

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022

### Present Councillors

Mr Steve Edwards – (Chairman)

Mr Jeff Nicholls

Mr Alan Spackman

Ms Hazel Lambert

Miss Ann Brennan (Vice Chairman)

Mr Allan Till

Mrs Paula Brown

### Public

10 members of the public

Mrs Mandy Pink – Parish Clerk

**Apologies for Absence** – Mr Keith Hudson, Mrs Louise Reay, Mr Nick Tindall

**Item 1 Chairmans Report** - The Chairman opened the meeting and gave his report.

Hello and thank you all for coming along tonight.

I am very pleased to say that the Parish Council has managed to keep working to provide the Village with services throughout the pandemic and am also pleased to say that we are now more or less back to normal. So, I am going to start by thanking the Councillors for all their help. All the Councillors are volunteers, and they give their time and effort to the Village to keep it clean and safe for all residents.

Thanks must also be given to the Clerk, Village Handyman, Cleaner and Caretaker who all help to administer the Council, Village, and the Hall and between them managed to keep things going throughout the last two years. I would also like to thank the Revd. Sheila for the help she has provided to our Villagers who needed support during this time.

The Council is involved in a variety of things though the following is not a complete list:-

- Looking down drains and reporting status to CC

- Liaising with CC roads team to report issues and try to manage priorities

- Keeping the playground safe, painting the rocking horse etc to ensure that we are able to pass health and safety inspections. The next is coming very shortly.

- Ensuring pavements are passable

- Lopping trees and hedges to ensure safety and not overgrown

- Check condition of the footpaths and reporting issues to CC where appropriate

- Keeping the village hall clean and set up ready for groups to use

- Liaise with local groups and charities that have an interest in Earith

I would like to give particular thanks to Flynn Lakes Koi who volunteered to carry out a significant project to assist us with maintaining the health of the pond, cutting back and clearing the pond surround and providing several fish that will help keep the pond weed at bay.

As you can see there is a lot going on that very often is not very visible but keeps everyone busy.

We continue to move forward with several village projects including the new Village Hall and Plastic Free Communities. The representatives are here to provide updates along with other village organisations, but I shall allow them to speak for themselves.

Further, in one week's time we have the local elections. This time around the PC has more nominations than seats. Consequently, there is a full election, and you will be asked to vote for those people you would like to see on the PC. I hope you go to cast your vote on the day.

I would also like to say thank you to Councillor Marilyn Russell who resigned from the council earlier this year. She was very helpful and supportive during her time with the council.

Of course, we will finish off the evening with a general Question and Answer session.

Earith is a community which I think works quite well and I hope you agree with me and will continue to build on that in the coming years.

**Item 2 – Earith Primary School Report** – Headteacher Mr Tom Abbs was unable to attend the meeting but gave the Clerk an emailed report. See below

**Growth** - Strategic planning is in place to address the rising cohort numbers currently, and the projected number of pupils who may enter the school in future years. We are excited about the opportunities this may bring our school.

**Community** - Meeting this morning with our FOES (Friends of Earith School) Chair to look at plans for more school events given the easing of restrictions. Look out on our website or on social media for further communication over a summer fayre on the school grounds in early July. All members of the community are encouraged to come along, dig deep and enjoy the festivities – TBC.

If you, or your business/community group wish to have presence/get involved, please contact Dan Wilderspin ([dan.wilderspin@fix4.co.uk](mailto:dan.wilderspin@fix4.co.uk) 07590840049).

Curriculum - The school has been working with Pete Woolard (Assistant Musical Director of Wicked). Pete has visited our school on two occasions already, with further visits planned. Initially, to engage our pupils into song and dance with one of his professional dancers from the show but more recently to teach our pupils Kodaly – the Hungarian method of teaching pitch to children without the need to read music. We aim to embed this into our curriculum so that it may open the door for more musicians in our school as well as instil a deeper appreciation of the arts. A big event in the pipeline for next Academic Year...

We opened the school swimming pool for lessons this week – half a term earlier than in previous years. This life skill sits high on our moral imperative given our geographical proximity. Not only that – it's great fun! Children in Reception to Year 6 have lessons in school. This year, taught by one of our Teaching Assistants who is also a swimming coach. Opening the pool last year, despite all the COVID restrictions was one of my personal highlights and seeing our pupils back in the pool on Tuesday was equally as rewarding.

Links with St Helens: Julia, Head at St Helens and I have been networking over the past year. With the easing of restrictions, we are keen to do more collaborative work, easing our way in with some cross-school sports matches in the pipeline for the summer term.

Thank you for your ongoing support as a community (noted in the Earith Echo). If I can be of further assistance to anyone, please contact me at the school.

More information can be found on the school website.

**Item 3 – Plastic Free Community Initiative** – Mrs Pink gave a presentation on behalf of the PFC Group. See below

Following on from the Annual Parish Meeting last year the Parish Council have pledged to support the Plastic Free Community Initiative. I have now personally taken up this pledge and have reached out for help within the Village to set up a steering group. Two fantastic volunteers have come forward to help and together we are moving this initiative forward.

Being a plastic free community does not mean that you must eliminate all plastic from your life. Some plastic is useful, and some is downright essential, so it is how we use and think about plastic that is the issue. When we refer to plastic in this campaign it is the avoidable single use plastic that is found everywhere such as throwaway cups, lids and bottles, carrier bags and food packaging as well as general packaging and bathroom and cleaning plastics. There are also a lot more if you sit and think about it which is what we would like you all to do.

38.5 million single use plastic bottles are used every day in the UK.

