

CASTLE EATON PARISH COUNCIL

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING and PARISH COUNCIL AGM
held on Thursday, MAY 14, 2015 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.**

MINUTES

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr L Saunders

2 ANNUAL REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council had some major planning issues and their knock-on effects to contend with during the year. Not one but two Solar Parks and a further development with the Anaerobic Digesters. I will not go through the details as most people will be aware of the issues and the discussions that have taken place.

The on-going flooding of School Lane and the surface drainage problems have, hopefully, now been overcome. Thames Water has laid a completely new pipe to bypass the worst problems, and this appears to be working well. I would like to give particular thanks to Les Saunders, Tony Trinder and David Sainsbury for their hard work and persistence in pursuing this issue.

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 the 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 restraints placed upon Councils.

The Village Fete last June was again a great success, raising over £1200 for the village groups. We have continued our financial support to maintain the Village Hall and it is pleasing to see that it is being well used. We have again extended the contract with Swindon Borough Services to maintain the Playing Field.

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.

Cllr W Hughes

3 ANNUAL REPORT BY THE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR

Another year has passed very quickly and this year will be my final term of office unless I am re-elected in May 2016.

During the last year I have tried to offer help and advice on many differing topics too numerous to mention (or remember!) and I have found funding for some of your projects.

I have helped with drainage and highway problems and made representation to the Planning Dept at SBC on your behalf.

At the moment I am involved with helping two residents in social accommodation with their problems with SBC and I think it may be ongoing for some time. I have also been called upon by other residents when they have needed intervention.

I have also had the pleasure of dining at the Red Lion on numerous occasions when I have been in the area!

The forthcoming year I think will be very challenging but I really hope to be still representing you as your ward councillor.

Cllr Mrs M Penny
(read by the clerk)

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REPORTS BY VILLAGE COMMITTEES/GROUPS

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 & 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 Bowood House in Wiltshire where we had a very pleasant day.

Finally, a thank you to all the Gardeing Club committee who in conjunction with club members have made this another enjoyable and interesting year.

Mr A Trinder, chairman

Ladies Club

Castle Eaton Ladies Club has enjoyed interesting and varied events this year. The number of members has increased and it is gratifying to note that this includes some younger women!

There have been some fascinating meetings, which have been well attended. These have included a demonstration of printing on silk, a talk about bee keeping and a slide show about evacuees during the Second World War.

The younger members seem to favour eating out and so the ladies have visited The Old Spotted Cow, the Falcon and the Red Lion at Cricklade so far this year!

The Club has a healthy bank account due to promptly paid subscriptions, money raised by selling raffle tickets and good stewardship in the past.

I am sure you all know that I took over the role of Treasurer very recently and as a new villager I must say that I have been warmly welcomed by all of the members of the Ladies Club.

Mrs Judith Parker, treasurer

Village Hall Committee

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 still very good but the committee are always looking for any improvement which could possibly make the Hall more efficient and cost-effective.

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

The Post Office continues to operate and contributes to an increasingly popular Coffee

Morning which is organised by a few ladies in the village and continues to provide the Village Hall with a very welcome regular income.

Mr A Trinder, chairman

Churchwarden's report

At our annual meeting a huge 'thank you' was extended to everyone who helps, in many different ways, in keeping St Mary's alive.

We feel that our congregation has slowly expanded despite the passing of two stalwarts who dedicated many years to St Mary's, Grace Sainsbury and Elaine Archard.

To the fabric. Work on the uneven first floor of the tower and the installation of a new ladder to the second floor was funded by various events and grants from the Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers and also their Swindon branch. With the expert help of the Association and our own ringers the worn bell wheels and stays were replaced. The PCC is aware of the importance of encouraging this ancient art and maintaining the bells for use well into the future.

In January, the electrician, John Chapman, replaced all the lights with energy efficient fittings and also installed a temporary sensor lamp that contains a camera giving us another aid in crime prevention. All this work was kindly funded by The Thomas Freke & Lady Norton Charity.

