

Minutes of the East Knoyle Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 5th February 2025 at 7.30pm East Knoyle Village Hall

Councillors Present – Sue Entwistle (Chair), Neil Southerden, Ian Tait, Deb Bateman, Hugo Middleton, Rob McCarthy, Ann Ambrose, Ann White, Garry Staunton. Guest – Cllr Bridget Wayman (WC)

Clerk - Martin Brown.

Members of the Public present – Mr P Naish; Mr C Cox; Mr T Kenyon; Mrs L Gascoigne; Mr D Jenkins; Mr P Dean.

1. **Apologies for absence** – none
2. **Notices of Interest** – none
3. **Public Open Forum** – Cllr Entwistle read out a letter received from Mr A Knight (Owner of the Fox and Hounds) outlining his current situation regarding the pub and his intentions to keep it as a pub. Mr Kenyon spoke in support of EKPC submitting an ACV application in relation to the Fox and Hounds as soon as possible, while at the same time noting that there was no wish to compromise the actual pub business. Mr Cox sought to clarify the contractual position. Cllr Wayman clarified some aspects of the ACV process and implications.
4. **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th January 2025** – Proposed Cllr Southerden / Seconded Cllr McCarthy - Approved and Signed as a true record.
5. **Matters Arising** –
 - i. Cllr Wayman confirmed that WC had attended to the drains/ditches at the Turnpike lay-by and have been cleared and are functioning.
 - ii. Election Notice will be 11th March 2025. Councillors should register for the May election between 12th March and 2nd April 2025.
 - iii. All other actions from January Meeting minutes carried out as directed.
6. **Planning Applications:**
 - i. **PL/2025/00203 - LAUNDRY HOUSE, HINDON ROAD, EAST KNOYLE, SP3 6AA** - Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. Approved with comment that Oak does not need reduction at this stage. Proposed Cllr Southerden / Seconded Cllr Ambrose. Approved unanimously.
 - ii. **PL/2024/10980 - Land North of Holdens Farm Cottages, East Knoyle, SP3 6DE** - Variation of Condition 2 of PL/2022/05051 to amend the approved plans. No support. Objections on grounds of increasingly invasive and Dark Skies concerns.
 - iii. **PL/2024/11029 - Deepwater Cottage, 10 Hindon Road, East Knoyle, SP3 6AA** - Installation of external boiler and oil tank. Approved with comment that firewall regulations at boundary are taken into consideration. Proposed Cllr Tait / Seconded Cllr White. Approved unanimously.

Note – Planning Applications and any comments submitted by East Knoyle Parish Council are available on the Wiltshire Council website – under Planning and Building Applications.
7. **Cllr Bridget Wayman's Report** –
 - i. Devolution – the proposal to form the Heart Of Wessex Strategic Planning organisation for sharing resources was accepted by Wiltshire Council. New members joining included Bournemouth and Poole. There are several implications and new powers over such areas as planning.
 - ii. Wiltshire Council budget – Rates will increase by 4.5% next financial year – 2.5% as council tax and 2.0% for adult care.
 - iii. Central Government impacts on local planning permissions continue to be monitored as potentially moves in favour of certain sectors, not necessarily local communities.
8. **The Fox and Hounds – application to nominate The Fox and Hounds as an ACV** – Cllr Middleton
 - I. Some of the elements of the ACV and the process were explained, but some confusion was evident.
 - II. Some of the suggestions generated during the discussion included the PC arranging for a public meeting to assess opinion; community involvement in some way; longer terms - investigating the possible takeover of the pub as a community run business – requiring a full business case to be prepared. It was generally agreed that there was a lack of information around both obtaining and ACV and the current owner's short/long term plans. A proposal was made to contact the owner as soon as possible to clarify their situation and plans. Cllr Bateman agreed to discuss this with the owners. Proposed Cllr Ambrose / Seconded Cllr Tait – Votes for 8. Votes against 1. Approved

Action – Cllr Bateman to discuss the situation with the owners of the Fox and Hounds and to report back to the PC.

9. EKPC Website – Cllr Middleton

- I. The 'trial' EKPC gov.uk website was demonstrated to the Councillors prior to the meeting, and the content and design was approved.
- II. The plan is to go live as soon as feasibly possible – this does require a number of changes to the way information is presented and this falls to the Clerk to implement with Cllr Middleton's assistance.
- III. The annual price for the website is £120. This is for the website only. It was determined that at this stage there is no requirement for additional costs for gov.uk email addresses. This charge comes in well below the allocated resource for this project and means EKPC will be fully compliant with the accessibility access now legally required.

Proposal – to proceed with the new website and to authorise the annual payment. Proposed Cllr Tait / Seconded Cllr Staunton – approved unanimously

Actions 1) Clerk to pay for the website to go 'live' 2) Clerk to ensure content meets the required accessibility standards. 3) Cllr Middleton to liaise regarding the content of the EKPC webpages

10. Highways – Cllr McCarthy

- i. Parish Steward has missed the last two programmed monthly visit days in EK due to be taken away for other WCC duties – next visit due shortly.
- ii. EKPC have been notified of the availability of the WCC 'gully crew' in February (they only clear ditches and gullies, not drains). Councillors/residents encouraged to contact Cllr McCarthy asap with any identified works needed.
- iii. Cllr McCarthy has received a request from a Holloway resident for a salt bin due to the freezing of the water on the road due to the broken/collapsed drains nearby. Cllr McCarty will continue to investigate – preliminary research suggests that a salt bin would cost over £200 to purchase, with an additional installation charge. This would only treat the symptoms, not the cause.

