

EASTON ON THE HILL PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the meeting of Easton on the Hill Parish Council held on **Monday 19th June 2017** at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr M Simpson (Chairman)
Cllr J Moll (Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Baker
Cllr D Asher
Cllr S Goodwin
Cllr P Bates
Cllr E Hanson
Cllr D Wheatley
Cllr A O’Grady

Mrs D Barrett (Clerk/RFO to the Council)

	ACTION
<p>17/100 – Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies from Cllr H Tomblin and Cllr S Geraghty</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the absence of Cllr Tomblin and Cllr Geraghty</p>	
<p>17/101 – To receive declaration of interest under the Council’s Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda. Cllr Hanson declared a personal interest for item 17/106 (b)</p>	
<p>17/102 – To receive and approve for signature The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 08th May 2017. Resolved That the minutes be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.</p>	
<p>17/103 – Matters arising from these minutes only.</p> <p>17/89 – Mr Bradbury asked if one of the VAS could be moved to Westfields and it was suggested that a VAS be located along Ketton drift in order to capture data. This would require a post being sighted along the drift for the VAS to be attached. The Clerk spoke to the Planning department who advised that planning permission wasn’t required and it was for highways to approve the installation. Cllr Moll has been in touch with Highways and they will assess the situation and consider whether they can arrange for a post to be installed.</p> <p>17/97 – Comments raised by Cllr O’Grady on To Review the contract between the Cricket Club and Kings Keys and AK11 Cricket Clubs</p> <p>Cllr O’Grady asked to comment on this matter and raised the points below</p> <p>1/ The playing field is reportedly town land given to the people of the village as a playing field with the PC as a registered land owner. It is classed as a community asset and it is the PC’s duty to manage the field for the good of the people of the village. The Deeds are yet to be found. However, given the fact that all the residents of the village who were around at the time give the same report, one cannot deny that it is accurate, even though the legal documentation confirming this is yet to be located.</p> <p><i>As the land is not yet registered then ownership is not clear whether the land is classed as a community asset. Danny Moody’s opinion on the matter is as follows:</i></p> <p><i>1. “Ownership” of the playing field is unclear but is not, as far as I can see, contested. In other words, no one contests that the land is “owned” by Easton-on-the-Hill Parish Council. That makes establishing “ownership” much easier, as the council can apply for first registration of title in the knowledge that the application is unlikely to be contested. The council’s solicitor will provide advice in this</i></p>	

respect. "Ownership" is in quotes above because it is itself and ambiguous word. Does it mean freehold or leasehold, does it mean absolute title or possessory tile? We know what we mean in the common use of "own" but from a legal point of view it will be necessary to establish beyond doubt the exact nature of the "ownership".

2. Because "ownership" is not absolutely clear it is difficult to say with any certainty whether any other action, deed, lease, licence or promise is valid. For example, in order to determine whether or not the lease with the cricket club is valid and lawful one would have to first know if the council was within its powers to grant the lease. If it turned out that the council was not the freehold title holder then it probably wouldn't have the power to grant the lease. Similarly with what is being called a "sub-lease" to KKCC, but is actually more likely to be a licence, if the council is not the freehold title holder then the licence is invalid because the lease is invalid.

3. So for me, establishing "ownership" is the biggest issue to resolve, and all other questions regarding leases and licences become secondary to that.

4. Following on from point 3 though is what to do in the interim? One option is to carry on as though "ownership" by the council has been established beyond doubt, the other is to close the field completely whilst the issue is being solved. Clearly the latter is in no one's interest, so the way forward should be to accept the lack of clarity for the time being and just work on clarifying "ownership" as a priority.

In addition to Mr Moody's view the following should also be considered; in the agreement drawn up by Stapleton's between the Parish Council and the Playing Field Association, the agreement allowed the Playing Field Association to allow other, non-village teams to use the facility provided 'use is allowed only for such period as is reasonable for the game or activity to be carried on'.

This gives clear guidance on the ability for a 'user' such as the Cricket Club (a club named in the agreement between the Parish Council and the Playing Field Association) to sublet the playing field and the terms that would attach to the sublet.

