

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council
held on Wednesday 2nd December 2015 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Carol Andrews, Nicky Bishop (Chair), Tina French, Richard Hann, Ron King, Andy Proudfoot and Richard White.

Parish Councillors absent: None

District / County Councillors present: None (RDC Cllr Gary Curtis was present from 9.15 – 9.30)

Also present: Clerk to the Council
2 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

- 1.1. Apologies for absence have been received from ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field and RDC Cllr Gary Curtis.

2. Disclosures of interest

- 2.1. Cllr Richard White submitted a written request for a dispensation until April 2019 to participate and vote on matters concerning the Village Hall Management Committee where he is the parish council's representative and of which he is Chairman. He has no pecuniary or other disclosable interest in the village hall. On the motion of the Chair the council resolved to grant the dispensation thus relieving Cllr White from the need to declare his interest at the start of every council meeting.
- 2.2. No other interests were declared.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The draft minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 23rd September 2015 were circulated with the agenda. On the motion of the Chair the minutes were adopted without amendment.

4. Open Forum

- 4.1. There were no matters raised.

5. Finance and RFO Report

- 5.1. On the motion of Cllr White, seconded by Cllr Proudfoot, members resolved to approve the following payments en bloc –
 - 5.1.1. Burial grounds maintenance
 - 5.1.1.1. Ashburnham Parochial Church Council £300
 - 5.1.1.2. Penhurst Parochial Church Council £300
 - 5.1.2. Grant to Chapel £100
 - 5.1.3. Slimline cigarette bin at Pavilion £35.99
 - 5.1.4. Sam Wakeling £1,088 - website
 - 5.1.5. Royal British Legion £120 - Poppy Appeal wreaths (mostly to be recharged)
 - 5.1.6. Baker Architectural Ltd £5,400 – Scheme design, planning stage drawings, design & access statement, planning application
 - 5.1.7. Hampshire Flag Co £48.53 – Union flag
 - 5.1.8. C W Technologies £124.80 – Road closed signs for Remembrance Sunday
 - 5.1.9. PKF Littlejohn £120 – Limited assurance review of Annual Return
 - 5.1.10. Clerk expenses first half 2015/16 £126.67
 - 5.1.11. Nigel White £250 – sports ground maintenance.

5.2. RFO Report

- 5.2.1. The clerk reported that email communication from Unity Trust Bank advised that all the application formalities have been satisfactorily completed and the account will be opened shortly.
- 5.2.2. The clerk advised that in accordance with the resolution at the previous meeting, a bank reconciliation has been carried out by Cllr White.
- 5.2.3. The clerk tabled the first draft of the budget (attached). A number of items are later agenda items at this meeting, but the following were dealt with here.
 - 5.2.3.1. Clerk salary – the current contract of employment is for 20 hours per month. The clerk tabled a bar chart of his monthly hours since the start of the contract in January 2015 showing the average hours employed on council business over that period to be 27 hours per month. Councillors requested that this item be tabled again at the next meeting when they will formally propose an amendment to the contract. Meanwhile, the draft budget attached shows the cost of 27 hours per month (£2,983 p.a.).
 - 5.2.3.2. Professional services re. new village hall – draft budget is £1,000, but the only certain cost is consultation with the Community Buildings Advisory Service which charges out at £216 per day incl. VAT. Other charges depend on progress with the project.
 - 5.2.3.3. Office expenses – propose to include in this item £250 for purchase of flat screen monitor and mount for viewing planning applications at council and planning committee meetings. This would become an item of pavilion equipment.
 - 5.2.3.4. Marquee for flower show and fete – councillors proposed that the budget be set at a sum which covered the full cost of the large marquee (as was provided in 2014) and ignored potential sponsorship (cost £1,548 incl VAT). It is expected that the marquee would be erected on or near the site of the proposed new village hall and be used for a function in the evening and a church service Sunday morning.
 - 5.2.3.5. Parish magazine – a grant request has been received from St Peter's PCC for financial support. The magazine was running at an excess of expenditure over income of £300 per year added to which is an additional £240 for the extra page now incorporated. Furthermore, a colour cover (occasionally) is an extra £35. Councillors discussed the role of the magazine in parallel with the parish website and felt that an online version of the magazine might be encouraged and developed as a way of reducing production costs. After discussion the council resolved to offer support of £300, about half of the extra costs, but they instructed the clerk to first seek certain assurances about the magazine's editorial independence. Councillors discussed the current funding arrangements noting that all the costs of the magazine fall on St. Peter's and none fall either on St. Michael's or on the chapel.
 - 5.2.3.6. Parish notice board at Penhurst – following instructions at the previous council meeting, the clerk tabled a catalogue from Village & Urban, the supplier of the notice board at the chapel. The council considered that a glazed board, free standing on posts and of a size to accommodate 6 sheets of A4 would be adequate considering that the existing public notice board will remain on the building opposite the church. Council resolved to provision £645 plus vat in the budget for next year for model LIN113 in the Linton Range. Meanwhile, the clerk will contact the landowner's agent to seek permission to site the notice board at the car park opposite The Retreat.