All annual servicing has been carried out but in March when the gas boiler was serviced a problem was found with emissions; to remedy this parts need replacing before the winter at a cost around £1,000 – which is cheaper than a new system!

Over the last two years we have been running at a loss and dipping into our reserves so again funds must be raised which began with a successful Jumble Sale last Saturday, in August we have a performance, in celebration of their 50th year, by the Kentwood Choir in conjunction with a floral display of some kind and we plan to hold another Harvest Supper in the Autumn.

Mrs Annette James, churchwarden

Police

There have been two thefts from motor vehicles in the village which include theft of a battery and a catalytic converter.

Three thefts from open space and another attempt. Items taken were Straddle Stones and electric fence. Offenders not known.

One theft of money and wine from St Mary's church. Several enquiries made but no further leads.

One violence against a person which was resolved locally and one disturbance in a public space which was dealt with by a community resolution.

With regard to traffic offences of vehicles travelling through the village, one driver was arrested for drink driving offences while another driver was arrested for taking a vehicle without consent. The drink driver had the licence revoked for 30 months with the licence endorsed. The other driver was disqualified from driving for 12 months, fined and given 70 hours unpaid work. Finally a vehicle was stopped in the village following a public order offence. All four occupants were arrested for possession of class B drugs. No final result on this.

During the year PCSO Juliet Evans has attended community events in the village and held community meetings at the Village Hall. There have also been a couple of bike marking sessions in the village.

PC Marc Jackson organised several operations called OP DEEPAK throughout the Thames Valley villages combating rural crime which included Castle Eaton. PC Jackson has now left the Neighbourhood Policing Team and moved to the Rural Crime

Team. He still has very much a vested interest in the area.

PCSO Evans will be joined shortly by another Police Officer in mid-May.

PCSO Juliet Evans
(read by the clerk)

VCC

VCC status remains as was. Due to the need for significant fund raising activities by the PCC, duplication or additional fund raising activities other than the Barn Dance run by the VCC are still not viable for such a small community.

Two items of significance in 2014: the inspection and the Barn Dance.

1 The inspection was carried out to ensure we keep on top of any issues and maintain our responsibilities in the upkeep of the park. The same items have been identified as in previous reports. Sutcliffe Play, although offering to rectify some items, have failed to deliver on their promise despite several requests.

2 The VCC completed the one scheduled event with the Barn Dance in June. This even raised approximately £900 profit. VCC total funds remain healthy at around £11,000.

Cllr D price, chairman

RECESS

Cllr James reported that the drainage gullies along Long Row and at Long Cott are blocked and require attention. The clerk informed the meeting that this procedure had been undertaken recently. Councillors thought that the gullies were soakaways and this may be causing the problem. The clerk was instructed to contact SBC.

Mr Trinder expressed concern that during the Barn Dance the Village Hall, which was used for toilet facilities, was left open and unattended. The chairman stated that this will be discussed at the Village Hall AGM next week.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

5 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr James proposed that Cllr Hughes be elected chairman for the ensuing year and this was seconded by Cllr Price. There were no other nominations. Cllr Hughes accepted the office and signed the Declaration of Acceptance form.

6 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The chairman sought nominations for the post of Vice-chairman. Cllr Price was proposed by Cllr Sainsbury and seconded by Cllr James. There were no further nominations and Cllr Price accepted the office.

7 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no Declarations given.

8 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 19, 2015

The Minutes were AGREED as a fair and accurate record.

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MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

9.1 The clerk reported his action concerning the broken safety rails on the road to Kempsford. Wilts CC will repair them, and also re-erect the broken 'Stop' sign at the end of that road.

9.2 There was discussion about the broken safety rail near the Thames Bridge. Cllr Sainsbury agreed to speak to Mr Gary Humphries.

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DEFIBRILLATOR

The Chairman reported that the defibrillator had been installed, wired and was now working. The Chairman has in his possession a certificate of operation.

The clerk was instructed to communicate with Community Heartbeat Trust to ascertain who now contacts the Ambulance service, and to ask if leaflets are available to distribute to villagers at the Fete on June 13, and publish on the village website.