This initiative is about long-term sustainable change. If we all look to eliminate three single use plastics from our lives, then this will all help to free where we live from avoidable plastics. It will not happen overnight, but it will happen if we all think about what we do and how we do it. We all have to face the realisation that there is no “away” unless we start to tackle this problem. Plastic pollution is damaging our environment. All the plastic that has EVER been made still exists in one form or another and it is still plastic even if we recycle it.

This initiative does require community engagement and so we are reaching out to all residents in the Village along with Community Organisations and Businesses to form Community Allies to help to spread the word. The Earith Echo and Earith Town Estate Charity have already signed up to support the initiative and any other organisations and businesses can also sign the pledge to support this for the Village. If we can spread the word as far as we can then it will help the Village to attain plastic free status. Being accredited as a plastic free community means we are laying the groundwork into tackling avoidable single use plastics in Earith and also helping to reduce the effects of Climate Change.

As a community reducing our plastic is better than the UK established means of dealing with waste such as burying it in landfill, sending it abroad, burning it and recycling it. If we reduce our consumption of single use plastic we are reducing the pressure on the whole environment. This initiative asks you to do four things.

Refuse plastic at source such as not buying fruit and veg prewrapped. This will make the supermarkets and producers think about different options

Reuse plastic as much as possible. Think about other alternatives such as reusable water bottles and drinks cups and wax paper food wraps

Refill more. By using refill stations and refill pouches you are making a difference

Recycle plastic wherever you can by taking items to recycle centres at supermarkets. Some soft plastics can be safely recycled using our kerbside bins so do check the District Council website to see what can be put into your bin at home.

As a village we can make small changes, one step at a time. Slowly get used to changing one thing in your life and then look at changing another and before long you will be removing three things from your life and possibly even more. Small actions from the whole community will all add up to make a big change. Let's all work together to save the Village from single use plastics. Love your Village – leave no trace.

**Item 4 – New Village Hall Update Report –** Ms Hazel Lambert gave a brief presentation following the drop-in session held this afternoon from 2-7pm. The Village Hall process began back in 2019 and a site for the Hall has been agreed. The aim of this meeting was to show the current design plans to the Village. A scale model was on display so that the placement of the building could be seen as well as other 2D design sheets and sample build materials. The Village Hall Team are having monthly meetings with the Architects and will be able to modify designs, if this is needed, prior to the planning application being made at the end of the year. It is hoped that work can begin in Spring 2023.

**Item 5 Police Report –** A Police representative was unable to attend the meeting, so the Clerk gave a very brief overview of the crime numbers for the St Ives and Ramsey area noted in February 2022

Violence and sexual offences 100

Anti-Social behaviour 32

Criminal damage and arson 44

Public order 24

The Clerk stated that other information can be obtained from the Police.UK website.

**Item 6 Reports from Parish Charities –** Reports were given from:

**Earith Town Estate Charity –** The Clerk reported that the Trusteeship of the Earith Town Estate now rests with the Parish Council as Sole Trustee, so they are looking at ways to make the administration costs for the grass area and Pavilion as self sufficient as possible. The Clerk is looking to organise a series of events and there is to be a “Care and Share” shop operating in the Pavilion on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022 from 1-4pm with donations of items being organised for Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July. Any monies raised, after operating costs have been deducted will be held in a fund for any Village resident to apply for if they are looking to provide a facility for the Village. Holiday sports sessions have also been agreed and will take place on the recreation field on Thursdays from 2-4pm starting on the 28<sup>th</sup> July and ending on the 25<sup>th</sup> August. Pre booking is essential. More events are to be organised and they will be advertised in the Earith Echo.

**Skeeles Education Charity** no 311817 – No report

**Rectors Hall Earith** – No report

**Samuel Saywell Church Causeway Charity** – No report

**Item 7 Reports from Parish Organizations -**

**Earith Women’s Institute** – No report

**Item 8 Questions from the Floor –**

A resident asked why the Precept has risen and asked if the Council could place an article in the Earith Echo if they make any changes to the Precept next year. They assumed that the increase was made to facilitate the new Village Hall, but this is not correct. The new Hall will be financed via a Public Works Loan over a period of years so the precept will go up but not by a significant amount. The question regarding a precept rise for the Hall was discussed in other drop-in sessions in 2019 and 2020. Over the last two years increases have been made to allow for inflation rises and to cover the costs of providing the Christmas Lights in the Village, providing funding to keep the Earith Echo running and to cover increased costs due to taking over the Trusteeship of the Earith Town Estate Charity. The Council always hold a precept setting meeting in December so if members of the public are interested in how the figure is set, they can attend the meeting. All meetings are open to the Public.

A resident asked what the footfall was regarding the drop-in session this afternoon. Ms Lambert said that it was approximately 34 residents.

A resident asked the Clerk if there were any crime figures available just for Earith and the Clerk said that she was not aware of any figures in the public domain, but she had only reported one ASB crime regarding vandalism at the Pavilion. There have been a few road traffic accidents but not a significant number. Ecops reports are provided at Council meetings when they are available.

A general discussion was had concerning HGV movements within the Village and it was noted that the volume of traffic movements had decreased now that the A14 improvements have been made. Speeding was still an issue however and the Clerk was asked to chase up the “20’s Plenty” Campaign to see if they have any updates about the Village.

Ms Lambert also reminded the residents at the meeting that there will be a “bring your own” Jubilee picnic on the Recreation Field on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June from 2-5pm. Tea, Coffee and Cake will be provided.

A resident asked the Clerk if allotment plot holders could be evicted if they do not cultivate their plots. The Clerk said that there is not an allotment waiting list currently and all plots have been paid for. There are only two plots available, and these are wet plots, so it isn’t in the interests of the Council to evict plot holders if they pay for their space.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm