 were signed as a true record. Proposed Cllr Eklid, seconded Cllr Coney and unanimously approved.

4 **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT**

4.1 District Council's new budget meant just an 8p increase in the weekly cost of its services to an average Band D home – an increase of 2.9%

4.2 Local Government Re-organisation – Secretary of State and Local Government decided not to implement either option and recommended a county wide Constitutional Convention. In the meantime it is business as usual for Suffolk with SCEC and Waveney continuing their joint search for efficiency savings among other cost cutting measures. There is to be no reduction in front line services.

4.3 Local Development Framework – The draft Core Strategy was duly approved by council. We shall now return to the site specific exercise to identify the land supply available to enable the housing target to be met over the next 20 years.

4.4 The Old Nursery - Following residents' complaints the Planning Officer visited the site and the developer has agreed to revert to the approved plans, promising to remove the stairs, roof lights, opening to a bathroom and so on. Cllr Snell assured the meeting that after the issue of the original covenant's demise, he is monitoring this one closely and will insist on enforcement if the builder ignores the rules.

Cllr Coney raised question as to why Section 52 was allowed to be removed. Legal opinions of the SCDC solicitor were agreed by SCDC planning. Cllr Snell did not agree with this decision and made this known to SCDC. This decision can be challenged by The Scrutiny Committee by EPC. Cllr Coney would liaise with those residents affected to put a letter to EPC to ask them to do so. Cllr Smith to speak to Monitoring Officer, Hilary Slater to ask her how best to move this forward.

Cllr Coney

Cllr Smith

4.5 Cllr Kerr raised concerns with Cllr Snell regarding the proposed development at Martlesham and its knock-on effects to the surrounding infrastructure in terms of extra traffic. Cllr Snell advised that no decision has been made and has raised concerns regarding the detrimental effect on movement in and out of rural villages in the locality with a large increase in traffic.

5 **COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT** None

6 **POLICE REPORT**

6.1 PSCO Hassler reported that there were no crimes between 11 Jan – 11 May 2010.

6.2 Cllr Smith asked if there had been any more heating oil thefts. PSCO Hassler reported that there hadn't, but encouraged residents to regularly check oil levels and report any unusual level drops. The nearest occurrence to Easton has been in Saxsted.

6.3 Cllr Coney asked regarding the Big Lunch on Sunday 18th July and whether the police would advise shutting the road. PSCO Hassler advised this would not be permitted, but that they would offer any assistance in slowing traffic for safety reasons if the village green was used. Big Lunch to be discussed at next EPC as an agenda item.

Clerk

7 **FINANCE**

7.1 The Financial statement for the period to 11th May was approved and signed. Proposed Cllr Kerr, seconded by Cllr Eklid and unanimously agreed.

7.2 Cllr Smith advised that more monies would be spent on the play area in terms of £250 for a bench, plus hedging and litter bins.

7.3 Cllr Kerr asked for Clerk to produce a spreadsheet for the budget so that expenditure could be tracked against budget to make reviewing the finances easier at the meetings.

Clerk

8 **CLERKS REPORT**

8.1 **Play Area** The official opening of the Play Area went well, attended by approx 60 people including 15-20 children who all had a great time. Thanks went to the councillors and their families who provided food and helped with the setting up.

EPC have now received the 2nd half of the grant from Suffolk Coastal and the grant from Easton Festival.

A request has been received concerning the slide regarding an extra step at the top of the slide as the gap is too wide. Play Quest are looking into a solution and confirm that the equipment conforms to British Standards. Clerk to report back on outcome.

Clerk

9 **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

9.1 Cllr Melton asked if this is what the village needs in terms of housing. Cllr Smith responded that the needs would be identified by issuing the Local Housing Needs Survey. Cllr Melton commented that his research had identified another village nearby that went through this process and built affordable houses only to find there wasn't anyone in the village that actually needed them. Cllr Smith clarified that if this did happen the housing is offered to the nearest villages that has a need.

