

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Edlesborough Parish Council held on

Thursday 15 January 2004 at 8pm at the Edlesborough Memorial Hall.

Present

Mrs A Thompson (Chairman), Mr Wilkinson (Vice Chairman), Mr Spencer, Mr Cubbage, Mrs Ratheram, Mr Munday, Mr Brown, Mr Atherton, Mr Spencer, Mrs Kerr (the Clerk) and no parishioners.

Apologies

Mrs Prys-Jones.

Declarations of Interest

Noted none stated at this point in the meeting.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 18 December 2003 were agreed and signed with the following amendments:-

Page 6, under Any Other Business, add "Mr Cubbage asked if the Edlesborough sign in the High Street could be moved to the boundary of the village at Moor End by the stream".

Matters arising from the previous minutes

There was a discussion as the agenda for Thursday 15 January was reduced in order for there to be sufficient time to consider the finance issues. There was a discussion as to whether if a matter has been in the previous minutes and the Council wants to raise it again at this meeting, can a decision be made. The Clerk to check the position. In future the Clerk was asked to place all matters on the agenda arising from the previous minutes and previous agenda in order that they could be discussed legally.

The Councillors asked if anything had happened on the planning review noted in the previous minutes. The Clerk said she had not had an opportunity to speak to all the parties involved.

Finance Issues

Monthly Financial Statement for December

The Clerk had provided the Councillors with a financial statement for the month of December. She said there was an error. The Clerk explained the balance for 30 November 2003 should be £17,723.18 as opposed to £17,711.95, which would mean the balance at the end of December 2003 was £15,249.03 instead of £15,282.80. The Clerk stated that the error was due to the Clerk changing some categories when she was preparing the precept and she had only just noticed the error. She had taken Kevin Cubbage through the computer system to show him that the bank and the finance package (Quicken) did reconcile with each other.

Authorisation of cheques

The Clerk produced a list of cheques and asked if these could be authorised. This was agreed by all.

Precept and Projects for next financial year

It was agreed the Clerk should take the full Council through the proposed budget. There were some alterations since the paperwork had been sent out and these were noted. The Clerk and Mr Cubbage had considered the precept and the draft budget at great length. They were suggesting the Council asked for a precept of £44,500.00. This would equate to a Parish Council tax per a Band D property of £35.42 for the year. It was noted that if it was raised by or decreased by £1,000.00 it would increase by £0.80, or if there was an increase or decrease of £500.00, it will increase/decrease by £0.40. The precept in the previous year had been £43,500.00 and a Band D property would have paid £34.64.

The Clerk took the Council through the income and the expenses. The Clerk was asked to clarify the following points:

1. Under open spaces income (4) in the budget the Clerk had stated a figure of £300.00. The Clerk clarified that £250.00 of this related to a reimbursement of hedge cutting from BCC for the Pastures hedge to be cut.
2. The Clerk was asked to provide more detail of the Clerk's salary (1), the Memorial Hall bookings secretary's/caretaker's salary (2), and the Green Pavilion and play equipment caretaker and booking secretary's salary (3).

3. Memorial Hall expenses in the draft budget (£400.00) have been included for floor repairs if it was decided not to put a new floor in the Memorial Hall this year.

4. It was agreed that there would be a contingency figure for items 1, 2 and 3 in the expenses of £1,500.00. The Clerk to amend the accounts summary accordingly.

5. Children's playground expense (5). The Clerk explained that this was quite a costly item because this year we had not painted or replenished the bark and we would need to do this in the following year.

6. The Green expense (4). The Clerk stated that in the budget she had allowed for grass cutting of 16 cuts for the parish cemetery, the churchyard, Dagnall recreation field and the Green. This was based on the contractors suggestion of allowing for cuts from March to October (eight months) and two cuts a month. As the number of cuts would be dependent upon the weather, the Parish Council were in no way bound to 16 cuts.

7. Open spaces (6). The Clerk stated the Pastures estate perimeter fence had only been cut once this year because it hadn't been felt that a second cut was needed, but in the budget a second cut had been allowed for.

At this point representatives from EB Lions were due to attend and therefore the reviewing of the budget was adjourned until after the EB Lions representatives had left.

Eaton Bray Lions

At 9.00 pm Mr Blumsom and Mr Lewis arrived from the Eaton Bray Lions (football team) to discuss the payment of use of the Green for football matches at the rate of £10.00 a match. Mr Blumsom had produced a letter that the Clerk had shown to the Chairman. Mr Blumsom took the Parish Council through his points as follows:-

1. This was an informal group of Dads who had received FA recognition and were now setting up a committee to deal with various items.

2. The annual subs for the club members was £25.00.

3. Originally it had been one team playing on the Green last year and now there were four teams, three playing on the Green and one playing at Edlesborough School.

4. They practised on Saturday morning and played on Sunday morning.

5. They accepted that they should now pay for the Green.

6. They had already asked for subs for the year and had spent the money on kit, fees to the Football Association, a football and white lining paint.

Mrs Thompson the Chairman declared an interest as her grandson played for EB Lions.

