



Painting by Rosemary Ingrams

Ecton Parish Council

Minutes of the **Ordinary Meeting of Ecton Parish Council** held in the Village Hall, High Street, Ecton on **Tuesday 28th November 2023** at 7.30pm.

Present: Mr I Whittaker (Chair), Mr D Dicks (Vice Chair), Mr N Bond, Mr J Fernley, Mr A McCarter and Mrs S Bell

Also Present: Mrs S Wong (Clerk) and North Northants Cllr Scott Brown and 1 x Parishioner

| Item No | |
|-----------------|---|
| 982/2023 | <p>To Receive Apologies Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Simon Grisewood.</p> |
| 983/2023 | <p>To invite declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda No Declaration of Interest was received.</p> |
| 984/2023 | <p>To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 26th September 2023 It was RESOLVED the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Parish Council held on the 26th September 2023, having been previously circulated, were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair Mr I Whittaker.</p> |
| 985/2023 | <p>Parish Council Vacancies - Co-option on to the Parish Council There has been no recent interest in either of the two Parish Council Vacancies. The Clerk will continue to advertise the post.</p> |
| 986/2023 | <p>To receive a report from North Northants Councillors Cllr S Brown gave an update on current matters within NNC. NNC have appointed their new CEO – Adele Wylie who is currently their chief Legal officer will be taking over. Changing places projects started at Irchester Country Park, Wellingborough Library and Barnwell Country Park. This will provide facilities for adults and children with disabilities. The recent Inspection of Youth offending services in Northamptonshire rated good. Kettering Library has had to close due to issues with their roof, issues that are going to cost around £6 million to fix. The Services are to be moved to alternative location in the intermediary Grants for Rural businesses are available between £5000 - £15,000 to help support with visitor economy. NNC and the National Autistic Society have brokered a deal to keep the services they provide for an additional 6 months. The national Autistic Society had previously indicated they were withdrawing services immediately. New Ward Boundaries have been confirmed, going from 72 to 68 councillors, with Earls Barton going from 3 to 2 members and losing Wilby and Great Doddington from the ward. The Relocation of Wilby school to Glenvale Park has now been rubber stamped. Scott is going around in circles trying to get the Lower Ecton Lane clean up arranged between NNC and WNC. He is hoping that he can achieve this in the new year.</p> |