- 9.2 Cllr Smith discussed comments received from EPC following the circulated survey document from the last EPC meeting. He recommended housing numbers to be changed to 4-6. In terms of the point raised about including Letheringham, Glevering, Martley and Hoo it was agreed that only Easton would be surveyed initially and if there is insufficient demand then it would be reconsidered to include them. Proposed by Cllr Coney, seconded by Cllr Eklid. Clerk
- 10 **RIVER DEBEN**
- 10.1 Cllr Melton reported that he had met with Keith Gibson, Technical Manager at the Environment Agency. They discussed the technical issues regarding de-silting and the management of the river, Mr Gibson advised that someone from the Agency walks the river once per year and identifies issues that need to be dealt with. However they had limited money and they ask land owners to also assist. EPC's concerns have been noted by Mr Gibson, however, they have no plans this year to undertake any work within Easton. Mr Gibson recommended that EPC report any issues that need dealing with to raise awareness with the Environment Agency. The stretch between Easton and Abbey Farm (Sanctuary Bridge, Letheringham and upstream) would be dealt with next year. He said there was a possibility that he could review Easton year after that. Council agreed that they would ensure letters are sent when any issues arise. All
- 11 **PLANNING**
- 11.1 **Decisions:** Pear Trees Granted
Kings Acre renewal has been referred to sub-committee
- 12 **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**
- 12.1 Clerk handed out copies to all Councillors present and asked for comments to be given to Clerk by end of June. All
- 13 **CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR**
- 13.1 Cllr Smith has not yet received Cllr McEwen's official letter of resignation, he will chase again 12 May. Cllr Smith
- Advertisement in May Parish Magazine is sufficient and does not need to be re-issued. Councillors asked that Clerk ensures that there is a copy placed on the notice board. Clerk
- 14 **CAR PARK**
- 14.1 Cllr Smith advised on the condition of the car park and the sunken area in the middle. Cllr Coney asked if SCDC could be asked to offer money towards repairs as it would be keeping cars off the road. Cllr Smith suggested that scalplings may be available from SCDC who could drop-off a load at the side of the car park and that EPC would need to arrange for this to be distributed using equipment and manpower. Cllr Smith would call Steve Aldous at Highways to see what works were planned in the area and if a free load could be provided. Cllr Melton to obtain prices on hire costs. Cllr Smith asked if Cllr Kerr could provide some perforated drainage pipe so that this could be installed first and improve the drainage problems. Cllr Kerr agreed he would. Update to be discussed at next EPC meeting. Cllr Melton
Cllr Smith
Cllr Kerr
Clerk

15 **CORRESPONDENCE**

- 15.1 **Planning Forum** Cllr Smith advised that Cllr Smith, Cllr Kerr and Clerk would be attending on 8th June 2010.
- 15.2 **Parish Plan** A copy of the Blaxhall village plan was passed around the meeting for a decision on whether EPC wish to do this. Cllr Eklid suggested that this was left until later in the year due to the Affordable Housing questionnaire being issued soon and felt residents may not want another questionnaire so soon after. Councillors agreed they liked the Blaxhall example as it was in a short format and the tick boxes for ease of completion. Action is to raise this in the November EPC meeting. Clerk
- 15.3 **Old Nursery** see update from Cllr Snell (item 4).
- 15.4 **Easton Hunt Kennels** – Council updated on the latest position and action taken by EPC in issuing letters to residents who had concerns over EPCs position. Cllr Kerr believes that the suggestion of Easton Hunt moving was a comment by one person and not the Hunt Committee and does not believe that they have plans to move.
- 15.5 **Scrutiny of SCDC’s Planning Service** – Cllr Smith read out the letter to Councillors to assist Clerk in formulating a response:
Firstly that EPC feel that SCDC Planning have enhanced the district and improved the quality of life in the area through SCDC Planning decisions. Also that when visiting the offices at Melton Hill you have access to what you want and see who you need. However, we do have some concerns with the service:
EPC are unhappy with the way they enforce planning conditions. Planning officers who come to site are not able to confirm what will happen; they don’t follow through on conditions placed on permission. Don’t feel that EPCs representations are fully taken into consideration when these are raised.
Follow-up is required, but they lack the will to take action when conditions are included in the planning permission to ensure this is policed and conditions are adhered to. Reliance is on neighbours to raise such breaches.
Visits to site on Saturdays when builders are not present does not help matters to ensure compliance if access cannot be gained.
Generally, we are happy with the Planning Department, however we are disappointed with the recent legal advice regarding Section 52 agreements, which does bring into question the SCDC Legal Team’s credibility and the effect this has on other planning applications where these agreements exist. Clerk
- 15.6 **Dog Bin** – Moving of the Dog Bin from outside the hall to the top of the footpath as suggested by LPC was agreed. It was recommended that it is sited away from children having to pass by it when entering the play area. Suggestion was to have it on the hunt kennel side of the path way. Councillors agreed that LPC should be asked to obtain another bin for the other end. Clerk to action. Cllr Kerr Proposed, Cllr Coney seconded. Clerk
- 15.7 Council asked that Clerk find out the legalities on dog fouling as Member of the public raised the issue that it is not illegal for dogs to foul outside the 30 mph limits. Clerk to advise EPC on findings. Clerk
- 15.8 **Service Charges** – Cllr Smith read out letter from SCDC regarding changes to service charges. Clerk to send this letter to Head at Easton School as they are the beneficiaries of the income from the recycling banks and would therefore be affected by these changes. Clerk

16 **AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

APM – Clerk to ask Stan Smith Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator to provide Clerk update

Car park action plan (Cllr Smith, Cllr Melton, Cllr Kerr); Big Lunch 18 July (Cllr Coney); Section 52 update from discussions with Monitoring Officer (Cllr Clerk Smith); Co-option of new Councillor

November Agenda item: Parish Plan

- 17 **MEETING DATES:** Tuesday 25th May 7:00pm Annual Parish Meeting
Tuesday 6th July 7:00pm
Tuesday 14th Sept 7:00pm
Tuesday 9th Nov 7:00pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:15pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....