

Minutes of the Meeting of the Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council

held on Wednesday 25th September 2013 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion

Councillors present: Cllrs R. Burfoot, R. Hann, R. Jones, R. White, P. Winfield

In attendance: Brian Holdstock (Clerk), ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field, Val Smith
(Rother Community Friends) plus 2 members of the public.

Councillors not present: Cllr C. Baker, G. Ratcliffe

1) Disclosures of interest

Agenda item 6 Personal interest – Cllrs White and Hann – members of Village Hall Management Committee

2) Apologies for absence

Cllr Colin Baker, Cllr Gill Ratcliffe, RDC Cllr Angharad Davies

3) Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st July 2013 were adopted and signed by the chairman.

4) Matters Arising from the minutes

a) At the previous meeting Cllr R. Jones promised to investigate the matter of village activities for young people, specifically the age group of 7 to 11 years old. He reported that a number of events were in the pipeline including a Pumpkin Party on 21st October and a “Journey to the Centre of the Christmas Pudding” on the weekend of 14/15th December. Ashburnham parish church and the chapel are working closely together on developing an ongoing programme.

5) Community Matters

a) Val Smith, the Rother Community Friends Project Officer, was invited to speak to the meeting and to brief councillors on the scheme which is about neighbours helping neighbours. Pump priming funding is available from The Tudor Trust to help with setting up a structured approach and providing a point of contact. This is normally a telephone number which is transferred between volunteers who agree to be the first point of contact. Cllr R. Hann is helping with the setting up of a scheme in Ashburnham and Penhurst.

6) Sports Pavilion

a) Window cleaning (exterior) is now operational with the window cleaner having his own key to the entrance gate to the sports field.

7) Village Hall

- a) Cllr White reported that the three working groups set up to pursue the new hall project had all met. Of these, the group working on fund raising events has been the most active and generated a programme of events, four before Christmas. There is a barn dance on 5th October, a quiz night on 12th, village bonfire on 8th November and a Christmas ‘Curry-oke’ on 7th December. A clay pigeon shoot is planned and next year, on the weekend of the village Flower Show and Fete, an evening event is planned.
- b) The annual Ride and Walk is to be revived and Gillian Van Der Meer is liaising with Ashburnham Christian Trust regarding access.

8) Highways matters

- a) Verge cutting has been undertaken in some parts of the parishes today, but other parts appear to have been missed. A schedule published by ESCC only shows one (unplanned) cut on 20th May 2013.
- b) The two dead end footpaths in the parish are still in the same state. ESCC have reorganised the Rights of Way team to reduce costs and as a result there was no resource for six months to pursue matters. The Lattenden Farm footpath might never be reinstated as ESCC do not have the resource to challenge any possible objections to the link. The Bodle Street to Ashburnham path reinstatement is held up as the landowner says it would be disruptive to operations. One alternative is to find a new route but this raises a fresh set of issues.

9) Planning

- a) *Existing applications*
 - i) RR/2013/298/P - Oak Bank Farm - change of use of land to form hard standing for residential building recently approved as lawful – awaiting decision
- b) *New applications*
 - i) RR/2013/878/P – Oliver’s Hill Farm – Modification of existing agricultural building to provide two holiday lets with emphasis on disabled facilities. Councillors agreed to offer support with some provisos the principal of which is that the normal conditions relating to holiday lets be applied. The clerk was requested to draft a response and circulate it to members for comment.
- c) *Enforcement update*
 - i) ENF/ASH/2011/293 - Brays Hill - holiday let rules breached - enforcement action – prosecution process instituted 16 May 2013; prosecution commenced for non compliance 23 July 2013
 - ii) ENF/ASH/2013/10 - Oak Bank Farm - Breach Of Planning Permission regarding commercial parking – inspection visit made which confirms commercial parking – owner requested to address the issue or face prosecution.
 - iii) ENF/ASH/2013/229 – Oak Bank Farm - Breach Of Planning Permission And Control RR/2012/1053/P and RR/2013/298/P - inspection visit made which confirms breaches – owner requested to address the issue or face prosecution.
 - iv) ENF/ASH/2013/231 - Anderson Wood, Ashburnham - Importation of MoT type 1 onto bridle path. Application requested.
- d) *Coldharbour Farm travellers site (Brightling).*
 - i) Cllr Burfoot reported that the pending appeal was now to be a public appeal and is to be held in December. RDC still plan to hold a public consultation on the core policy of travellers sites in the Spring of 2014.
- e) *Baldwins Farm (Mountfield)*
 - i) RR/2012/2343/P - The planning application has now been resubmitted without the 6 Eco lodges and a reduced bulk of the main house. Mountfield Parish Council are requesting support from neighbouring parishes to continue objecting that the proposal is out of keeping with the AONB. The council agreed that the chairman should comment in that vein on behalf of Ashburnham and Penhurst.

10) Finance

- a) Cllr Burfoot reported that the annual accounts have now been audited and approved.
- b) Members agreed to waive the pavilion hire fees for three events in the next year – the village bonfire, the Flower Show and Fete and the Macmillan coffee morning.
- c) Pavilion hiring fees will be held at their present level in the financial year 2014/15.
- d) The following proposals were discussed for inclusion in the budget for 2014/15

- i) Village notice board - The W.I. have proposed that the notice board at the chapel be replaced by one of a similar size but one which is glazed to keep the notices dry. The W.I. are proposing to make a contribution of £500 but the total cost is in the order of £900. Installation costs are additional. Councillors agreed that the draft budget include £200 to £300 to enable the notice board to be replaced. Councillors suggested that the old notice board could be relocated to a position next to the telephone box at The Pound and Cllr Hann will contact ESCC Highways to discuss.
- ii) With increasing popularity and usage the grounds maintenance arrangements are probably no longer adequate. Councillors proposed to include an additional £400 in the draft budget to pay for more frequent cutting of the boundaries.
- iii) Village Hall renewal – at some stage professional fees will be incurred to set up new arrangements for ownership of a new building and tenancy of the land on which it stands. Councillors suggested that £1000 be included in the draft budget as a contingency for professional fees.
- iv) Support for the churches – there was discussion about some financial support for the chapel in view of the fact that both parish churches are supported. However, it was pointed out that the parish council makes a contribution to the parish churches only because it has a legal obligation to ensure the burial grounds are maintained and the existing level of support, £300 to both parish churches, will be included. Cllr R. Hann proposed and Cllr. P. Winfield seconded a motion to provision in the budget an ex gratia payment (section 317) of £100 for the chapel to support their community work and in recognition of them providing a site for the main village notice board.
- v) Annual assembly- a provision of £200 will be included which will be sufficient to provide a road side banner advertising the event.
- vi) War memorial refurbishment – a sum of £720 will be included, based on the quotation from Arthur C Towner, which will pay for cleaning all stonework, replacing missing lead lettering and repainting all lettering.

11) Correspondence

- a) RDC have advised that a management reorganisation is being undertaken.

12) Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items

None

13) Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held, as scheduled in the forward calendar, on Wed 27th Nov 2013 at 6.30 pm.