**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF**

**ELLESBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL**

**HELD ON TUESDAY 19th JANUARY 2015 AT 7.30PM**

**IN ELLESBOROUGH PARISH HALL**

Present: Councillors:

 R Alexander (Chairman) D Hayes

 M Glover D Hares

 D Panikkar A White

 Parish Clerk: R Norris

 **Action**

**Item 1.1 Apologies.** Apologies had been received from Councillor McGrail.

**Item 1.2 Open Forum.** No members of the public were in attendance so nothing was discussed under this item.

**Item 1.3 Declarations of Interest.** No Declarations of Interest were made for items on the agenda. However, the Clerk distributed copies of the Councillor’s Declarations of Pecuniary Interests for amendment if necessary and signature.

**Item 1.4 Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting of Ellesborough Parish Council held on 17 November 2015 were unanimously approved and duly signed.

**Item 1.5 Road Safety.**  Councillor White and the Clerk had met with our Local Area Technician (LAT) on the 8th of December to discuss a variety of issues that were concerning the Council. Unfortunately, due to pressure of work the LAT had been unable to respond to the points we had raised with him. The Clerk will continue to press him for a response and in particular about the licence requirement for the bag of gravel left on the verge. Following the meeting, Councillor White had taken the LAT to Dunsmore to see the poor condition of the road which was being damaged by the waste collection HGVs. Whilst the LAT agreed the condition of the road was poor, short of a complete resurfacing, there was little that could be done in the short term to improve it. Councillor White has also spoken to David Carroll, our County Councillor, who co-incidentally is responsible for roads in the County, but had to report that basically there was a distinct shortage of funds and that little was likely to be done to improve the situation. As David Carroll had indicated that he would like to attend one of our meetings, the Clerk will invite him to the March meeting. **RN**

**Item 1.6 Clerk’s Report.** The Clerk reported that he had finally managed to retrieve the documents that had been in safe keeping with the bank but that we now need to find a safe place for them to be stored. There is an external lock-up on the Parish Hall which at the moment has gardening tools in it which are rarely, if ever, used and the Clerk thought that with a little bit of work this could be made into suitable storage. However, the meeting considered that it would not be very secure and it would be better if some storage could be made available within the hall. Councillor Glover thought that this would be possible and will investigate. If so this would give the Parish Council a very good facility for the storage of the parish archives. The Clerk will also investigate the provision of a suitable fireproof and secure container for the important documents, meanwhile he will continue to store them in his office. **MG, RN**

The Clerk reported that because the hall is already booked on Tuesday the 24th of May, the Annual Parish Meeting will now have to be held on Thursday the 26th of May. The change of date was agreed by all.

With regards to the problem of sorting and storing all the emails that now form part of the Parish records, Councillor White advised that there was no need to purchase the 2016 version of Outlook as the 2013 version would do exactly the same job. The Clerk is to find a suitable supplier and purchase a copy. **RN**

The other 2 subjects that the Clerk raised were the car parking problem in Elm Close and he had written to Red Kite Housing about this but had yet to receive a reply. Similarly, he advised the meeting that he had had no reply to the letter to Mr Emmerson of Dunsmore about his mis-use of the common. Councillor White will speak to him about this. **AW**

**Item 1.7 Recreational Facilities.** Councillor Panikkar reported that the repairs to the fence had been completed and that the repairs to the steps up to the slide and the re-instating of the grassed areas around some of the play items, will be carried out when the weather improves. The site for the table tennis had been agreed and it will go under the trees to the west (the kitchen side) on a concrete base which will be installed by the supplier. After a lot of discussion about where to put the rest of the fitness equipment the meeting agreed that the best place for it was at the top of the overflow car park as it is already screened by the hedge, it could be easily accessed from the playground by putting a gate in the fence and an additional fence could be put in between the equipment and the remainder of the overflow car park. The Clerk is to approach the Secretary to the Chequers Trust to see if he will agree to this proposal. If agreed then the Parish Council will take on the responsibility for the rent of the car park. Councillor Panikkar thought that the work may start in late February or early March so this requires urgent action. **RN**

