

LIAISON MEETING OF HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY WITH EDMOND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting which took place on Thursday 1st June 2023 at 11am on Teams.

Present: Cllr Allan Wilson (AW)

Cllr Keith Arbuthnot (KA)

Cllr Marion Barton (MB)

Catherine Baxter (University Secretary) (CB)

Ian Rowley (Chief Global Impact Officer) (IR)

Jo Horsburgh (Chief Operating Officer) (JH)

Richard Hooper (Farm Director) (RH)

Jo Da Silva (Student Liaison) (JdS)

In attendance: Katrina Baker (KB)

23/001 Welcome & Introductions

IR welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending the Liaison Meeting between Edgmond Parish Council and Harper Adams University. IR and JH will be the lead officers for these meetings, following the retirement of CB.

23/002 Apologies

Cllr Robert Higginson, Cllr S Bentley (cannot attend morning meetings unless on a Wednesday) and Cllr G Jones (may arrive later)

The Vice Chancellor sent his apologies, he hopes to attend the next meeting.

23/003 Updates

- a. The notes of the themed meetings, which took place regarding the provision of a new permissive path and Birchmoor Lane have been circulated, for information.
- b. Updates from the meetings, which had welcomed representatives from Edgmond Wildlife Group and Edgmond Walkers, had been provided for the website and social media.
- c. RH reported that they are still waiting for the delivery of the kissing gates for the permissive path (known as Path C). The single wire fence has been installed and the signage will be erected, when the gates are available as soon as is possible. As soon as the work is completed, RH will let KB know and a joint announcement will be made. Unfortunately, there are lots of delays with the supply of materials and it is not yet known when the gates will arrive.
- d. RH reported that HAU is awaiting a date from TWC contractors for the installation of the Kent Carriage Gap which has been agreed for Birchmoor Lane.

At this time, the Farm Team will erect notices explaining that there is no access to the reservoir, due to health and safety regulations.

Representatives of the Parish Council expressed sincere thanks to RH and his colleagues for the swift action and work involved with the two projects.

- e. KA was in receipt of a statement from Edgmond Wildlife Group, which he read to the meeting. It was unfortunate that this had not been available prior to the meeting as no-one had an opportunity to consider all the content.

There was mention of the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting, at which HAU had presented a report. The Minutes are available and will be circulated and sent to Edgmond Wildlife Group.

CB confirmed that the slides used at the APM did not mention Edgmond Wildlife Group and it was never her intention to misrepresent any information.

JH referred to Route D and it was confirmed that this is not a permissive path and it cannot be stated that it will be 'closed', because it was never 'open'. It was agreed that it is likely to be used less when the new permissive path is available.

KA stated that 'EWG understands that Path D is not a permissive path, but was planted as a wildlife area. John would not want EWG to be the reason for its non-use.'

IR confirmed receipt of the statement, which will be circulated to all Members, and a response will be sent to EWG.

23/004 Matters from Harper Adams University

- a. **2030 Strategy**

IR reported that extensive work on this important document is progressing well. It has now been shared with the internal community at an event to activate the Strategic Plan, where it well received. All responses and ideas were welcomed and will move forward to further engagement in years ahead.

- b. **Summer Garden Party**

IR confirmed that it is the intention of HAU to share the document with the community at an event held at HAU. A provisional date has been suggested and this will be confirmed as soon as possible, it is mid-July. The plan is to invite the Parish Council and local residents and businesses to play rounders and enjoy music, entertainment and refreshments. When the details are finalised, there will be a letter drop. This will be the start of a programme for HAU to get closer to the community.

- c. **Other matters**

The Vice Chancellor has suggested that he would like to invite the Parish Council to join him for an informal tea at The Farmhouse during the Summer Recess.

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk have been invited to the University on 3rd July for a special event engaging with 15 students from Africa and India, with a charity 'Self-Help Africa'. There will be a special guest attending the event who will arrive by helicopter (local residents will be informed of the time when available in order that they can be prepared especially if they have livestock).

CB reported that the University and Students have been helping the Newport Agricultural Society with arrangements for the Newport Show and students are acting as Stewards on the day.

The Annual Open Day will take place at the University Campus on 10th June.

There are two reunion events arranged, where around 100 people will be attending. These will not be late or loud events, one is a 60 year reunion and the second for 40 years.

23/005 Matters raised by Edgmond Parish Council

a. HAU Crossroads junction with B5062

This is the responsibility of TW Highways and no updates have been received for some time. CB confirmed that HAU still has the funding (as requested by TWC) earmarked for the project.

A request in early May received no feedback. JH confirmed that she would reach out to TWC and the Chairman of the Parish Council confirmed that the Parish Council would, once again, contact TWC for an update.

A new officer will join the HAU team in the near future, with responsibilities for access, highways etc. When in post, AW will be pleased to meet and discuss local matters.

b. Liaison with the Community

IR confirmed that as previously discussed, the provision of a twice-yearly newsletter was under consideration. They are looking at the content (of interest to the community), the cost and how it would be effectively distributed.

It was suggested that a four page, A4 newsletter delivered to every house would be welcomed – it was noted that there are so many positive stories from the University that local residents would be pleased to know about. The first should include the 2030 Strategy and Celebration Event, if possible.

It was agreed that both the University and the Parish Council will consider better routes of communication which will include Edgmond Chit Chat, the Parish Council facebook, Website and traditional Posters, as it is recognised that not everyone wants to use technology.

23/006 Events

JdS confirmed that some students have already gone home, as some examinations can be done online.

24th June 2023 Summer Ball

The plan for the event has been approved by TWC and a letter drop will take place to ensure that all residents are aware of the date, time and will have a contact number for use if they have concerns during the event.

9th July 2023 Len's Light

A special event (A Tractor Run) has been arranged in memory of a student and has been organised by his family to raise awareness of mental health in rural communities. This will call at campus on 9th July.

In association with this the students are organising a Wellbeing Walk for the community of Edgmond and this will be advertised soon and it is hoped that lots of local families will take part.

23/007 Next Meetings

The next meeting of the EPC/HAU Liaison Group will be arranged for Mid September and calendar of events for the year will be agreed, to include the extended meetings where we will be joined by representatives of the Edgmond Wildlife Group and Walkers.

Before closing the meeting, Catherine thanked everyone for their work and dedication to Edgmond and for their support over the years as this will be her last meeting with the Parish Council due to her upcoming retirement. She extended her best wishes for future success.

Councillor Wilson, on behalf of the Parish Council and community of Edgmond Parish extended heartfelt thanks to Catherine. He stated that the Parish Council has enjoyed working with her and has very much appreciated her tireless efforts as we have worked together over many years. He extended best wishes for her retirement.

Ian, on behalf of the University Officers for this Liaison Group stated that they will do their best to continue the excellent work, but they are already realising that Catherine's departure will be leaving a big hole, but they are committed to the positive partnership between our two organisations.