Whilst the agreement is no longer in force, it was legally drawn up, allows a member of the Association to sublet and outlines a condition to the subletting of the Playing Field.

In 2008, a licence for use of the playing field was legally drafted and approved by a full Parish Council. This document was extremely well written and gives clear guidance and rules to anyone using that playing field. It also highlights the fact that the playing field is the responsibility of the PC and that any use of the playing field has to be sought from and approved by the PC.

It is not clear whether this document was legally drafted as described by Cllr O'Grady. In any event, having sought Mr Moody's advice on the contract his opinion is

"The 2008 licence is irrelevant to proceedings. The term of the licence was from 07:30 to 17:00 on 14 September 2008. Even if the licence holder held several events (in contravention of the licence), or even if there were several licences, they are long-since expired."

Let us go back to Autumn 2015 –

OneTouch Football had been authorised by the PC to use the playing field but was summarily dismissed given that he had used the playing field one day without prior permission. Added to this was the fact that local residents had complained about increased traffic.

As a consequence, he was told forthwith that he was no longer allowed to use the field.

This is an over simplification of the situation regarding OneTouch Football. A detailed paper was submitted to the Parish Council itemising the reasons for considering rescinding OneTouch's use of the Playing Field. The proposal to rescind was resolved at full Council on 08 June 2015 13(b)q

The EOTH Cricket Club did the following:

1/ dump a huge pile of rubble at the side of the playing field and was asked by the PC to remove it. This

<p>was not done. Even more rubble was recently added to it.</p> <p>The Clerk can find no record of this issue being raised with the Parish Council and therefore has not raised the issue yet with the Cricket Club.</p> <p>2/ the CC were repeatedly reminded that all grass cuttings are to be deposited in the pit and consistently fail to do so, dumping it instead along the verges causing the cuttings to decay into black smelly heaps which attract insects.</p> <p>The Clerk can find no record of this issue being raised with the Parish Council and therefore has not raised the issue yet with the Cricket Club.</p> <p>3/ the CC advised the PC last year that it had hired the playing field to another cricket club. This is illegal. The PC said and did nothing.</p> <p>Cllr O’Grady makes an assertion that the CC’s actions are illegal but provides no evidence to the illegality of their actions.</p> <p>The view from Mr Moody is ‘...so the way forward should be to accept the lack of clarity for the time being and just work on clarifying “ownership” as a priority.’</p> <p>In addition, there is clear evidence that the Parish Council has the power to allow a user the ability to sublet the playing field subject to a given condition. If we were to apply the same condition, there is no evidence that the condition has been broken.</p> <p>The Cricket club sent a request to the Parish Council asking for permission to allow another cricket club to use the field when they were not playing at home. The matter was discussed and the PC voted and fully agreed to the CC request. This took place at the January 2017 meeting ref 17/14 (b)</p> <p>The view from Mr Moody is to carry on and accept the lack of clarity.</p> <p>The Parish Council have historically granted clubs the ability to sublet so have arguably set a precedent to do so.</p> <p>The CC requested and was granted the ability to sublet the Playing Field subject to an appropriate agreement in place, January 2017 meeting ref 17/14 (b).</p> <p>There has been no proposal to rescind the resolved proposal January 2017 meeting ref 17/14 (b), therefore the that resolution still stands and the three proposals erroneously passed are not relevant.</p> <p>4/ the CC held two parties without licence and without requesting permission from the PC. The PC, having a duty as landowner to the people of the village, did nothing to remind them of their obligation nor did it ensure that the CC had applied for the proper licences prior to the events.</p> <p>Technically this is partially inaccurate. The CC did have a licence, but it was not fit for purpose hence the subsequent change to the licence the CC hold. In addition, this matter was discussed at previous council meetings and apologies for this have been made by both the PC and CC</p> <p>5/ the CC should provide the PC with a copy of their annual liability insurance, every year and, to my knowledge, have failed to do so. The PC has not reminded them or taken appropriate steps to check that they are insured.</p> <p>The Clerk had already approached the Cricket club and asked them to provide all the relevant documents.</p>	
<p>17/104 – Public Time.</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed the members of the Public that had attended.</p> <p>Mrs J Ward requested to speak and the Chairman invited her to do so. Having read the agenda for the meeting Mrs Ward felt that it was totally inappropriate to move the goals posts. Mrs Ward felt that it was because the boundary of the cricket pitch had increased due to more wickets being included that was the problem. Mrs Ward also wanted to ask about nets for the goal posts, something she had asked about before. The Chairman thanked Mrs Ward for her questions and for attending the meeting.</p> <p>Rev Phillip Davies and Sue Chappell had attended the meeting to answer any questions from parents whose children attend the primary school. No questions were asked and the Chairman thanked Rev Davies and Mrs Chappell for attending.</p>	

<p>17/105 – Public Correspondence</p> <p>a) The Clerk received a letter from Mr Ward, Annex A, a resident of The Crescent. The Chairman advised that he would draft a suitable response and then send to all councillors before the clerk sends to Mr Ward.</p> <p>b) The Clerk received notification that Mrs J Ward had been emptying the bin at the Play Park behind the Close, Annex B. After finding the reason behind this the Chairman thanked Mrs Ward for doing this.</p> <p>c) The Chairman read the letter of resignation from the Clerk Annex C. The Chairman suspended the meeting and asked the public and clerk to leave so the implications of the letter could be discussed. The procedure for recruiting a new clerk will be discussed at July's meeting.</p> <p>d) The Chairman received a letter from the Chairman of the Cricket Club, as he hadn't had the time to properly read it will be brought back to July's meeting.</p>	<p>Cllr Simpson</p> <p>Cllr Simpson</p>																																					
<p>17/106 – To Receive Report from Planning Committee</p> <p>To receive report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee for the applications</p> <p>a) 17/00886/FUL – Double garage with associated storage areas and new vehicular access from High Street at 2 Stamford Rd, Easton on the Hill. The Planning Committee reported that there was an Objection to this application. The Clerk submitted this to the Planning Department with the committee's comments</p> <p>b) 17/01033/FUL- Removal of existing bay window, flat roof porch and conservatory and addition of new roof with raised eaves and ridge, new front gables and side extension at The Sperrins New Road Easton on the Hill. The Planning Committee reported that there was an Objection to this application. The Clerk submitted this to the Planning Department with the committee's comments.</p>																																						
<p>17/107 –Finance.</p> <p>a) ICC's report – monthly bank reconciliation and invoices are approved: Receipts and Payments to Date</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="76 981 1177 1061"> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="76 1111 1305 1541"> <thead> <tr> <th>Chq no.</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>102300</td> <td>The Society of Local Councils – Annual Subscription</td> <td>£ 108.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102301</td> <td>E-On – Repair and replacement of two damaged light poles and lights</td> <td>£ 1816.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102302</td> <td>G McGill – Easton Maintenance Services – Pigeon Spikes, Playing field</td> <td>£ 463.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102303</td> <td>PL Services – Work done at Spring Close</td> <td>£ 30.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102304</td> <td>Stapleton's Solicitors – Work for Council with advice about CIPS Planning</td> <td>£ 453.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102305</td> <td>Mrs D Barrett – Wages and Expenses</td> <td>£ 504.49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102306</td> <td>E-On – Light Quarterly Maintenance</td> <td>£ 280.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102307</td> <td>HM Revenue and Customs-PAYE</td> <td>£ 217.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>102308</td> <td>Balfour Beatty Living Places Ltd- Emergency call out for light at 50 Stamford Road</td> <td>£ 401.35</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>£ 4274.54</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Chq no.	Description	Amount	102300	The Society of Local Councils – Annual Subscription	£ 108.00	102301	E-On – Repair and replacement of two damaged light poles and lights	£ 1816.80	102302	G McGill – Easton Maintenance Services – Pigeon Spikes, Playing field	£ 463.00	102303	PL Services – Work done at Spring Close	£ 30.00	102304	Stapleton's Solicitors – Work for Council with advice about CIPS Planning	£ 453.00	102305	Mrs D Barrett – Wages and Expenses	£ 504.49	102306	E-On – Light Quarterly Maintenance	£ 280.30	102307	HM Revenue and Customs-PAYE	£ 217.60	102308	Balfour Beatty Living Places Ltd- Emergency call out for light at 50 Stamford Road	£ 401.35			£ 4274.54	
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<p>It was Resolved to accept the ICCs' approval and payments were made under the Local Government Act 1982 and subsequent financial legislation.</p> <p>c) To approve the solicitors costs of approx. £2500 for work already done and work still to be done in reference to the registering of the playing fields and investigating the use of the Bridleway known as Ketton Drift.</p> <p>It was Resolved that the amount of £2500 be allocated for any future Solicitors and set up costs. Cllr Goodwin ask that advice and guidance be sort from NCALC before committing to any one solicitors doing the work. Cllr Simpson will contact NCALC.</p>	<p>Cllr Simpson</p>																																					
<p>17108 -To Receive the monthly update from the PCSO's.</p> <p>No PCSO was in attendance.</p> <p>It was reported that one car had been stolen from the house, formally known as The Oak at the beginning of June.</p>																																						
<p>17/109 - To Receive a Report from Cllr Moll on the Vehicle Activation Signs/Road Safety and Highway Matters</p> <p>a) Proposal to Purchase a solar powered VAS unit for the A43 as to move the current one at the junction of Porters Lane and the A43 would cost in the region of £10,000</p> <p>It was Resolved to purchase a solar powered VAS unit for the A43 at a the cost previously proposed by Cllr Moll, he was not 100% certain from memory but advised that he would circulate this after the meeting. cost of £3000.00.</p>	<p>Cllr Moll</p>																																					

