

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CASTLE EDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 20 APRIL 2023**

Councillor Mrs M Wilmer (Chair)

Councillors D Gordon, Mrs L Taylor and Mrs J Welch

Also Present: 1 resident

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of County Councillors Crute and Denali

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. POLICE REPORT

There had been 20 reported incidents in the area from 16 February to 15 March 2023, of these incidents, 10 were road or A19 related. There had been 1 report of criminal damage.

The number of calls regarding off-road bikes has fallen in the month. Officers carried out various operations around targeting off-road vehicles resulting in the seizure of a number of bikes previously and this had continued for the past month. By highlighting hotspot areas and times, which were intelligence-led, they had been able to disrupt much of the reported activity.

They continued to go forward with Op Grouse and the rural crime aspect. They were looking to have further late night/ early morning patrols to complement the Op Checkpoint (National Rural Crime Operation) patrols that we carry out. All of the patrols were intel led. Any relevant intelligence around suspicious activity should be reported via 101 or via Crimestoppers.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

4. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on **16 March 2023**, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Salt bins – A resident had agreed to fill the salt bin which would be purchased later in the year ready for the winter months.

Bus Shelters – all would be cleaned and Action Castle Eden would monitor them when they carried out the monthly litter pick.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Crute had circulated a report.

He had been contacting local groups to encourage their members to submit their comments on the Council's planning portal if they had any concerns about the planning application seeking consent to extend the time allowed to remove spoil from the former pit heap in Hesleden (DM/22/00010/MIN). Any comments would be raised by them at the planning meeting.

By way of a brief update on the streetlighting issue in Castle Eden, he had been advised by the streetlighting team that unfortunately there appeared to be a structural cable/outage issue in the area which was causing delays to repair works. The latest update from his blog can be found at <https://robcrute-blackhall.blogspot.com/2023/03/streetlight-cable-fault-in-castle-eden.html>

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

8. PLANNING PROPOSALS

- a) DM/23/00699/FPA Proposed development of existing industrial estate to develop 10no. starter units at Wellfield Depot, Castle Eden

Concerns were expressed regarding the increase in traffic that would contribute to the many accidents that had occurred at the mini roundabouts.

RESOLVED that an objection be made on highway safety grounds.

- b) DM/23/00805/TPO Various tree works as outlined in Arboricultural report dated 21st March 2023 at Tollgate Lodge, Stockton Road, Castle Eden

RESOLVED that no objection be made.

- c) DM/23/01020/TCA Five day notice, to fell a dangerous tree at Cornfields 5 St James Fields, Castle Eden

The application was for information only.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

9. FINANCE

Balance as per bank reconciliation as £34,516.23

Bank statements were viewed by the Chair

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	CHEQUE NO
Gordon Fletcher	Audit	£100	000714
BHIB Insurance	Insurance	£590.63	000715

10. 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.

11. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2022/23

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 2022/23 be accepted.

12. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022/23

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.

13. ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2022/23

Consideration was given to the Statement of Accounts and asset register for the Year Ended 31 March 2023, a copy of which had been circulated.

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

14. VILLAGE MATTERS

- a) ACE had collected 35 bags of litter during the litter pick including a DVLA car clamp. The golf course had cleared the litter that had gone onto their land.
- b) Castle Signs – The owner of The Castle had given permission to use the castle logo. DCC would be contacted again to enquire if the signs could be used elsewhere in the village adjacent to the highway.

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 11 May 2023 at 6.15pm.