The Chairman made the point that the Parish Council had always supported football teams on the Green but in the year 2002 the Parish Council's Clerk at that time had made efforts to contact the people who were playing football on the Green but had not received any reply initially. It was noted that the football team had been contacted in January/February 2003.

After some discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would not ask the EB Lions to pay for the use of the Green last season or for this season up to 16 January 2004.

From 17 January 2004 the EB Lions would be asked to pay £5.00 per match as two of the teams were five-a-side and seven-a-side and the length of the game was shorter than the adult match. This was proposed by Mr Atherton, seconded by John Wilkinson and agreed by all Councillors.

EB Lions were asked to note that they would be provided with a copy of the Green regulations and would be asked that if weather conditions were such that it was felt the match should not be played on the Green, then they would be contacted. It was agreed they would forward to the Clerk a list of fixtures. The Clerk to put this in writing to the football team.

The EB Lions representatives left and the Parish Council returned to considering the budget.

Precept and Projects for the next financial year

8. Open spaces – dog hygiene bin (6). Mr Wilkinson felt that we should revisit this item at a later date to discuss whether we needed as many dog hygiene bins, in particular on the green, and whether we wanted to reduce the costs of this.

9. Open spaces – expenses (6). Parish Paths Partnership. Mr Spencer asked the Clerk to clarify why this was nought. The Clerk said that this year, when she had considered it was the right time to clear the paths, she had contacted BCC who were about to go and do the paths anyway. If we were to do the paths ourselves we would have to use an independent contractor because of all the safety regulations involved. It was not a job that our handyman should be doing on his own and we had been advised by BCC to use independent contractors. BCC were trying to set up a scheme of conservation volunteers who would be insured and properly trained. They would come out to the villages and do the work, but at the present time we have been told there would be no extra cost for this.

10. Open spaces – expenses – notice boards (6). The Clerk said that she had put in the budget that we should look at the notice boards this year and consider tidying them up as some of them were getting a bit rusty round the bottom and needed a general tidy. The Clerk also noted that when we replaced the perspex window of a notice board it had cost us £97.00 including the cost of the perspex and labour.

11. Allotment expenses (7). It was noted by Mr Wilkinson that the allotment expenses were outweighing the actual income we received and therefore we would have to revisit the cost of the allotments. It was also suggested that we should check on the water situation as to whether people were using too much water and attaching a hose to the taps.

12. Parish cemetery expense (8) and churchyard expense (9). It was noted that the churchyard expense was quite high. It was agreed this was a topic we would have to revisit at some stage to look into what work should be carried out at the churchyard.

13. Green sacks (10). The Clerk noted that we had actually made a bit of a profit on this. Mr Wilkinson stated this wasn't reflected in the figures. The Clerk said this was because some of the money going out and coming in straddled the previous year. But if we took the price of a green sack as £0.20, we were in effect selling each sack for £0.22, although there was the cost of us administering this.

14. Public lighting (13). The Clerk noted that we are under statutory obligations to maintain the public lighting and therefore she had allowed £50.00 for 20 lights to be done, £200.00 January to March, and £800.00 in the budget for the following year.

15. Projects (14). Mr Cabbage noted that the figure of £2,810.00 for new 2004/2005 projects had been placed in order to balance the draft budget to nought. The Clerk pointed out that she felt that some of this figure should be used for emergency contingencies because this would be an item she felt should be in on an annual basis to cover for any unforeseen expense.

16. Donation and grant expense (15). The Clerk had placed in the draft budget £2,000.00. It was suggested that this figure had been the same for a period of time and maybe that this would be increased. This to be considered at a later date.

17. Accountancy and audit fees (18). The Clerk stated that the full year forecast was more than the budget because this year it had included an audit fee from the previous financial year.

18. Training and seminars (20). The Clerk confirmed that she had put in the budget £200.00 which had been suggested by BALC because there was a greater need for training and more places that had been providing free training would start charging in the near future.

19. Petty cash (22). The Clerk stated that next year petty cash would not appear in the accounts summary. This was a follow through from last year, but the Clerk treated the petty cash as you would a current account and it was merely a vehicle for transferring money in and out and was only used for things like stamps and photocopying and the odd other expense.

20. The Clerk then took the Parish Council through the analysis of available funds, together with the amendments that had been made, and clarified that at the end of the day the Parish Council were talking about a surplus of approximately £14,000.00 earmarked for specific projects, and approx £26,000 for contingency. Due to the fact that time was running out, the movements in special projects reserves document was noted and amendments made to it, and it was decided that this would be discussed at the next meeting in February.

It was proposed by Kevin Cabbage and seconded by John Atherton that we ask BCC for a precept of £44,500.00. The Council were all in favour.

Mr Atherton stated that as he had not played a role in preparing the budget due to other commitments, and Mr Cabbage had stepped in, that Mr Cabbage be made the overseer and checker of the finances and this was again agreed by all.