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| 987/2023 | <p>Progress any matters arising from the previous minutes not covered by agenda items</p> <p>The Chair Cllr I Whittaker will be putting a notice in the Ecton newsletter about the benefits of changing the street lighting to LED bulbs, such as it being greener and also saving a lot of money on energy costs.</p> <p>Parish Councillor A McCarter reported that the trees at the Worlds End have been looked at and works to be carried out are being arranged.</p> <p>Parishioner Ollie Earby reported that Ecton Estates have arranged to meet with him now to discuss his idea of running an allotment plot for children. The PC are fully supportive of the idea and are happy to help where they can. A polytunnel(cover) will be required to help protect the children in the rain. Cllr Scott Brown may be able to help with funding the polytunnel.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 988/2023 | <p>Discuss and review Clerks working contract after 10.5 years are any updates required?</p> <p>The Clerk’s contract was discussed and it was RESOLVED that no update changes are needed at this current time. Members are happy for the Clerk to progress to the following pay scale next April and then the following year for this to be looked at again.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 989/2023 | <p>Financial Matters</p> <p>a Review of financial statement as at 28/11/23 and propose payments for bank transfer and sign cheques – (To see full payments breakdown see Appendix A)</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to approve payments to be made in November 23 (Appendix A) via bank transfer. These payments were authorised online during the meeting via NatWest Bankline by Cllr J Fernley.</p> <p>The Clerk reported the Bank Balances to date as reconciled to the bank statement were as follows:</p> <p>Current Account £50.00, Reserves Account £27,448.86</p> <p>Cleared funds of £25,803.03 are broken down into David Cross Funds £3,483.53 Playing Field Funds £0.00 and Parish Council Funds £22,319.50.</p> <p>Income received since 26th September – Bank Interest £70.15</p> <p>b Delegate power to the Clerk to make payments in December due to there being no PC meeting in December</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to delegate power to the Clerk to make payments in December.</p> <p>c Discuss and approve draft budget for 2024/2025 and agree level of precept for 2024/2025 – (To see full budget see Appendix B)</p> <p>The Clerk presented a 2024/25 budget prior to the meeting. It was RESOLVED to accept the budget as it is, and no amendments were necessary.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="355 1541 1246 1821"> <tbody> <tr> <td>TOTAL INCOME 2023/ 2024</td> <td>38,616.26</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2023/ 2024</td> <td>24,228.63</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PARISH FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2024/2025</td> <td></td> <td>14,387.63</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>ANTICIPATED VAT REFUND TO 31.3.24</td> <td>2,747.52</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>GRASS MOWING GRANT</td> <td>152.97</td> <td>17,288.12</td> <td>Total funds to c/f to 24-25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BUDGET FOR 2023/2024</td> <td>16,680.00</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PLUS 10% CONTINGENCY</td> <td>1,668.00</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td></td> <td>18,348.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PC FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2024/25</td> <td>17,288.12</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Following the budget discussions members RESOLVED to keep the precept value the same for the 2024/2025 period as this current year at £16,335. All were in agreement.</p> | TOTAL INCOME 2023/ 2024 | 38,616.26 | | | LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2023/ 2024 | 24,228.63 | | | PARISH FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2024/2025 | | 14,387.63 | | ANTICIPATED VAT REFUND TO 31.3.24 | 2,747.52 | | | GRASS MOWING GRANT | 152.97 | 17,288.12 | Total funds to c/f to 24-25 | BUDGET FOR 2023/2024 | 16,680.00 | | | PLUS 10% CONTINGENCY | 1,668.00 | | | TOTAL | | 18,348.00 | | PC FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2024/25 | 17,288.12 | | |
| TOTAL INCOME 2023/ 2024 | 38,616.26 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2023/ 2024 | 24,228.63 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PARISH FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2024/2025 | | 14,387.63 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ANTICIPATED VAT REFUND TO 31.3.24 | 2,747.52 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GRASS MOWING GRANT | 152.97 | 17,288.12 | Total funds to c/f to 24-25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BUDGET FOR 2023/2024 | 16,680.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PLUS 10% CONTINGENCY | 1,668.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | 18,348.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | <p>d Discuss and agree to re-imburse the latest EGOS trip 17 theatre tickets @ a cost of £459 Members RESOLVED to re-imburse the full value of the recent EGO's theatre trip from the David Cross fund. All were in agreement.</p> |
| 990/2023 | <p>To discuss any correspondence received Does the PC want to apply for a VAS or speed indicator? – Cllr Nigel Bond was contacted with regards to this The Police Crime Commissioner has funding available through the Road Safety Community Grants scheme – the Making Northamptonshire Safer Fund. It was RESOLVED that if a grant could be obtained then the PC would like to apply to purchase a vehicle activated speed (VAS) sign. Action: The Clerk will investigate.</p> |
| 991/2023 | <p>Village Services a Receive any update reports on the Playing Field The annual H&S inspection report will be carried out in December. b Receive updates and discuss any village maintenance matters inc the Lower including any fly tipping issues A large bed has been dumped across the road at Lower Ecton Lane, this has been reported for removal. It was noted that the buddleia is growing again from 1 Franklins Road running up to Northampton Road. Action: Clerk to report to Ben Wright at Kier to be cut back. c Receive any updates on the 2nd installation of LED Lights on order with Zeta Lighting The second and final installation of the LED lights are due to be installed in January 2024. Zeta Lighting has sourced a supplier in the UK now rather than use the suppliers in China due to delays in shipping. d Receive any updates on the A4500 Ecton Traffic Calming proposals Unitary Cllr Lora Lawman has chased Highways for a start date for the traffic calming works on the old A4500. The Engineering Team at Keir, are undertaking the design works for the counties “Red Route” schemes. These should be finalised by the end of the week. This will then be passed to the Commercial Team for pricing. Unfortunately, the Commercial Team is working through a large number of schemes; however, the Engineering Team will ask if these proposals can be given some priority due to the length of time this has taken.</p> |
| 992/2023 | <p>Councillors Reports and discuss any items to be considered for the next agenda No new items to add to the January agenda at this time.</p> |
| 993/2023 | <p>Discuss any planning related matters including those not yet determined a Planning Application NW/23/00699/FUL – 2 Parsons Close - Demolition of 2 persons bungalow – The Parish Council agreed the following response to this application. Please see appendix C b Planning Application NW/23/00745/LBC – West Lodge Sywell Lane, Ecton - Listed Building Consent for provision of historic opening and adding glazed double door, removal of flight of stairs and adjacent door. The PC have no comments to make at this time.</p> |
| 994/2023 | <p>Date of next meeting – Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council - Tuesday 23rd January 2024 It was RESOLVED to hold the next meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 23rd January 2024 in Ecton Village Hall at 7.30pm. Close: The meeting ended at 9.05pm.</p> |

Signed byDate

Appendix A

989/2023 Financial Matters

Review Financial Statements for November 2023.