Actions – 1) All Councillors to forward details of any ditch/gully works required asap. 2) Cllr McCarthy to report back on Holloway investigations.

11. Chair's Report – Cllr Entwistle

- i. Cllr Entwistle and Cllr Southerden met with the chair of the Village Hall to discuss some of the feedback the parish council has received following the recent increase in the hall rental charges, the way it was handled, heating issues and other points.
- ii. The recent CPR and Emergency First Aid training courses run on the instigation of EKPC by St John's Ambulance were a great success, generating very good feedback by all 43 attendees. Donations from attendees (plus £50 from EKPC) totalled £335.
- iii. Cllr Entwistle advertised the upcoming Musical Event (Wiltshire Age Concern) taking place on 26 February.

12. Grant of Access across Common Land

- i. Clerk explained that the Grants of Access were not sent out last year due to an oversight.
- ii. The four grants for – Deepmoor Cottage; Fourwinds; The Windmill and The Fox and Hounds were presented to the PC for comment and approval. It was noted that the Grant for the Fox and Hounds should go to the owner this year, not the tenant. Proposed Cllr Bateman / Seconded Cllr Tait. Approved unanimously.

Actions – Clerk to send out Grants of access

13. Councillor Recruitment Update – Clerk

- i. There are still 2 councillor vacancies. Adverts were placed in the January EKN, and the statutory notices are on all PC notice boards – no responses received.

14. Finance

- I. Cash Book reconciliation – Clerk presented and highlighted key areas
- II. Payments due for approval – Proposed Cllr White / Seconded Cllr Entwistle.
- III. Clerk transition payment/confirmation of current clerk leaving date. It was agreed that it would be realistic and sensible to ask the current clerk to supervise and train the new clerk in a working environment, which would require the Clerk now leaving on 30 April 2025 (new clerk starts 1st April). This would require the payment of both salaries. Proposed Cllr Bateman / Seconded Cllr McCarthy. Salary payment approved unanimously.

15. Village Hall –

- i. Cllr Ambrose had no updates since last VH Cttee meeting. Next VH Cttee is scheduled for Thursday 6th February.

16. Common Lands – Cllr Ambrose

- i. Fallen Tree - access required across common land from Wise Lane. The contractor request requiring access to the property – Cocked Hat, Underhill - to carry out tree works was reviewed and agreed it could proceed, subject to conditions. Proposed Cllr Bateman / Seconded Cllr Tait. Approved unanimously.
- ii. Funding through a grant (covering all costs for approximately 500 trees/shrubs and the clearing and planting works) for the area near The Green were approved just before the PC meeting. The work has to be completed before the end of March 2025, or the grant would be withdrawn with no guarantee that a new grant would be available in the future. To go ahead with this project - Proposed Cllr Tait / Seconded Cllr McCarthy. Approved unanimously.
- iii. Financing the new tree/shrub project – the terms of the grant mean that EKPC has to pay the contractors/suppliers directly. This is then reimbursed on completion by the awarding body. The amount of the works and the grant is £3614.80 which would need to come from PC funds. The RFO reported that this in theory could lead to the Cash Book being very low on funds / overdrawn. He suggested that the funds from this project could be temporarily borrowed from the (ring- fenced) Windmill View Deposit Fund and repaid when the grant payment was received. This funding solution was Proposed by Cllr Bateman / Seconded by Cllr Staunton. Approved unanimously.

Actions 1) Cllr Ambrose to liaise closely with the Clerk/RFO regarding timing of works and payments. 2) Cllr Ambrose to monitor and be the project manager.

17. Post Office & Village Shop – Cllr Ian Tait

- i. Retaining Wall approved by the PC in January to be installed 24 February
- ii. Shop Cttee had approved a donation of £700 to the EK Newsletter
- iii. Mrs L Webb retires from a key role in the administration of invoices, etc – to be replaced by Cllr White
- iv. Loyalty Card scheme is in place
- v. Planned power cut – there are concerns as to impacts but working with SSE to avoid disruption.
- vi. Lease Renewal discussions with EKPC are due to take place in March
- vii. Annual Stock Take – dates confirmed as 22/23 March

18. KHG/Playground – Cllr Staunton

- i. Clearance of boundary vegetation to commence w/c 10 February
- ii. New playground signage was presented and discussed. Two signs suggested – one for the playground area (aimed at younger children) and one for the playfield area (aimed at older children). Quotes and artwork for the two signs were presented. Funding to come from the KHG Improvement Account. Proposed Cllr Entwistle / Seconded Cllr Staunton – approved unanimously

Actions 1) Cllr Staunton to continue to liaise on site with supplier during the clearance work 2) Clerk to progress sign order.

19. Correspondence Received – Mr A Knight - included in Public Open Forum

20. Urgent Items – see items 16 ii and iii.

21. Date of the next meeting – Wednesday 5th March 2025 @ 7.30pm East Knoyle Village Hall

Meeting Closed at 9.46pm.

Signed as a true Record*Sue Entwistle*.....Chair

Date ...5th March 2025.....

Martin Brown, Clerk to the Council
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