

**THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
CASTLE EDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 8 MAY 2025**

Present:

Councillor Mrs M Wilmer (Chair)
Councillors D Gordon and J Welsh

Also Present: 2 residents, County Councillor S Woodhouse

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs M Wilmer be elected Chair for the ensuing year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs J Welch be elected Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

COUNCILLOR MRS M WILMER IN THE CHAIR

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Taylor.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

RESOLVED that Mr G Fletcher be appointed Internal Auditor for the ensuing year.

6. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that no Councillors be appointed to outside bodies.

7. POLICE REPORT

There was no police report.

8. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on **17 APRIL 2025**, copy of which had been circulated to each Member were approved and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Planning – the enforcement issues had been looked at by Durham County Council. There was no evidence of removal of trees in the location, however works had been carried out in the adjacent site had been approved.

Footpaths – the condition of the footpaths had been reported by the previous County Councillors.

9. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

The Chair welcomed the new County Councillor representing Castle Eden.

County Councillor Woodhouse introduced himself and gave details of how long he had lived in the village and some background information. He had recently been elected the County Councillor for the Castle Eden and Passfield Ward.

10. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

11. **PLANNING PROPOSALS**

DM/25/01020/LB Replacement of glazed palm house roof and guttering at The Castle, The Village, Castle Eden

RESOLVED that no objection be made.

12. **FINANCE**

Balance as per bank reconciliation as 5 May was £4
Bank statements were viewed by the Chair

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	CHEQUE NO
Wearside Properties	Installation of milestone	307.20	000761
Clear Insurance	Insurance renewal	£937.98	000762
G Fletcher	Internal Audit	£100	000763

13. **CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION**

Smaller Authorities where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31 March 2021 could certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

RESOLVED that the Certificate of Exemption be agreed.

14. **ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2024/25**

Consideration was given to the report of the Internal Auditor which examined the system of internal controls that were in place to ensure that the Parish Council may obtain an adequate level of assurances for its activities, a copy of which had been circulated.

The report gave details of the annual review of the internal control arrangements within the Council.

Members were advised that all Local Councils in England were expected to complete an Annual Return which summarised their annual activities at the completion of each financial year.

It was Members responsibility to ensure that financial management was adequate and effective, and the Council had a sound system of internal controls.

A section within the Annual Return had been completed by the Parish Council's independent internal auditor and in his view the system of internal controls were adequate for the purpose intended and had been operated effectively. The Report recommended that the internal controls within the Parish Council were satisfactory.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Report 2024/25 be accepted.

15. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25**

RESOLVED that the annual governance statement be approved and the following confirmed:

- 1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.
- 2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.
- 3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.
- 4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 5 We assessed the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.
- 6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council's accounting records and control systems.
- 7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.
- 8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate, included them in the accounting statements.

16. **ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2024/25**

Consideration was given to the Statement of Accounts and asset register for the Year Ended 31 March 2025, a copy of which had been circulated.

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts and asset register be approved.

17. **STANDING ORDERS**

The Clerk advised that Standing Orders would be reviewed throughout the year.

RESOLVED that the Standing Orders be adopted.

18. **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Clerk advised that new Financial would be reviewed throughout the year.

RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations be adopted.

19. **PARISH COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION**

The parish council could proceed to co-option as there had been an insufficient number of candidates that stood for election. The parish council had 3 vacancies. A resident in attendance expressed an interest to be co-opted.

RESOLVED that

- (i) a notice advertising the vacancies be placed on the notice boards.
- (ii) The resident be sent the forms to complete.

20. **VILLAGE MATTERS**

There were no village matters.