

MINUTES OF ETCHILHAMPTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 30 MAY 2019 7PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Mrs Bridewell, Mrs Cowdry, Mrs Freeman, Mr & Mrs Garland, Mr & Mrs Hanson, Mr Holgate, Mr Nash, Mrs Robertson, Mr Rodwell, Mr Smith, Mr Whitehead (Wiltshire Councillor) and Mr Woods (Chairman)

Apologies: PCSO Georgina Dodd, Wiltshire Police

AGENDA

PART I – Guest Speakers:

1 Mr Philip Whitehead, Wiltshire Councillor

Mr Whitehead gave an informative slide presentation on Wiltshire's finances. The effect of huge rises in "social" spending of all sorts and cuts in central government grants meant that Wiltshire was always under pressure to keep solvent. Only 36% of business rates went to Wiltshire the rest to central government.

On rehabilitation of hospital patients, care offices were now working closely with hospitals which cost about £6m.

More support was being given to special needs children in ordinary schools as distinct from special schools.

Bin collection was being rationalised to provide more single bin collection.

Given the need for £25m savings this year, every Wiltshire department/activity was under scrutiny.

Mr Whitehead responded to a number of questions from the floor and was thanked for his presentation.

PART II – Ordinary Agenda:

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting were distributed, approved and signed.

3 Matters arising

None were raised.

4 Points from the Public not otherwise covered

A parishioner asked about repair to the Echilhampton/Coate junction sign and the buckled village sign by Whiterig. It was explained that both matters had been reported to Wiltshire and were on their action list but were not deemed to be priorities in road safety terms.

Voluntary painting by the Parish Council and volunteers of the 1-4 Church View sign had been rejected by Wiltshire but they themselves had not done the job.

Likewise BT had been asked about voluntary repainting of the telephone kiosk but they had referred the matter to their works unit.

5 Parish Council Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts

Mr Nash presented his report and the annual accounts. He explained the Council's expenditure items. The cost of the playing field slope would appear in next year's accounts.

St Andrew's Church had been given donations of £250 for churchyard maintenance and £50 for green bin emptying.

6 Parish Council Chairman's Report

Mr Woods reported on the Council's activities over the year and thanked Mr Nash for his work as Treasurer/RFO and Mr Hanson for acting as Internal Auditor.

On broadband, he believed that all residents who had asked for this had now been connected.

The WWI Commemorative Beacon and nibbles had been very successful. Special thanks had been given to Messrs Frank and Alec Edwards for providing the beacon site and collecting wood and to the providers of the nibbles. Some native saplings had been planted outside the playing field fence as Commemorative trees.

On street lights, Mr Holgate had raised the defective light outside Church Farm and Mr Woods had reported this to Wiltshire who claimed that responsibility lay with Ringway who said they could not get their repair vehicle down to the light. Mr Woods had suggested a smaller vehicle or the use of a sectional alloy tower moved into place by a couple of men. Action was still awaited.

The playing field entrance slope had been resurfaced in tarmac as mentioned in Mr Nash's explanation of the accounts after Mr Woods had obtained a grant from the Lottery Fund. The contractors, Molloy Groundworks, had done a very good job.

The grass cutting of the field by Mr D Stevens was of a high standard and his firm had been re-hired for the 2019 season.

The next Stewards' visit would be on 24 June and the priority was grass cutting in difficult visibility areas, gully clearance and clearing the sides of the central village track.

On potholes it was explained that Wiltshire differentiated between potholes in road surfaces – holes surrounded by tarmac – and erosion of verges. Wiltshire's pot-holing scheme included only the former and this applied equally to the new jet-patching machine Wiltshire had acquired.

On planning, the Inspector's Reports on 18/05984 and 18/5990 were still awaited. Until these were released nothing much more could be done.

Mr Woods thanked everyone who had attended the meeting and those not present who had supported the Parish Council over the year.

7 Any Other Business

There being no further business the meeting closed.