The Minutes of Easton Parish Council Meeting
held on 1 April 2025 at 7.00pm
at Village Hall, Easton

Present:	Cllr M Caton (Chair)	Cllr R Chapman	Cllr M Cordy
	Cllr J Hudson (Vice)	Cllr M Jobling	Cllr M Bowman
	Cllr P McCarter	Cllr D Lewis	

Also in Attendance: J King (Locum Clerk) – Norfolk Parish Training & Support, Margaret Dewsbury, District and Council Councillor and 9 members of the public.

Cllr Caton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

166 Apologies for Absence
Apologies from Cllr Fulcher and Cllr Main were noted.

167 Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensations
Cllr Caton declared an interest in item 170a, two of the payments were to himself.

168 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2025
After a small amendment to item 156b – 'one' changed to 'once', **it was resolved to accept these minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, and they were duly signed by the Chair.**

169 Planning Applications and Determinations:

a) Persimmon Developments

i. **Phase 2 Play Equipment**
Due to insufficient information, it was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting.

ii. **Layout of New Allotments**
Councillors and allotment holders had met with Joshua Pitcher from Persimmon Homes the previous Thursday. Suggestions made and accepted by Joshua included:

- Removal of the Compost area, it was felt this was not required, which would increase the parking, turning and offloading area.
- Extra water points and moving some that had been included to improve the layout, and the supply of hoses to the required lengths.
- Reduction in the number of sheds to be included to be replaced with polytunnels.
- It had been noted that moving the existing trees was not viable and instead 40 fruiting trees would be supplied – an allotment holder was collating a list of the breakdown of requirements.

It was noted that:

- The road system would allow lorries to reverse in.
- The communal area would include a locked off electricity supply for future use.
- The water connection would be in a secure place with only those authorised being able to access. The anti-flowback connection would be fitted to the main source.
- A soil and compaction test would be carried out with the results helping to formulate the requirements for the road and pathways. It was likely that this would be plastic mesh backfilled with shingle.
- There would be an area with raised beds for those with limited

mobility.

- Notice would be given to existing allotment holders in October 2025, with an anticipated move date of October 2026.
- Whilst the construction work was in progress, access would be established to the rear of the site.
- Persimmon would provide assistance to allotment holders who wanted to move existing sheds and greenhouses.
- Persimmon would move the existing security gate.

It was anticipated that revised plans, based on the recommendations of the allotment holders, would be available for consideration at the next meeting.

b) Determinations

The following were noted:

Phase 2 land North and South of Dereham Road, Details of condition 43 of 2014/2611 – Mineral Safeguarding Assessment – approved

Phase 2 land North and South of Dereham Road, Details reserved by condition 30 of 2014/2611 – fire hydrants – approved

c) Draft Changes and New Policies for the Neighbourhood Plan

A meeting was being sought between councillors and the Neighbourhood Planning Consultant for Tuesday 22 April. It was therefore agreed to defer this item until a future meeting.

170 Finance

a) Approval of Payments

Brought forward		£7,428.00
April Direct Debits		
Hiscox	Community Centre Insurance	£777.81
The following payments were approved:		
Mark Caton	Allotment tap	£8.89
Mark Caton	Allotment padlock	£27.50
Julie King	Glasdon Dog Bin	£179.38
Approved at last meeting but not yet paid:		
Norfolk PTS	Locum work	£5,674.36
VAT to be reclaimed		£7,564.01

An invoice from Nurture for grounds maintenance was also noted, further information on the current contract was being sought and payment would not be considered until this had been received.

b) Application of a £500,000 loan over a borrowing term of 50 years to pay back the current 10-year loan

The application had been successful with the £500,000 loan now payable over 50years. There had been £49,825 difference between the outstanding amount of the existing loan and the new loan which had allowed the payment of outstanding invoices.