<p>17/110 – To Receive a report from Cllr Asher on the Village Sign competition. Design a sign for Easton on the Hill competition The Village Sign competition was judged at the village fete. There were many entries from both young and adult members of the village and the judging was made by Sue Hunt, Deborah Davenport and myself. After much deliberation the winner was from EG school, Charlotte Measures who is in Year 6 and it was chosen because the judges felt it conveyed the spirit of the village and that it depicts what a lovely place it is to live. I would like to propose that the PC commission a little trophy that includes her winning design that can be presented to her. Costed at £31.90 but will attempt to find cheaper. Funding for the sign will now go ahead but initial exploration from usual local larger funding sources have been unsuccessful. Sharman’s have offered £150 towards the project if a tractor was included in the design – sadly it was felt that this wasn’t enough of a donation to be seen as sponsorship worthy of design inclusion. Cllr Goodwin will approach CIPS about funding for the sign.</p>	<p>Cllr Asher Cllr Goodwin</p>
<p>17/111 – To Receive a Report from Trees and Greens</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Proposal for Christine Lawson from Horticultural Society to take a caretaker role for the verge on West Street opposite the Priest House. As this area is owned by the Highways / District Council the clerk will contact them to seek permission for the Horticultural to look after it. Cllr Goodwin expressed a view that this should not be extended to pruning the trees. The Clerk will then write to Christine with an update and a letter of thanks for the offer. b) Cllr Baker had been contacted by the owner of The Exeter Arms. They were concerned that the trees in the field at the back of the Pub had been cut down. Cllr Baker had checked with East Northants Council about this and was advised that, as the it was private land and there were no preservation orders on the tree’s it was legal for the land owner to cut down the trees. Cllr Baker will write to The Exeter Arms to explain this. c) It was reported that the vegetation at 3 West Street was over growing and requires maintenance. The Clerk will write to the owner. 	<p>Clerk Cllr Baker Clerk</p>
<p>17/112- To Resolve the following proposal.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Proposal to instruct Stapleton’s Solicitors to now set up new deeds for the Playing Field, Register the field with the Land Registry and investigate the Bridleway issue. As the council are going to seek further advice and guidance from NCALC this proposal will not be actioned at this time. b) Proposed to move the small goal post from the cricket pavilion end of the playing field and site along the hedge line close to the swings It was felt that moving the goal posts close to the swings could be a health and safety risk. The cricket club can remove the posts and store. The proposal was rejected c) Proposed to move the small goal post near the car park to opposite the other goal post to form a small football playing area. It was decided that the goal posts were fine in its current situation so the proposal was rejected. d) Proposed to move both large goal post approx. 2-3 feet towards the car park to allow for a full football field. It was decided that the large goal posts did not need moving so the proposal was rejected. 	
<p>17/113 To receive a report from Cllr Asher on Easton Garford Trust. Report from Easton Garford Foundation.</p> <p>Pre-school update With the closure of the Pre-school, its management committee have been tasked with determining it’s future for life after closure and have been working hard to meet this requirement that will fulfil it’s financial obligations and keep within it’s charitable status.</p> <p>The preferred option by the Pre-school has been for another pre-school or nursery provider to take over the organisation thus retaining this asset to the village. Easton Garford (EG) School was given the first opportunity to take the pre-school over but the Academy chain that EG is part of wouldn’t provide the funding for this to happen.</p> <p>The two options that are currently being explored are again to attempt to find another pre-school to come in and re-open or to sell off the building in which case it will be removed from the site. There has been interest for both of these options which the Pre-school committee are currently investigating, however the current status of EG could shape what options the Pre-school end up being presented with.</p>	

