

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CASTLE EDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2015**

Present:

Councillor Mrs M Wilmer (Chair)
Councillors M Colborn, D Martin, B Nutter, Mrs V Robertson and B Turnbull

Also Present:

Mrs A Moon – ACE, Mrs Bothwell

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor B Robertson, County Councillors Crute and Pounder.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. POLICE REPORT

There was no Police representative in attendance.

4. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on **19 MARCH 2015**, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Tree Maintenance in the Village (Minute No 4 refers)

Councillor Nutter commented that a lot of residents were interested in the trees within the village, which the estate owned a large percentage of and many trees had Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) on them.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

There was no County Council report.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

East Durham Under 10 Football Team

A request for a donation towards the training facilities and football strip had been received.

RESOLVED that the application be refused.

8. PLANNING PROPOSALS

There were no planning proposals

9. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chair and Vice Chair had attended a Neighbourhood Planning Meeting in Newton Aycliffe. Government Policy was to facilitate future development rather than restrict it. It was felt that this was not suitable for the village at present.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council do not progress Neighbourhood Planning at present.

10. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY CODE 2015**

The Clerk advised that the Government had introduced the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 which saw the Audit Commission disbanded from 31 March 2015. This also introduced exemptions from routine external audit for Parish Councils with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000. In place of routine audit, smaller authorities would be subject to new Transparency requirements. Parish Councils that met the criteria were referred to as exempt authorities.

Smaller authorities with less than £25,000 turnover would be subject to an assurance review. An auditor would issue a report on the annual return prepared by the authority rather than a full internal audit. The following information was required to be published by 1 July 2015 and annually thereafter:

- Draft minutes from all formal meetings should be published not later than 1 month after the meeting
- Meeting agendas and papers should be published not later than 3 days before the meeting is to take place.

From 1 April 2017, smaller authorities with a turnover under £25k will be exempt from undergoing an annual assurance review but would be required to meet the transparency code.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

11. **FINANCE REPORT**

Balance at Bank as at 1 March 2015	£8116.81
Clerks Salary	480.26
HMRC	120.06
Clerks Expenses	<u>63.90</u>
Balance at Bank	<u>£7452.59</u>

12. **VILLAGE MATTERS**

(i) **ACE Report**

Amanda Moon circulated the key points from the last ACE meeting and gave an update on progress. The Parish Council acknowledged that the hire of the village hall had not increased since the previous year.

(ii) **The future of St James Church building**

Councillor Mrs Robertson explained that The Village Residents Association had written to the Arch Deacon advising that they did not support the closure of the Church.

The Clerk had received a letter from the Diocese of Durham formally asking the Parish Council's views as an interested party. The Committee would consider the views of all interested parties prior to a final decision on what, if any recommendations it should make to the Bishop. Draft proposals for the closure for regular public worship had been submitted. Responses were sought prior to 5 June 2015.

RESOLVED that the draft proposals be displayed on the noticeboard requesting any comments be forwarded to the Clerk.

(iii) **Social Media**

Councillor Mrs Robertson apologised if any resident had misconstrued her post on Facebook regarding the Church. It was her opinion and not that of the Parish Council.

It was suggested the Parish Council account be re-created as a business account.

RESOLVED that Councillor Colborn create a business account for the Parish Council.

13 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

GP Surgery in Healtworks, Easington

It was reported that the GP surgery in Easington was to remain open for a further 12 months.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.