

,The Bi-Monthly Meeting of East Garston Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Thursday 11th July 2024 at 7.00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. **Present:** Councillors: - Deana Carpenter (Vice-Chairman) DC, Sue Tulloch ST), Annabelle Eyre (AE), Peter Smith (PS), and Jonathan Rabbitts (JR) Gillian Woodward (Clerk).

Apologies: Liam Robson (LR) Clive Hooker (CH)

2. **Declaration of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.
3. **Minutes of last meeting:** The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 9th May 2024 were unanimously confirmed and adopted.
4. **Co-option of new councillor:**
Peter Smith (PS) confirmed he would be stepping down as from 11th July 2024. ST, JR and DC had met with Stephen Reschwamm who is keen to join the PC. He lives in East Garston and is an ex-policeman. It was unanimously agreed to co-opt him as a new councillor.
5. **Questions/comments from members of the public:**

Pat Glover (PG) of the East Garston Eco Group reported on the following:

West Berkshire Council has sent a Forward Plan for its Climate Forum. Subjects covered so far this year include Biodiversity Net Credits, the Downlands electric mini-bus which is available for hire, and the WBC website which has information about home improvement (including for landlords) and village hall grants. Still to come is information on wildlife corridors and support for local market garden schemes. Points covered at the most recent Climate Forum were:

1. Any issues relating to changes to the maintenance of road verges and other green areas should be reported to WBC.
2. Various training initiatives for councillors were presented.

Councillors agreed that PG reporting back to the PC was sufficient to keep them well informed, and that the Friends of the Earth document, '20 Actions Parish and Town Councils can take on the Climate and Nature Emergencies' could be put on the Parish Council website. PG will arrange for this to be done.

PG reported on the use of Biodiversity Net Credits for any Millennium Field improvements for wildlife. It was agreed that this shouldn't be pursued further as the increase in biodiversity from relatively small changes to a mainly recreational area was not expected to be large enough. There was a discussion about ways to increase nature in the field, without significantly impacting on its recreation use. Better use could potentially be made of corners that the contractor doesn't mow. Pat will contact the West Berkshire Countryside Society for advice on managing the overgrown wooded area at one side of the field. It could be useful to get feedback from parishioners before any other changes to the field are undertaken. Sue will ask Thames Water if they are still able to replace the section of hedge that was removed, and if possible, could this be replanted after October.

PG will continue to report on the village hall grant application for low carbon heating and cooling as this progresses. PG asked if the poster promoting WBC's Environment Newsletter could be put up on the PC's notice board.

There was some discussion about the Millennium Field and the unmown corners of the field which act as pollinator strips, and if any saplings could be planted. ST to investigate.

Signed



Date 12/9/24

6. Planning Matters since last Meeting:

DC reported on the Greengates planning meeting at WBC on 19th June. The applicant is now appealing for the original plans to be passed. The Parish Council doesn't need to do anything as the original objections still stand and it is up to WBC to make a final ruling by the deadline of August 14th.

DC further reported that the village should have a Village Design Statement (VDS). AE agreed to do some research into other village VDSs for examples of what is required.

Action: AE to research VDS.

NEW:	
245/01156/AGRIC	Jimmys Farm Stables, School Lane, East Garston Application to determine if prior approval required for a proposed storage barn extension. Planning application is required – subsequent notice from WBC.
24/01270/SDAY	Church, Manor Farm, Station Road, East Garston Horse Chestnut: Crown reduction, as several large limbs overhanging the driveway to the Church in East Garston are showing stress fractures.
DECISIONS:	
24/00534/HOUSE	Highbury, Front Street, East Garston Part retrospective: retention of replacement barn building with solar panels and use as artists studio (domestic) following demolition of derelict barn in rear garden. No objections from PC. PERMISSION GRANTED with conditions
24/00491/FUL	Greengates, Front Street, East Garston Demolition of existing structurally compromised cottage and provision of a replacement cottage, with provision for access and related land-scaping. PC met on 4 th April to discuss revised plans. It was agreed that more detailed plans showing exact measurements be requested and looked at before any decision can be made. These comments were submitted before the 11 th April deadline. Meeting with WBC on June 19 th . PERMISSION GRANTED with conditions

7. Receive Reports:

District Councillor Clive Hooker sent his apologies and no report available.