Mr Cabbage felt that we needed to consider the various items in the budget and whether they should be reviewed further, for example the dog hygiene bins. Mrs Thompson made the point that she felt that they should be emptied twice each week in the summer and once in the winter and that those in Dagnall village were used. It was suggested that Edlesborough look at their dog hygiene bins and decide whether they wanted to reduce the number and the amount of empties.

It was agreed the Parish Council would review the movements in special projects reserves at the February meeting and allow 30 minutes.

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Planning

Application No:	Address	Proposal	Parish Councils response
03/01037/APP	3, Hall Farm Barns, Slapton Lane, Northall		no comment
03/02638/APP	5, Greenacres, Leighton Road, Northall	single storey and double garage	no comment
03/03101/APP	8, Church Croft, Edlesborough	rebuilding of garage and erection of side extension with rear conservatory	no comment
03/03143/APP	4, Townside, Edlesborough	conversion of garage to study and detached double garage and store	no comment
03/03157/APP	Northall Baptist Church Northall	Name sign in perspex lettering	no comment
03/03169/APP	1, Ashton Cottages, Leighton Road, Northall	Change of use of strip of land to residential use	no comment
03/03164/APP	100, High Street, Edlesborough	single storey side extension	no comment

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Mr Atherton asked if the Clerk had heard anything back from AVDC in respect of the wooden stables at Hazledene. The Clerk said she would be chasing this in the next couple of weeks.

Parish Councillors' Allowances

It was agreed that the Parish Council would adopt the proposal set out in the Clerk's note, which is as follows:-

1. The Parish Council should **NOT** pay any Parish basic allowance to the Chairman or any other Councillor.
2. The Parish Council agree to pay travelling and/or subsistence allowances to any Councillor whether they were incurred within or outside the Parish of Edlesborough provided they were:

necessarily incurred in the performance of the councillor's duties and they are not expenses of private travel.

3. If the Chairman or any Councillors are required to attend a meeting on behalf of the Parish Council then a **claim may be** made at the rate of forty pence (40p) per mile using a car or public transport fares. The Clerk to provide the form. This must be signed by the claimant and authorised by the Chairman. or Vice Chairman if the claimant is the Chairman.

4 For incidental expenses (photocopying, printing etc).The Clerk to provide the form. This must be signed by the claimant and authorised by the Chairman. or Vice Chairman if the claimant is the Chairman. (Clerk to provide dispensation form if required)

5. The adoption of the regulations to be re consider every year at the Annual meeting or during the year at the request of a Councillor.

Highways/by-ways/footpaths/lighting

SID

It was noted that SID would be at Northall on 19 January 2004 and would be delivered on the Monday, and would be at Dagnall from 26 January 2004.

Projects

It was agreed we would come back to this at the February meeting.

The Villages

FOE's use of the Green

It was noted that we should request FOE to make a written request to have a car boot sale on the Green on Monday 31 May 2004.

Christmas Fayre correspondence

A letter had been received from a resident from Eaton Bray. It was agreed the Clerk would respond to this.

Northall

Leighton Road – bollards and ditch

A resident of Northall had asked that some bollards be placed to stop lorries and cars parking on the side of the road. This was because the water pipes were being disturbed. The Water Authority had advised that the bollards needed to be put in place to stop the water system collapsing. Agreed the Clerk would check whose responsibility this was and ask for them to be placed.

Dagnall

The consultation for traffic calming for the area of natural outstanding beauty including Dagnall were having a meeting at Dagnall Village Hall on 4 February 2004.

Edlesborough

Litter Picking

It was noted that Tessa Williams had decided to stop collecting litter on the Green as from March. It was agreed that an article would go in Focus thanking her and asking if anyone would like to take over. It was also stated that this would be reviewed at the next meeting.

Carnival

The Carnival Committee had requested whether they could have a skip on the Green. Agreed the Clerk would go back with various questions to see if this was at all feasible.

The Carnival Committee had also asked if they could put a caravan in the Pavilion car park. The Council fully agreed that this would not be allowed.

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Church and Churchyard

Remembrance Service

It was agreed this would be held over to the next meeting.

Quad bikes in the churchyard and cemetery

Quad bikes had gone through the gate in the churchyard, round the cemetery and out again. The Clerk was informing the Police.

P.A.I.N.

John Wilkinson stated that there had been a White Paper issued on this matter and had supported Luton Airport's request for a full length runway to its full capacity. We were awaiting a further consultation document. Mr Wilkinson would not be at the next meeting and therefore it was asked that if anything came through he be made aware of it.

Correspondence

The Clerk said she would prepare a schedule in the next few days and that would be sent to the Councillors.

Clerks workload

Mr Wilkinson produced a proposal to reduce the Clerk's workload . He would give everyone a copy and ask for comments back before the next meeting Mr Wilkinson would not be at the next meeting. Hopefully it could be finalised at the next meeting. In the meantime it was agreed that in principle the General Purposes Committee meeting on 5 February would meet only to discuss the Pavilion, the Green and the Memorial Hall. It was agreed the Clerk would discuss whether her attendance was necessary with Mr Wilkinson in the next few days.

Next meeting Thursday 19 February 2004 starting at 8.00 pm

Venue to be notified