6. Planning

- 6.1. The outcomes or current status of the following matters were noted:
 - 6.1.1. RR/2015/998/P – Ashburnham recreation ground – proposed new village hall *Undecided*
 - 6.1.2. RR/2015/1952/L - Little Acre, Brays Hill, Ashburnham TN33 9NZ - Retention of white painted timber weatherboard on south west elevation.(Retrospective) *Undecided*
 - 6.1.3. RR/2015/1963/P - Clearview Farm, Brays Hill, Ashburnham TN33 9NZ - Retention of agricultural barn and farm track. *Undecided*

- 6.1.4. RR/2015/2071/P - Archers Farm, Penhurst TN33 9QN - Removal of existing building and build new tractor shed and workshop. *Approved.*
- 6.1.5. RR/2015/2078/P - Penhurst Field, Penhurst, TN33 9QN - Demolish existing office/ summerhouse and replace with studio/ office constructed in Sussex sandstone and brick base with feather edge cladding; glass doors and panels with a new clay peg tiles on the roof. *Approved*
- 6.1.6. RR/2015/2241/P - Burnt Barns Farm, Freckley Hollow, Ashburnham - Proposed manege for private, non-commercial equestrian use. *Approved*
- 6.2. New applications:
 - 6.2.1. RR/2015/2251/P - Burnt Barns Farm, Freckley Hollow, Ashburnham, TN33 9LZ - Relocation of former agricultural worker's cabin and its conversion to tourist accommodation. *Council has resolved to make no comment*
- 6.3. Breaches and Enforcement updates:
 - 6.3.1. ENF/ASH/2011/293 - Brays Hill - holiday let rules breached - enforcement action. Holiday home used as permanent home. *Further information requested.*
 - 6.3.2. ENF/107/15/ASH - Woodland to the East of Deer Park Lodge - Change Of Use Of Land To Recreational Use. *Decision 2 Nov '15: No further action, not in public interest*
 - 6.3.3. ENF/177/15/ASH - Naulakha, Lakehurst Lane, Ashburnham - Alterations to holiday let and possible permanent residential use. *New complaint.*

7. Highways matters

- 7.1. Finger posts
 - 7.1.1. The clerk reported that East Sussex Highways have confirmed that a 50% subsidy is available for the cost of remedial work on two fingerposts in this financial year.
 - 7.1.2. On the motion of the Chair, councillors resolved to accept the quotation from JAKK designs for the cost of complete replacement of the post at The Pound (£1,081 plus vat) and at Penhurst church (£913 plus vat) and to place a purchase order immediately.
 - 7.1.3. The clerk was instructed to bring up in early 2016 the matter of the posts at the T-junction at the top of Forge Lane and at the junction known as Mansfield Cross (Brownbread Street with Lingham Lane). As soon as East Sussex Highways are able to confirm that subsidies are available for 2016/17, the council will wish to instigate repair work on these two finger posts and the cost is to be incorporated in the budget.
- 7.2. Verge cutting
 - 7.2.1. The clerk reported that East Sussex Highways have investigated the complaint that the rural cut has not happened in many areas and found that the map the contractor was using was incomplete. This has now been rectified and the missed verges will be cut in the next few weeks, weather permitting.
 - 7.2.2. Highways matters
 - 7.2.2.1. Cllr Hann reported that he had met with the highways steward, Andy Swanson, and together they had toured the lanes marking some 40 potholes needing attention.
 - 7.2.2.2. RDC Cllr. Gary Curtis arrived at the meeting and reported that he was continuing to investigate how it was that new road signs at Akehurst Field had appeared. Both RDC and East Sussex Highways claim it was the other who had installed them. Cllr Curtis will pursue the matter as parish councillors are deeply unhappy with them and the fact that there was no prior consultation.

8. Sports pavilion

- 8.1. The following maintenance matters were noted -
 - 8.1.1. Cigarette bin fitted outside main entrance door.
- 8.2. The following developments were noted -
 - 8.2.1. A new shed has been positioned between the building and the boundary hedge at the expense of the Cricket Club to house additional machinery.

- 8.2.2. A proposal for some soft and hard landscaping around the war memorial was discussed. The clerk will develop these proposals and table them before the budget for 2016/17 is finalised.

9. Village Hall

- 9.1. Cllr White reported on the following matters:
- 9.1.1. 6 new GOPAK tables have been purchased and a similar number of the old wooden tables removed.
 - 9.1.2. A working party to clear the garden is planned for January.
 - 9.1.3. A license to use Charity Checkout has been purchased which enabled the village hall committee to act as ticket agent for PANTS and accept online payments including gift aid.
- 9.2. New village hall
- 9.2.1. Cllr Bishop reported that RDC planners have responded to the architect's latest sketches proposing some further amendments. The council's architect is to respond.
 - 9.2.2. Cllr White reported that fund raising events being planned include a Race Night in the winter or early spring, a summer fete with a dance in the evening on 13th August and a revival of the Walk and Ride, also in the summer.
 - 9.2.3. An online shopping portal which enables purchases to attract a donation for charity is being investigated.
 - 9.2.4. The AiRS Community Buildings Advisory Service are to be asked for dates for a half day consultation, preferably at the weekend.

10. Community Matters

- 10.1. Cllr Hann reported that he had coordinated a concerted approach to RDC to address the complaints of electors about the erratic nature of refuse bin collection. Happily, most problems have been resolved and robust communication channels established with key officers.
Councillors offered a vote of thanks to Cllr Hann for his work on this issue and that of highways maintenance.
- 10.2. Cllr Hann reported that Huw Merriman, M.P., is taking up our rural broadband cause and will be convening a meeting of all stakeholders early in the new year.

11. Correspondence received

- 11.1. RDC consultation on Statement of Licensing Policy
- 11.2. CAB letter of thanks to parish councils for continued support
- 11.3. Police and Crime Commissioner consultation on funding – online questionnaire

12. Dates of next meetings

- 12.1. Councillors resolved to move both ordinary council meetings and planning committee meetings to the second Wednesday of the month.
- 12.2. The schedule of future ordinary council meetings in 2016 is now as follows:
13 January
9 March
11 May
13 July
14 Sep
- 12.3. The planning committee meeting planned for 16 December 2015 will now only meet, and as an ordinary meeting of the council, if budget planning requires an additional meeting before the council meeting on 13 January.

..... Date

Signed (Chair)