

**DRAFT MINUTES FOR ETCHILHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON MONDAY,
17 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 6.30pm IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present Mr. P. Hanson (Chairman), Mrs. L. Clark (Vice-Chairman), Mr. J. Nash (RFO), Mr. M. Harris and Mrs. C. Wimble (Clerk)

1 Declarations of Interests and Dispensations. There were none.

2 Apologies for Absence. There were no apologies for absence.

3 The Minutes of the last meeting on 11 November, 2024 were approved.

4 Matters Arising

a Bleed Kit. The council discussed the suggestion of a bleed kit for Etchilhampton but decided that the village was too small. Mrs. Clark commented that it was run by a different organisation to that of the defibrillator and would involve registration with another company, and changing every four years. It was decided that if the Village Hall Committee felt one was required, they could organise and pay for it.

b New Play Ground Assessor. Mr. Hanson reported that as Dave Roberts had left the village, we would need to find a new assessor. Mrs. Wimble commented that she had texted the Roberts to ask and would send an email. Failing that another company would be approached. Mr. Nash produced a flyer from RoSPA and it was decided that they would be approached if we had no news from Dave Roberts.

c Parishioner letter to Mr. Whitehead regarding damage to the verges. Wiltshire Council had been to tidy the verges – closing the road for a week during the autumn whilst they completed the work. Not long afterwards tractors had gone over the verges and blocked the newly dug drainage ditches. Recently, a contract hedge cutter from Melksham working for Mr. Butler had driven all over them once again. It is now looking a mess and a waste of tax payers' money. The councillors agreed it would be a good idea if a representative from highways were to come and inspect and have a word with Mr. Curnick.

d VE Day Village Event. The Councillors discussed the organisation of a village event. It was decided that this would be a good idea especially as there were few events for the village and they were very much enjoyed by all who attended. Plus, there were new people in the village and it would give them a chance to meet the rest of the village. Mr. Hanson noted it had not been widely advertised – but there would be bell ringing and beacons lit. Mrs. Clark to talk to Alec Edwards to see if Stert are preparing a beacon that we can join in with on Thursday 8 May. Mr. Hanson to talk to Mr. Chadwick about the possibility of organising a village BBQ at lunchtime on the weekend or Saturday evening.

e Speed Survey. Mr. Hanson reported he had submitted a speed survey form but had not heard anything. Cars can still drive along the road through Etchilhampton at 60 MPH. In the mornings and afternoons there is quite a lot of traffic to and from All Cannings school. Mr. Hanson reported that when the Council had come before to monitor the speed it did not comply with the Highways Act and regulations. Mr. Nash asked if the Parish Council could put up signs for 40 MPH which would be a good start. There were conflicting views if this was legal.

f Village Gates. Mr. Hanson has emailed Andy Cadwallader from Highways to apply for funding for the gates. The locations were discussed – they would be put where the existing village signs are. If we get the gates approved, we could apply for a reduction of speed. It was mentioned that the gates could have something on them which will be discussed in due course.

g Churchyard. Mr. Hanson had spoken to both Simon Rodwell and Simon Chadwick regarding mowing of the churchyard grass. Simon Rodwell has been doing this on his own and paying for the maintenance of the mower. Simon Chadwick had confirmed that the £350 paid annually does go to the Etchilhampton church fund but is not earmarked for grass cutting. He also said he could take the mower and it was noted that volunteers were needed to assist. Mrs. Clark asked where the rota was and who was in charge. Mr. Hanson confirmed it was Mr. Chadwick who was in charge and he also suggested it might be easier to keep the mower in the shed beside the village hall. Mr. Harris to raise this at the next village hall meeting.

h Etchilhampton Footpaths. Mrs. Clark has had a reply to her letter from the Countryside Access Officer (Ali Rasey). There had been a comment from a parishioner that the footpath through the village and up the hill was being used by horses and bikes. Mrs. Clark asked if we needed a sign for No Horses and No Bicycles. It was decided that horses did not use that path and it might have been a one off for a mother and daughter on a pony. The footpath is narrow leading from the road into the village and a No Bikes sign would be a good idea. Mrs. Clark to contact Ali Rasey.

i Parish Steward. (note this was added to the agenda at the meeting) The Parish Steward had come on 5 February. Mr. Hanson reported that he always calls in advance to discuss what needed doing. He is quite limited as things that require traffic management are not in his remit. However, he had cleared the middle path very well. Mrs. Clark asked when the gulley truck was coming and it was confirmed they would attend on week 22. Mr. Hanson will try to make sure he speaks to them and ensure they jet the blockages.

5 Questions/Points from the Public. There were no questions from the public.

6 Treasurer's Report. Mr. Nash reported that the closing balance was £1,072.77 and presented the following list of payments since the last meeting which were ratified:

13 Nov	Ionos	12.00
13 Dec	Ionos	12.00
23 Dec	Goddard	801.00
14 Jan	Ionos	12.00
12 Feb	Ionos	12.00
14 Feb	Talbot	10.80
17 July	WALC Annual Subscription	588.00
TOTAL		1437.00

7 Correspondence and consultations.

8 Planning Applications. All planning applications received to date had been approved by the Parish Council. Mr. Harris reported he had submitted planning for his garage extension.

9 Reports of Meetings. Mr. Hanson reported that he looks closely at the agendas of meetings like Devizes Area and if there is something that would be of interest to Etchilhampton he would attend.

10 Any Other Business

- a Mrs. Wimble reported that there was a bad smell and foul water at the Coate Road junction. Mr. Hanson has reported this to the Environment Agency. Hopefully it would go on their list of concerns. Mr. Hanson will write to Public Health Wiltshire. The drainage department will not treat this because of foul water. Mr. Harris felt this was now a health hazard. Mr. Hanson will write to the Environment Agency and to the manager of the Whiterig 'care home' again. Mr. Harris felt the Wiltshire Council had a duty of care to resolve this problem. Mr. Hanson to contact Brian Mathews the MP and stated that perhaps the contractor involved with clearing the drains might not have done everything correctly.
- b Playing Field boundary fence. Mr. Hanson reported that he had written to the Land Registry department who wanted proof of identify which he had now given.
- c Notice Board. Mr. Hanson reported that it was now safe. He intended to replace the glass with a clear plastic material.
- d Coate Road Development. Technically this was not within our boundaries to contest. Kate Freeman had pointed out that these developments would increase the traffic on our roads.
- e Re-election. Mr. Hanson asked if all the councillors were up for re-election as this would take place at the beginning of May. All councillors would be obliged to go to County Hall in Trowbridge. Mrs. Wimble to put the forms on the notice board when they are received.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 20.15.

C Wimble, Clerk