DC reported on the WBC planning meeting 19th June – already covered above under Planning.

ST gave update on War Memorial remedial works – the re-flaunching of the base is scheduled for Sept 10-12th.

ST reported that mowing on the Millennium field had begun but there were some concerns from villagers about the damage to the field from the work that Thames Water had carried out.

DC reported that an email regarding dog fouling had been received from a resident and that the resident had bought a couple of signs which they would plant in the grass. It was agreed to have a reminder about dog fouling placed in the next EG Newsletter **Action: Clerk to organise.**

Proposed new playground equipment – ST told the meeting that she had spoken to Stephanie Watson about a quote received from Caloo for £10,000. The maximum amount The Greenham Trust would match fund is £5,000, which means raising £5,000. It was agreed that the PC would give a contribution of £2,000.

Clerk's report:

PS reported that the phone box window pane had been fixed. However, since then it transpires that a further pane has broken and will need fixing. **Action: PS agreed to have a look.**

Emergency Plan – Clerk still waiting for information from councillors and will send a final reminder with the aim of finalising the plan by the end of July.

The Clerk reported that she is booked on to 2 half-day courses run by NALC on Sept 24th and Oct 1st on What You Need to Know aimed at officer development. The cost of the courses is included in the PC's annual BALC subscription.

Rural Services Network – it was agreed not to incur the expense of £50 plus VAT/year for this newsletter as it was felt that the information is available in other places which the PC already receives.

The Clerk reported that her hours had reduced from considerably over her contractual hours (probably to do to end of year accounts and the audit) to much closer to the contracted number but that

Signed



Date 12/9/24

she would keep monitoring over the next couple of months.

8. Finance and Compliance:

a) Payments and Receipts

1. Paid since last meeting:

Name	Goods or Service	Amount incl VAT	Approved
Scofell	Grounds maintenance – April	305.53	ST/DC
Tactical	Dog bins – April	102.00	ST/DC
Penny Post	EG Newsletter	295.00	ST/DC
Zurich	Insurance	542.15	ST/DC
BALC	NALC newsletter	131.45	ST/DC
Christopher McGowan	Auditor	90.00	ST/DC
G. Woodward	Exps – stationery	22.81	ST/DC
Scofell	Grounds maintenance – May	305.53	ST/DC
Tactical	Dog bins – May	81.60	ST/DC
G. Woodward	Clerk's salary – June		ST/DC
Unity Bank	Service charge	18.00	
	Total incl Clerk's salary	£2111.28	

2. To be paid before next meeting:

Name	Goods or Service	Amount Inc VAT
Scofell	Grounds maintenance – June	305.53
Tactical	Dog bins – June	81.60
	Total (incl Clerk's salary)	

3. Received since last meeting:

Name	Goods or Services	Amount
Unity Trust Bank	Interest	114.03

Current Account: £2,572.71
Deposit account: £16,745.66
Total £19,318.37

9. Jubilee Meadow:

DC had undertaken the routine inspection of the play equipment in the Jubilee Meadow. She remarked that there was a lot of nettle growth. **Action: PS agreed to look at this.**

10. Village Maintenance and Millennium Field: - JR

This has been covered in point 7.

11. Community Speedwatch:

Nothing to report since the last meeting.

12. Any Other Business:

JR had spoken to Martyn Wright about the recent fallen tree over the river about who would move it and who would pay for it. West Berks Council had been out and inspected the tree and the next day had instructed their contractor to clear the site of the fallen tree. It was agreed that when Trevor Cripps's bill was received the PC would reach out to WBC and ask for a contribution and at same time ask if they looked at the other trees on the bank.

The meeting finished at 8.30 pm

Date of next meeting: September 12th 2024 at 7.00 pm.

Signed



Date

12/9/24