Monies must be paid out only in pursuance of statutory powers (SP) vested in the Parish Council.

RESOLVED balances as presented are accepted. **RESOLVED** the following accounts are paid.

Payments approved and made at the meeting of 28/11/2023.

| Payment Method | Amount | Inc VAT of | Payee | Details | Power |
|----------------|--------|------------|----------------------|---|------------------|
| BT | 83.46 | 10.93 | Southern Electric | Electricity & Standing Charges from 3.10.23 to 31.10.23 | Highways Act |
| BT | 312.00 | 52.00 | Hayeswood Landscapes | Grass Cutting October 2023 | Highways Act |
| BT | 25.00 | 4.17 | Royal British Legion | Poppy Wreath | S137 |
| BT | 180.00 | 0.00 | Royal London | Replacement pension payment - Replaces lost Chq No 770 | LGA 1972 s 112 |
| BT | 459.00 | 0.00 | Ecton EGO's | Re-imbusement of 17 Theatre Tickets – Ecton EGO's | David Cross Fund |
| BT | 670.57 | 0.00 | Shirley Wong | Clerks Salary to 28.11.23 35 hours @ LCP 25 £17.64 Back dated pay increase 112 hours at £1 ph. = £112 Office & Broadband £70.84 Mileage 25.2 miles £16.13 Tax deductions £145.80 | LGA 1972 s 112 |
| BT | 145.80 | 0.00 | HMRC | Tax S Wong £145.80 | LGA 1972 s 112 |

Total of payments £1,695.83

To note payments to be made in Dec 23 outside of meeting by the Clerk using delegated powers.

| Payment Method | Amount | Inc VAT | Payee | Details | Power |
|----------------|--------|---------|------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| BT | 168.00 | 28.00 | Seagrave Inspections | Annual H&S Inspection report of play equipment | Open Spaces Act |
| BT | 100.08 | 16.68 | Mowerman Grounds Maintenance | Salt for salt bins on Parson Close and Barton Fields | Open Spaces Act |

Total of payments £268.08

Appendix B

989/2023 Financial Matters – Agree Draft Budget 2024/2025

ECTON PARISH COUNCIL - BUDGET SETTING FOR 2024/25

Appendix B - Minutes 28th November 2023

| | 1.4.23. to 31.3.24 | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| INCOME | | | | | | |
| FUNDS AS 1.4.23 | 19,141.24 | | | | | |
| PRECEPT | 16,335.00 | | | | | |
| SSE ELECTRICITY COSTS REFUND | 1,738.36 | | | | | |
| GRASS MOWING GRANT | 152.97 | | | | | |
| VAT REFUND 2022/23 £1055.13 | 1,055.13 | | | | | |
| BANK INTEREST | 193.56 | | | | | |
| TOTAL INCOME | 38,616.26 | | | | | |
| | COSTS FROM 1.4.23 to 28.11.23 | ANTICIPATED COSTS TO 31.3.24 | TOTAL TO 31.3.24 | BUDGETED FOR 2023/24 | ACTUAL DIFFERENCE IN BUDGET | BUDGETED FOR 2024/25 |
| EXPENSES | | | | | | |
| CLERKS SALARY & HMRC | 3,278.78 | 1,465.00 | 4,743.78 | 5,500.00 | 756.22 | 5,500.00 |
| STREET LIGHTING INC BULB CONVERSIONS | 5,953.13 | 5,780.00 | 11,733.13 | 5,000.00 | -6,733.13 | 1,000.00 |
| INSURANCE | 619.07 | 0.00 | 619.07 | 650.00 | 30.93 | 650.00 |
| VERGE MOWING | 1,855.00 | 0.00 | 1,855.00 | 2,800.00 | 945.00 | 3,000.00 |
| INTERNAL AUDIT FEES | 207.00 | 0.00 | 207.00 | 250.00 | 43.00 | 250.00 |
| EXTERNAL AUDIT FEES | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 200.00 | 200.00 | 0.00 |
| NCALC SUBSCRIPTION | 329.94 | 0.00 | 329.94 | 325.00 | -4.94 | 360.00 |
| DONATION - CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE | 1,250.00 | 0.00 | 1,250.00 | 2,000.00 | 750.00 | 2,000.00 |
| DONATION - PARISH MAGAZINE | | 0.00 | 0.00 | 750.00 | 750.00 | 750.00 |
| S137 WREATH | 20.83 | 0.00 | 20.83 | 25.00 | 4.17 | 25.00 |
| DATA PROTECTION RENEWAL | 5.00 | 40.00 | 45.00 | 45.00 | 0.00 | 45.00 |
| HIRE OF MEETING ROOM | 144.00 | 144.00 | 288.00 | 200.00 | -88.00 | 200.00 |
| TRAINING | 0.00 | 88.00 | 88.00 | 100.00 | 12.00 | 100.00 |
| STATIONERY / TONER | 31.36 | 40.00 | 71.36 | 180.00 | 108.64 | 150.00 |
| DOMAIN RENEWAL/ZOOM FEES | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| PLAY EQUIP INSPECTION | 0 | 130.00 | 130.00 | 150.00 | 20.00 | 150.00 |
| ELECTION COSTS | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| PLAY AREA | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 500.00 | 400.00 | 500.00 |
| VAT | 1,547.52 | 1,200.00 | 2,747.52 | 2,000.00 | -747.52 | 2,000.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 15,241.63 | 8,987.00 | 24,228.63 | 20,675.00 | -3,553.63 | 16,680.00 |