Consultation to determine the future of Easton Garford School

With current and projected unsustainable pupil numbers in attendance at EG, the Academy Chain Peterborough Diocese Educational Trust (PDET) have reached a conclusion that the school is no longer financially viable.

This coincides with the falling amount of money that is provided by the government for both schools and pupils making small rural schools very vulnerable to closure. EG have had dwindling numbers for some years and the closure of the Pre-school has not helped with potential pupils feeding into EG.

Parents were informed by letter on June 8th with a meeting for parents held on the 14th where a presentation of the financial facts were given by PDET along with an introductory talk by the Ryhall Headmistress who explained how the integration would take place, the benefits to the students and the welcome that all pupils and parents could expect from the proposal.

Wishing to maintain the community of EG school, PDET have made the proposal that pupils could relocate to Ryhall Church of England Academy, another PDET school and currently the geographically nearest in it's academy chain. The proposal would mean that pupils would be transported to Ryhall and back for the majority of their education with the intent that some educational provision would still be ongoing at the EG site with the transition period to begin immediately and formal transfer taking place at the start of the next school year.

PDET's alternative to this proposal is that the school formally closes

PDET are to have further consultations with the Regional Schools Commissioner – to determine whether this proposal is viable and Northants CC to secure an agreement for transport. PDET continued to stress that this proposal is under consultation and not definitely decided. The outcome for current staff at EG would also depend on if this proposal goes ahead, how many children go to Ryhall (and subsequently how much money PDET gets for each pupil to finance staffing).

There has been much parental resistance to this proposal which was evident at the meeting. Parents' views presented were that the 'consultation period' wasn't a consultation, the time frame was too short and that a workable (for parents) choice isn't being offered. Ultimately parents do not want the school to close.

17/114 To receive a report from Cllr Asher on the replacement of A43 road signs

A43 Village Sign Report

The first of the new Village Signs on the A43 was installed prior to the Gala weekend at the Collyweston end of the village.

The old village sign was auctioned at the Easton's Got Talent show and raised over £200.

The remaining sign at the Stamford end of the village has yet to be removed has been delayed by the discovery of a badger's sett. As the set is protected the new sign is not allowed to be positioned in the same place for fear of disturbing the badgers.

The following communication has been received by Highways with the attached documents that explain the proposed new positions of the sign with a view that we discuss and decide on Monday's meeting.

Following our previous discussions, we need to get the parish council's views on the two alternative locations for the remaining village gateway.

The two options are:

- 1. Just beyond the bridleway from the present village name sign, however I acknowledge Simon's concerns about the limited visibility due to the chevrons.*
- 2. Move the location further towards Stamford, where the 40mph repeater signs are. Please note, as yet we have not investigated this area for badger setts.*

Just to clarify, we cannot install it in the area between Racecourse Road and the bridleway, as this area is within 30m of the badger sett.