171 Community Centre Project

a) Insurance

Questions had been raised by the insurer and the following responses were agreed:

- It was anticipated that the work would be completed in 2027.
- The building was watertight, but the fire alarms were not connected.
- The building was of sip panel construction with brick and clad skin.
- Weekly inspections were being carried out, but it was recognised that these should be recorded. The insurer would be asked about what was required and a checklist would be drawn up.

b) Working Group and Open Day

Currently there was no insurance cover to allow for an open day. Consideration was being given to making a film showing the inside of the Community Centre that could be shared at a public meeting to be held in the Village Hall.

c) Electrical Connection and EV Charging Points

An offer had been made to make, free of charge, an electrical connection to the Community Centre and pay a small bay fee for four EV charging spaces, the company would then retain all income from the EV charging points. Concern expressed included: the size of the connection, the loss of four car parking spaces, whether there was sufficient need for 'fast' charging at the location, the fact that the site wasn't currently open to the public, the need for legal advice before entering into the suggested contract. **It was agreed to reject the offer at this time.**

172 District and County Councillor Reports

Margaret Dewsbury reported:

- Norfolk County Council's work to date on Devolution and Local Government Reform – an interim plan had been submitted in March and the final plan, which should have the support of all the districts, was to be submitted by 21 September.
- The Park and Ride service had been enhanced with earlier journeys in the morning, later journeys into the evening, increased frequency at most sites and Sunday services at all sites.
- Norfolk County Council was working with partners to install 34 new electric vehicle charging points, taking the total number of public charging points to 772.
- South Norfolk Council were also considering Local Government Reform, most Districts were suggesting three unitaries, Norwich City Council on extended boundaries with the remainder of the county split into east and west. However, this left some parishes west of Norwich in the east unitary and South Norfolk Council had been unable to support that suggestion and instead submitted an interim plan for two areas split east and west or one unitary.
- The Help Hub continued to provide assistance.
- Many communities were engaged in litter picks with South Norfolk Council arranging for the collection of the waste.
- Upgrading of the leisure centers was being carried out.

173 Public Forum

Members of the public raised the following:

- Concern regarding the number of lorries using Marlingford Road, it was noted that this might have been caused by the removal of equipment following the

end of construction.

- It had been heard that the Village Hall was heavily in debt and had been suggested that the committee be removed and responsibility handed over to the Parish Council. The accounts of the Village Hall were shared with those present showing a balance at the end of December 2024 of £19,952.40. It was also noted that it was unlikely that there would be any circumstance in which the Parish Council would be able to take over the Charity. It was acknowledged that the creation of such rumours was very damaging for the existing Chairty and caused distress to those involved. Questions were asked regarding the process for reporting Councillor behaviour, and it was noted that concerns should be addressed to the Monitoring Officer at South Norfolk Council.
- Councillors were thanked for the work that they were undertaking on behalf of the Council and the community.

174 Asset Maintenance

a) New and Repaired Dog Bins
The replacement dog bin had been installed and a bin at had been repaired. There was also a missing bin from Wheeler Crescent which Persimmon had agreed to replace.

b) Damage to Brick weave Driveway at College Heights
Whilst it was thought that much of the damage had probably been caused by surface water run-off and that this was only now noticeable because the vegetation had been cut back, it was agreed to obtain a quote for digging a trench to cut through any tree roots that may be causing an issue – Cllr Jobling.

c) Trees/Shrubs on land South of Stern Close
It was agreed to obtain a quote to cut back the trees and shrubs – Cllr Jobling

d) Damaged Fence, Jubilee Park
This had been repaired.

175 Highways

a) Directional Sign for The Church
A response was awaited from Highways.

176 Norwich Half Marathon
It was anticipated that a meeting would be held with the organisers in April.

177 Events in and Around Easton
Consideration was given to whether the Council should routinely ask event organisers to make a financial contribution to the community to mitigate the inconvenience caused. **It was agreed to ask for donations towards the Community Centre and/or reduced rate tickets for those who live in the parish.**

178 Land in Front of Oakley House, Bawburgh Road
The owner of the property had approached the Parish Council regarding adopting a small piece of land in front of their property. **It was agreed to reject the request on the basis that this would restrict public access to the open space.**

179 Norfolk ALC
It was agreed not to appoint a representative authorised to vote on the Council's behalf and not to make any nominations to the Board of Directors.

180 Items For Next Agenda

- It was noted that contact had been made with OCU City Fibre regarding the re-seeding of areas around the village, they had taken the decision not to carry out this work until all the cables had been installed, this would be monitored.

181 Date and Place of the next Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 6 May 2025 – the Annual Parish Meeting would commence at 6pm with the Parish Council meeting to be held following this meeting.

182 Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was resolved, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude the public due to the confidential nature of the item to be discussed – personnel matters.

183 Recruitment of new Substantive Clerk

It was agreed to appoint Sue Marsh as Parish Clerk, Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer. The salary offer and terms of employment were agreed.

With no further business, the meeting closed at 8.47pm.