**Item 1.8 Planning.** Councillor McGrail had informed the meeting that there were no planning issues that required discussion. However, Wycombe DC still have to make a decision on the latest application for Dropshort barn. The Clerk stated that he had found that where decisions on applications had been delayed, in some cases it was still possible to submit consultee comments. The Clerk is to check and advise Councillors if this is the case for Dropshort Barn, and if so we will submit comments. **RN**

**Item 1.9 Finance.** The following payments already made were approved:

Fresh Air Fitness (New Exercise Equipment) 1119 £5441.03

Ellesborough Parish Hall (Hall Hire 17 Nov) 1120 £15.00

Howe and Co (Queens Birthday Celeb (QBC) Catering Deposit) 1121 £50.00

Broadband Folk Dance Music (QBC Entertainment Deposit) 1122 £100.00

Wycome DC (Electoral Expenses) 1123 £118.53

The following payments were approved and made:

S Webb (Bin emptying Nov and Dec) 1124 £138.42

Ellesborough Parish Hall (Hire Carol Concert) 1125 £16.00

Chilterns Conservation Board (Donation) 1126 £100.00

Open Spaces Society (Donation) 1127 £100.00

The meeting checked the bank statement and its associated reconciliation and the expenditure against the budget, which were all in order. The meeting discussed the proposed budget for the year 2016/17 and agreed that the precept for the coming financial year should be set at £19,617.67. The Clerk is to notify Wycombe District Council of this figure. (Clerk’s Note: Letter re precept sent to WDC on 20 Jan 16) **RN**

Because the finances are in good order, the Chairman suggested that we should be looking for capital projects that we could undertake within the parish. Following the funeral of Jack North, where the coffin had to be carried down the path and steps to the bottom of the churchyard, one project that would certainly be an improvement, would be to refurbish the path and steps. Councillor Hares will ask the contractor currently repairing another path in the churchyard about this project. **DH**

**Item 1.10 HS2.** The Clerk had been contacted by Bob Lewis from Wendover to advise us that Wendover were going to petition against the latest proposals from HS2 which are a 100 yard extension to the north end of the tunnel and the installation of 6m high noise attenuation barriers. Councillor White confirmed that this was going ahead and that some input had been made by Dunsmore.

**Item 1.11 Correspondence, Circulars and Consultation Documents.** There were no documents to distribute.

**Item 1.12 Footpaths, Stiles and Gates.** Councillor White had contacted Spittles who said that they had been told not to install the 3 stiles and the one hurdle in Dunsmore. Because of the delay, the cost have increased slightly and each kissing gate would now be £310.00 + VAT and the hurdle £180.00 + VAT. These cost were unanimously approved and Councillor White will instruct Spittles to go ahead with the work. Councillor Hares reported that a parishioner’s dog had been attacked by another dog whilst on the footpath running across Mary Hall’s field. He will continue to monitor the situation to see if there are any more instances of this happening. **AW, DH,**

**Item 1.13 Affordable Housing Project.** The Chairman reported that he had had an offer of some land within the village that could be made available for the Affordable Housing Project. At present the location and person offering the land will be kept confidential. The meeting agreed that some of the opposition to the project arises from a lack of understanding of the quality of the housing that would result from the project. After some discussion the meeting agreed that the Chairman will contact Hastoe with a view to making progress by the next meeting and then “going public” at the Annual Parish Meeting on the 26th of May. **McG**

**Item 1.14 Web Site.** The Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities details the information that needs to be included on a parish website. Councillor White had been looking at the websites of other councils and had found a company in Aylesbury that had produced a very good one for Stoke Mandeville. The company is called “Smoking Rocket” and after discussion with them the following costs were given:

 To design and build a new web site £1,000.00

 To move data across £500.00

 1st year support Nil

 2nd year and subsequent years £150.00

Councillor White said that there would be no ongoing maintenance costs and that the email system would be able to cope with up to 2000 addresses. Once given the go ahead it would take between 4 to 6 weeks to have the new site up and running. After discussing the matter the meeting agreed that the Council should change to the new Company, with the aim of having the new site operational on 1 May 2016. Councillor White will action this

**Item 1.15 Church Path.** . Councillor Hares reported that the contractor carrying out the work on the church footpath had had to suspend work temporarily because of problems with other work in the village. The additional work that was agreed at the last meeting will add between about £1,000.00 to £1,500.00 to the cost. The meeting unanimously agreed to these extra costs. **DH**

**Item 1.16 Queen’s 90th Birthday Celebration.** Councillor Glover reported that arrangements are progressing slowly and that another meeting of the committee is planned for 20 Jan 16. He will continue to monitor the activities and report back to the Council.

**Item 1.17 Request for Donations.** The meeting discussed the requests for donations that had been received from The Chilterns Conservation Board and The Open Spaces Society. The meeting felt that both of these organisations undertook work which benefitted the parish and accordingly, unanimously agreed that a donation of £100.00 be made to each. The Clerk is to action these. (Clerk’s Note: Cheques signed and sent on 21 Jan 16) **RN**

**Item 1.18 Memorial Bench.** The Clerk advised that following the death of Jack North, he had been contacted by Tracy Davidson who wished the Council to consider the possibility of erecting a memorial bench in his honour. As Jack North had been born at 94 Chalkshire Road, lived in the village all of his life and died in 92 Chalkshire Road, she thought that positioning a bench at the bus stop which is between the two houses would be appropriate. Furthermore, she was willing to arrange a collection for the bench but wondered if the Parish Council would be willing to make a contribution. During his life Jack North had made a great contribution to the village including serving on the Parish Council. Accordingly, the meeting agreed in principle to the proposal. However, the Clerk is to first obtain the agreement of his widow and the current occupant of 94 Chalkshire Road to the positioning of the seat outside their houses. He is also to consult the LAT to see if any approvals need to be given by them for it to be positioned on the grass verge. If all are in agreement that it could go ahead, then the meeting agreed unanimously that the Council would meet up to half the cost of a suitable bench. **RN**

I**tem 1.19 Village Camping Night.** The Chairman reported that he had been contacted by Daniel Ridley to see if the Parish Council would consider giving its approval or support to a “village camping night” to be held on the playing field, but if it were to go ahead, for the PC to meet the cost of hiring a portalloo. After much discussion the meeting agreed to give the proposal the go-ahead in principle but subject to the submission of an acceptable plan which would cover such things as noise, camp fires etc. The Chairman will pass on the approval in principal to Daniel and also advise him of the need to submit a plan for approval before the final go-ahead can be given.

**Item 1.20 Parish Husbandry.** The Clerk reported that because of the very mild weather it might be prudent to have an additional cut of the verges before March when the grass cutting season starts again. However, after discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would advise the contractor that the fiirst cut in March should be carried out as near to the 1st of March as practicable and that if in May when the grass is growing at its fastest an additional cut is required, it can be authorised then. The Clerk also reported that there were still places in the village where the footpaths required siding out. The meeting agreed that siding out results in a significant visual improvement of the village and agreed that the Clerk should approach our own contractor and the LAT to obtain costs for the work. It might also be possible to have the “community work” team undertake this. The Clerk will liaise with Steve Webb to see if this is the case. **RN**

**Item 1.21 Matters of Report.** Councillor Glover reported that the carol concert had been well attended but that some comments had been made about the lack of Councillors at the event. However, he had explained that Councillors were heavily committed at that time of year. He also informed the meeting that a village ball was being planned for either the 1st or 2nd weekend in September.

**Item 1.22 Next Meeting.** The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Tuesday 15 March 2016 at 7.30pm in Ellesborough Parish Hall. **All**

The meeting closed at 21.15 hrs.

Signed

Councillor Rob Alexander

Chairman

Ellesborough Parish Council