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VILLAGE FETE – JUNE 13

The Chairman thanked the Vice-chairman for his work to date on organisation of the Fete, and this was followed by discussion of the activities/events to be held. Cllr Price AGREED to distribute a flyer seeking contributions/donations for the various stalls, and an advertisement would be put in appropriate magazines.

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TRANSPARENCY CODE FOR SMALLER AUTHORITIES

The Chairman introduced the DCLG publication and reported receipt of NALC Legal Briefing. He explained that this required publication of agenda for meetings, minutes and the Annual Return, together with a list of Councillors and Parish Council assets. The Chairman had held discussions with Tony James who can publish information on the website, for which there may be a cost. The grants available do not seem to cover this.

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TELEPHONE KIOSK

The clerk reported communication from BT about adopting the Telephone Kiosk.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council did not wish to adopt it and would take no further action. The clerk was instructed to inform BT of this.

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VILLAGE HALL HIRE AGREEMENT

The Chairman gave a brief introduction of the 'Conditions for Hiring'. As the Parish Council had not signed an agreement since 2012 it had been decided that a new signing was necessary. The clerk was instructed to sign the agreement.

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FINANCE

15.1 The clerk presented copies of the Annual Accounts. It was proposed by Cllr Sainsbury and seconded by Cllr Price that these be received.

15.2 The Chairman checked the Annual Return Part 1 and signed it.

15.3 It was AGREED that Mrs Eleanor Newman be appointed Internal Auditor for the 2014-15 financial year.

15.4 Financial and Operational Risks were reviewed.

It was AGREED that the procedure for minimising risks should remain operational as the minute 9.3 of May 10, 2012, page 880, viz

a full budget must be completed annually and adhered to
all expenditure must be made within this budget

bank accounts/balances must be presented to each meeting and agreed by a quorate meeting
 cheques will be signed only at meetings of the Parish Council
 all cheques must require two signatories
 there will be no cash movements and payments will be made only by cheque
 there will be an Internal Audit annually
 there will be an External Audit annually
 and that the procedure for dealing with unforeseen expenditure is sufficiently robust
 15.5 Copies of the Financial Regulations had been circulated previously by the clerk. It was AGREED that these be adopted.

15.6 Cheques for signature

Bank account 01529286 balance as at 12.5.2015	£6,034.33
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Cheques to be signed	
Community First – insurance	144.59
WALC subs 2015-2016	90.72
SBC – grounds maintenance – Oct-March	326.11
Village Hall Cttee – grant and room hire	756.00
Village Hall Cttee – PO rental	250.00
Meysey Hampton PCC – grant	50.00
A Gorton – salary	281.80
expenses	37.38
Post Office Ltd (PAYE to HMRC)	319.18
	70.45
Total cheques	2007.06

Bank balance after cheques	4027.27
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(includes £3,000 Sun Edison donation
 includes first tranche of precept £2,257.00)

A further invoice had been received from J C Electrical	£225	3802.27
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The Chairman declared an interest on all matters relating to the Village Hall, and on the basis that the payments had been agreed in the budget of November, 2014 signed the cheques as appropriate.

15.7 There was discussion about receipt of Community Benefit Payment from ORTA in respect of the solar park erected at Port Farm, Water Eaton and the clerk passed correspondence to the Chairman. The Chairman was authorised to sign the documents. It was AGREED to discuss a strategy for publicising to and seeking information from residents, and to set time-scales for this, at a later meeting.

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CORRESPONDENCE

CORRESPONDENCE FOR COMMENT

SBC Low Carbon Local Development Orders

CORRESPONDENCE

Local Government News – February 2015

Community First Enews – March 2015

Local Government Executive Newsletter March

Local Government Executive Newsletter April
WALC ENewsletter - April
WALC Newsletter – April
NALC Legal Note – Transparency Code
NALC – Audit Arrangements for Smaller Authorities (less than £25K)
Local Government News - April 2015

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A meeting will be required to sign Part 3 of the Annual Return after the Internal Audit has been completed. This was set provisionally for June 4 – subsequently changed to June 2.

Signed (Chairman)

..... (clerk)

..... (date)