Once the second sign is installed, the old sign will again be auctioned with proceeds going to the Village Sign Fund. There has been much interest in this older sign, particularly from the CC so I'm hopeful this auction will be popular..

It was decided that Cllr Asher would go back to the Highways to challenge whether the sign could be installed in the original suggested position if the post were hand dug. If this is an option there may be an

additional cost so it was Resolved to allocate an extra £500 if required.	Cllr Asher
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17/115 To resolve recipient of Village donations to child fund Village donations that have been collected at the Post Office were discussed and it was Resolved that the money should be used for funding new football nets for the two large goal posts located at the playing field. The clerk will get some costs of nets and ask the owners of the post office what the donation amount is and report back at July's meeting.	
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17/116 To receive a report on future Projects to be undertaken Cllr Simpson presented a document detailed below showing the Councils Aims, Priorities and future projects. It was suggested that current committee should be responsible for specific projects such as finance committee looks after Village Lighting. All councillors were asked to look through and further discussion will take place at July's meeting	All Councillors
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Easton on the Hill Village Plan recommendations – Aims, Priorities and Projects

	Aim Pri Pro	Ref	Item	Committee / Sponsor (Parish Councillor)
Village Plan		01	Protect the unique history and heritage of our rural village community by safeguarding the legacy we have been bequeathed.	
		02	Share and communicate with visitors and residents the history and heritage of our community.	
		03	Create a documented, mapped wildlife walk around the village linking our rural paths and walks.	
		04	Plant trees and shrubs in sensible places and maintain them.	
		05	Involve our local school and enterprises to sponsor environmental improvements and projects.	
		06	Any future housing development should be sensitive and proportionate to the character of the village and aligned with East Northants Council Local Plan.	
		07	The PC should ensure that the village maintains its unique and widely appreciated character and protect the Conservation Area.	
		08	Develop a plan to relocate the Sports Fields and Playground closer to the village and upgrade the facilities to the highest possible standards. This should include a new pavilion, with changing rooms and provide a modern community owned space for meetings and gatherings. Or, if relocation proves unattainable, to redevelop and upgrade at the existing site.	
		09	Provide clear and up to date information about existing public transport services which serve the village and wider area.	
		10	Upgrade traffic street furniture and village lighting.	
		11	Work with traffic management experts to develop and deliver appropriate actions to mitigate against the impact of traffic and parking congestion.	

		12	Develop and deliver a sustainable solution to the parking problems in the vicinity of the Post Office which presently creates excessive wear to the immediate environs.	
		13	Ensure appropriate speed awareness and enforcement throughout the village. In the longer term reduce the speed limit, within the village centre, from 30mph to 20mph.	
		14	Create a village guide for all residents listing important information and contact details for businesses, local groups and other opportunities to contribute to village life.	
		15	Take account of our local business community in its decision making, to ensure that local goods and service providers are not disadvantaged by Council policy or practice.	
		16	Create a village guide for all residents to help raise awareness of the facilities and public and private services already in place which could meet the needs expressed.	
		17	The Parish Council will work with others to explore how better use may be made of existing buildings, such as the Church, the school, the village hall and local land.	
		18	The Parish Council will work with volunteer groups to explore how best to meet the identified social needs of the community that fall outside its capability and capacity.	
		19	Create a village guide for new residents listing important information and contact details for local businesses.	
		20	The Village Survey highlighted that the shop and post office was the place where most residents regularly visited within the village. A larger noticeboard is recommended at this location.	
Existing		21	VAS Management and oversight	
		22	3rd VAS A43	
		23	Ketton Drift traffic	See Item 8 above
		24	Post office parking	See Item 12 above
		25	Roads & Pavement	
17/117 – To allocate the Checkers for July 17 – Checkers will be done on the 2 nd and 4 th weeks of the month				
Checkers for July 2017 is: Cllr Simpson				
17/118– Close The meeting closed at 20.59 (Note: The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Monday 10 th July 2017, 7.00 pm at the Village Hall				

Signed: _____

Date: _____