NOTES

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| BUDGET FOR 2023/2024 | 16,680.00 |
| PLUS 10% CONTINGENCY | 1,668.00 |
| TOTAL | 18,348.00 |

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|--|------------------|
| PC FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2024/25 | 17,288.12 |
| LESS BUDGETED COSTS | 18,348.00 |
| LEAVES SURPLUS FUNDS FOR PROJECTS | -1,059.88 |

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| IF WE KEEP THE PRECEPT THE SAME | 16,335.00 |
| LESS DEFECIT FUNDS FOR PROJECTS | -1,059.88 |
| WOULD GIVE A TOTAL SURPLUS OF FOR 2024/25 | 15,275.12 |

Appendix C

993/23

The PC's response to Planning Application NW/23/00699/FUL – 2 Parsons Close - Demolition of 2 persons bungalow.

Reference: Planning Applications NW/23/00699/FULL, NW/23/00700/CAC and NW/23/00703/LBC

With reference the above three planning applications at Location – 2 Parsons Close, Ecton, Northampton. NN6 0QJ, Ecton Parish Council has the following observations to make.

The application denotes that the design is for a 3-bedroom property.

However, we believe in reality that the Laundry / Dressing room areas, are sized up to become future bedrooms, which should also, in effect incur a higher council tax band.

Although not designated as 'bedrooms', we think it could be to get around Policy 2 of the Ecton Village Neighbourhood Plan (ENP) which states:

"The provision of dwellings with 3 or fewer bedrooms will be supported. Alternative provision will only be supported where up-to- date evidence of need in Ecton is demonstrated."

The application design and access statement section 9.1 and 9.2 tries to address this. The proposal might be proportionate but it is in breach of the policy as there are clearly more than 3 usable 'bedrooms' and the statement in 9.2 that the building can be adapted is clearly nonsense.

Additionally, the proposals are largely contrary to ENP policy 7 part 1 (the existing street pattern and proximity of buildings to the highway; the scale, height, orientation and juxtaposition of existing buildings) the property is simply too big, will change the outlook at a key point in the conservation area, in view the shrine, behind a listed wall and next to The Grange.

Using the existing footprint, with a lower elevation might be more in keeping with the ENP. The new position is also adjacent to property in Parsons Close, which might also have implications for the owners of these properties.

Design wise we feel it is not completely in line with ENP policy 7 part 2 and 4 (the use of traditional materials and architectural features including building and roofing materials and fenestration and chimney stack details; & the need to retain and replicate traditional stone walls within the public realm and the railings which are a distinctive feature associated with Ecton Hall and its former curtilage;)

ENP policy 7: states "Standard designs" which fail to capture or complement the distinctive and traditional character of the Conservation Area will not be permitted

Contemporary designs need not imitate earlier architectural periods or styles but must be of a high quality and sympathetic to the form and scale of surrounding development.

ENP Policy 10: Lists the view along the High Street including the War Memorial as key should be protected, so a large new building will impact this.

Given the size, an extra parking space should be provided that the mandatory 3.

Additionally, the alterations to the property's access should also reflect ENP Policy 10 (in alterations to High street views) and also comply with ENP policy 7 part 2 and 4 which requires "the need to retain and replicate traditional stone walls within the public realm".