

Emberton Parish Council
Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting – 21st November 2017
Held at 7.30pm at The Pavilion, Hulton Drive

Present: Councillor Steve Gibson
 Councillor Vicki McLean
 Councillor Paul Flowers
 Councillor Soo Hall
 Councillor Mike Horton
 Councillor Harry White

Ward Councillor Keith McLean

Michael Bath (EPFC/ESSC)
 Myrtle Bath (EPFC/ESSC)
 Sue Harris (EPFC/ESSC)
 Dennis Letts (EPFC/ESSC)
 Gerald Mann (EPFC/ESSC)

Mr G Proud (resident)

Mrs Karen Goss – Clerk and RFO

Councillor Gibson Welcomed everyone to the Meeting to discuss Emberton Sports & Social Club and Emberton Playing Field Committee.

Apologies for Absence - Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Laval, Ward Councillors Peter Geary and David Hosking and Andy Letts (EPFC/ESSC).

Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda – There were no Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda.

1. **Emberton Playing Field Committee and Emberton Sports & Social Club**

Councillor Hall updated the meeting stating that at the last EPFC & ESSC Meeting, the running of the committees was discussed as the Chairperson had resigned but had stated that they were willing to continue to do the bookings. However, the Constitution stated that the bookings secretary had to be a committee member. Paul Flowers handed in his resignation as Vice Chair at the meeting and it was agreed it was impossible to run the committee without a Chair, Vice Chair or Secretary being present. The remaining committee members asked Councillor Hall to report back to the parish council to see how it could assist them in getting the committee back on its feet.

Councillor Horton stated that it would be better to amend the Constitution to allow the bookings secretary to continue and that looking at the Constitution, there appeared to be a large amount of members who had no function on the committee. Councillor V McLean agreed that the committees appeared to be top heavy.

Councillor Flowers commented that the situation was that there was not a problem with the external facilities; it was running very well and the problem was inside the building.

Sue Harris responded that it was the same people on both committees that were doing everything.

Councillor Gibson stated that a plan needed to be worked out how to solve the issue and asked the remaining committee members what they wanted the parish council to do.

Gerald responded that the parishioners of Emberton should be made aware that they were stakeholders of the facility and that more volunteers might help the situation. Changing the Constitution would not help people to run the committee and the parish council could give help; a leaflet drop to every house asking for people to go on the committee would help. Mr Mann asked where the enthusiasm was for running the pavilion?

Councillor McLean commented that the committee had quite a turnover in the recent years of Chairpersons. Mr Mann responded that in the past, the committee had some excellent Chairpersons and some shockers and the morale of the committee had been damaged and the committee needed some enthusiasm, drive and fresh ideas.

Councillor Gibson asked why a Chairperson would resolve all the problems.

Mr Mann responded that the Chairperson could be a neutral person, unbiased.

Councillor V McLean stated that she was involved in the writing of the Constitutions and queried why two were required.

Sue Harris responded that a separate Constitution for the ESSC was required for the Licence.

Councillor Gibson asked if the parish council could not find a Chairperson, what would happen?

Mr Mann responded that if the parish council could not come and help, the facilities would come to a grinding halt. The parish council owned the land and building and were responsible for them. If the parish council were going to take it over, it would incur a considerable cost to the parish council which would reflect on the precept.

Councillor Horton commented that the problem has been leadership of the committee as the management had been there. Sue and Karen have been congratulated in the past for the work that they have undertaken but things have developed and the committee need to consider rewarding people for what they were doing.

Sue Harris stated that it was leadership that was required; committee members did their own jobs.

Michael Bath responded that the day to day running of the facility was done very well.

Councillor Gibson stated that personally he thought the whole thing needed to be refreshed and restructured with a business plan coming forward and residents made aware that they were paying for the facility. Councillor Gibson commented that his recommendation was that it needed to be opened up to the village for them to come and pitch for it to the parish council.

Ward Councillor McLean commented that it might be worth asking other parishes what they do with their pavilion. Councillor K McLean agreed with Mr Mann with regard to a leaflet drop to all the houses in Emberton.

Mr Mann responded that BALC (Bucks Association of Local Councils) were able to provide advice.

Ward Councillor McLean also suggested the National Playing Field Association.

Councillor V McLean asked if the pavilion could operate without the commercial bookings.

Sue Harris responded that she didn't think it could and at the moment there were regular bookings such as an exercise class and tea dance.

Ward Councillor McLean asked what bookings caused the most problems.

Michael Bath responded that weddings were difficult to manage as they were usually over three days.

Councillor Gibson asked whether the committee could continue to operate.

Sue Harris responded that the committee needed some guidance and it needed to comply with Charity status. Sue stated that personally she suggested that the committee did not take on any more bookings.

Councillor Gibson suggested that the way forward was to put in place a process for residents to bid for the facility and suggested that the committee work out how long it had to keep the pavilion running for.

Councillor Flowers commented that the pavilion would cost the same closed to run as it did staying open.

Micahel Bath stated that the precept all went to the cost of the playing field and none went to the pavilion.

Councillor Gibson asked Sue Harris to provide a projection of how long the pavilion could operate for.

Sue confirmed that all the major bills had been paid for the year and the pavilion could operate at least a year if no more money was spent on the building.

Ward Councillor McLean suggested that in mid January, before the AGM that every effort was made for people to come along to the AGM.

Councillor Gibson stated the offer needed to be out in January, with a plan to find a new management team and the whole process should not go on beyond March.

Sue Harris stated that in the meantime, a letter had been received from the licensing department at MKC stating that they would like to inspect the premises and that the letter had to be dealt with either by the Chair or Secretary.

Mr Mann stated that he did not like the idea of putting a hold on bookings but the committee did need someone to chair a meeting and the existing EPFC and ESSC members would anticipate that a chair would be someone from the parish council as they had an interest in the facility.

Councillor Horton proposed Councillor Gibson should stand as Chairman. Councillor Gibson responded that he was not able to take the position due to work commitments.

Sue Harris reported that the maintenance grant application to the parish council had not been agreed and this needed doing by the 4th December and a meeting of the EPFC/ESSC was needed before this.

Councillor McLean asked what needed to be discussed at the meeting. It was noted that a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary needed to be appointed and the Constitution needed addressing, the premises inspection needed addressing, the maintenance grant application needed to be agreed and there were other issues which needed clarifying as no Minutes had been taken at the previous meeting.

Councillor McLean was asked if she would be prepared to join the committee as a co-opted member and take the role of Chair in the interim period, if elected. Councillor McLean agreed and stated that a meeting would be called for 5 days time (28th November).

Sue stated that she would prepare something for the parish council maintenance grant.

The question of a Secretary to Minute the Meeting was discussed and Karen agreed to be co-opted onto the committee as a volunteer and would take the role of Secretary, if elected.

Mr Mann stated he was concerned that the committee would not accept bookings as this could get back to the village and felt that bookings could be dealt with on a selective basis.

Councillor Gibson stated that he did not see this as an issue as he did not anticipate it being a long drawn out process.

Sue commented that in order to claim rate relief from MKC, bookings had to be shown to be non selective.

Councillor Gibson responded that it was important to send a message out to the village.

Councillor Hall stated there were basically 4 people running the pavilion and asked the remaining committee members whether they were happy with the solution put forward.

Sue stated that she sometimes felt that the committee members were seen to be causing the problem.

Michael commented that he was happy as the committee had now got rid of the dead wood; the people that said they were going to do something and they didn't do it.

It was noted that an Extraordinary Meeting of EPFC/ESSC would be held on Tuesday 28th November at 7.30pm at The Pavilion.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm