
Minutes of the Meeting of Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council
held on Wednesday 25th March 2015 at 6.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Nicky Bishop, Roger Burfoot (Chair), Richard Hann, Pat Winfield, Andy Proudfoot, Gill Ratcliffe, Richard White (Vice Chair)

District / County Councillors present: None

In attendance: Clerk to the Council
2 members of the public

1) Apologies for absence

An apology for absence has been received from ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field

2) Disclosures of interest

- a) Declarations of interest were made by Councillors in the Minutes as indicated below:
Cllrs Bishop, Hann and White – Agenda item 9 (Minute 9) – Personal interest in so far as they are members of the Village Hall Management Committee.
- b) On the motion of the Chairman seconded by Cllr Proudfoot and approved by those councillors not being members of the Village Hall Management Committee, Councillors who are members of that committee were granted a dispensation to speak and vote on matters relating to the village hall in Agenda item 9.

3) Adoption of Minutes

Members requested an alteration to the wording of item 9 c) in the draft minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 28th January 2015. The wording is now as follows:

“The Chairman expressed concern that the intentions of ATT to make a donation to a new village hall have not been put into writing. Most other councillors expressed the view that they are comfortable with relying on the verbal assurances of the trustees of ATT.

The Chairman was authorised to sign the amended minutes as a correct record of the proceedings.

4) Finance

- a) The Chairman, as RFO, tabled the last financial statement for the year
- b) Cash Flow:
 - i) Treasurers Account (current) £402.75
 - ii) BMM (deposit) £1,806.22
 - iii) Scottish Widows 7 days £1,941.14
 - iv) Scottish Widows 1 yr £10,000.00
 - v) Petty cash £2.14
 - vi) . Total cash balances £14,152.25
- c) Accounting reconciliation
 - i) Brought forward from previous year £14,490.00
 - ii) Receipts year to date £10,050.79
 - iii) Less payments year to date £10,388.54
 - iv) Balance to carry forward £14,152.25
- d) Impending receipts – precept first half
- e) Recent payments: Baker Architectural; AiRS
- f) Placement of balances: when the 1 year bond with Scottish Widows runs out very shortly the funds (£10,000) will be placed in Scottish Widows 7 day notice account.
- g) On the motion of the Chairman seconded by Cllr Hann the council confirmed the appointment of the Clerk to the Council as RFO with effect from the 1st April 2015.

5) Planning

a) Existing applications

RR/2014/3098 - The Bungalow, Freckley Hollow, Ashburnham TN33 9LZ. Conversion of upper storey (roof) of vehicle shelter/stores into domestic accommodation ancillary to The Bungalow. – *PC opposed. Decision - permission refused.*

b) New applications

RR/2014/344/PN3 - Thornden Timberyard, Ashburnham, TN33 9PE - Prior Approval of proposed change of use of forestry/agricultural building to a business office (Use Class B1a) - *Following email consultation, the Council have filed an objection as follows, "The Parish Council support local industries and are mindful that up to date facilities are necessary for the operation of rural business. We are not aware that these buildings were "agricultural" but in fact has a Certificate of Lawful Use as a saw mill/timber yard and consequently would not qualify for the prior notice procedure, but require full planning permission. We are anxious that the building should not be re-classified to B1a so that it cannot then be re-classified from B1a to C3 in the future (thus circumventing the GPDO in regard to "agricultural" to C3 in the AONB)." Since the objection was lodged it has transpired that the current use is not B1a but an undefined status termed sui generis. This means that any future change would require full planning permission.*

c) Enforcement Update

- i) ENF/ASH/2013/231 - Anderson Wood, Ashburnham - Importation of MoT type 1 onto bridle path. Application requested and received end of Sep 2013. Enforcement action eff 14/6/14 - 3 mths to comply. - *Application (retrospective) refused 22/11/13; enforcement June '14; Appeal Oct '14. Retain on agenda.*
- ii) ENF/14/15/ASH - Little Acre (Clear View Farm), Brays Hill, Ashburnham - New building and tarmac drive – *Application requested*
- iii) ENF/15/15/ASH - Little Acre (Clear View Farm), Brays Hill, Ashburnham - Works To Listed Building (New Flue And Weatherboarding On Gable End) – *Application requested*

6) Governance

- i) Elections: the clerk has emailed nomination packs to those existing councillors who have indicated their wish to seek re-election on 7 May 2015.
- ii) Annual Parish Assembly 23rd April 2014: the clerk reported that a number of organisations have indicated their intention to have a presence. Arrangements for catering and roadside notices are in hand.

7) Highways matters

- a) Cllr Hann reported that
 - i) only 5 serious pot holes remain to be repaired and these are all on Hammer Hill. Action has been promised very soon (days rather than weeks).
 - ii) the replacement finger post at the junction of Old Thatch Lane and Towerhouse Road has been promised several times but not yet appeared.
- b) The Clerk emailed to members details of East Sussex Highways' liaison scheme called 'Strengthening Local Relationships' (SLR). Members felt that so long as Cllr Hann continues to maintain the links he has established in the last year there is little to gain from joining the SLR scheme.

8) Sports Pavilion

- a) Members felt that the time of year is upon us when weed killing and general tidying up is due. The Clerk will engage Nigel White.
- b) The Clerk reported that he was in discussion with an electrical contractor about two issues:
 - i) The switch for the outside lights is on the outside of the building and is key operated but is not user friendly. Alternatives were discussed with the consensus being that replacing the existing switch with a PIR operated switch (with a 10 minute 'on' period) plus a manual override switch inside the store room (to switch the lights on to stay on) would be one way ahead. The clerk will obtain a price before proceeding.
 - ii) Periodic testing of the electrical installation is recommended but it does not have to be done all at the same time. The clerk will obtain a price and table a proposal at the next meeting.

9) Village Hall

- a) Cllrs Bishop, Hann and White declared a personal interest in so far as they are members of the Village Hall Management Committee. The dispensation approved [Minute 2) b)] allows them to participate and vote on this item.
- b) Cllr Bishop reported that
 - i) User feedback was comprehensive but remarkably consistent.
 - ii) The architect (Bernard Baker) has been instructed as to the final internal layout for submission for planning permission subject to final review by the parish council.
 - iii) The site has been marked out on the ground at the sports field as a result of which it was moved 12 metres, in its current orientation, towards the pavilion.
 - iv) Final plans will be on show at the Annual Parish Assembly.
 - v) A sub committee of the VHMC are meeting on Friday this week to review the business plan (running costs and build cost). These will be displayed at the Annual Assembly.
 - vi) The question to be put on the ballot paper will be discussed by the sub committee on Friday.
- c) Members resolved to hold a special meeting of the Parish Council on Wednesday 8th April to approve the final design and to approve the wording of the ballot paper.
- d) The clerk had circulated prior to the meeting a paper outlining the voting procedure on polling day, the arrangements for a postal vote and the appointment of an independent scrutineer. On the motion of the Chairman members approved the adoption of the proposed arrangements.

10) Community Matters

- a) New web site: Cllr Bishop reported that all the tenders exceeded the sum set aside for the new website. The sum set aside is £1,000 but prices are generally of the order of £1,200. Discussion about options concluded that the prices offered are good value considering the comprehensive specification. On the motion of Cllr Proudfoot, seconded by Cllr Bishop, the council approved an increase in the budget for the new web site to £1,300.
- b) Marquee for the Flower Show: the clerk reported that the event is being organised by the Gardening Club, the W.I. having decided not to participate this year. The club are in the process of finalising sponsorship for most of the cost of the marquee which will cost £700 plus vat for a marquee of a size necessary to accommodate the flower show alone. The Parish Council will hold off placing the order for the marquee until there are written pledges of sponsorship from third parties of at least 70% of the cost so that the council can keep to the sum budgeted as a Section 137 expenditure.

11) Correspondence

- a) A letter of thanks has been received from BACT for the parish council's donation.
- b) Rother District Council had published its Core Strategy and the clerk has a copy of the document.

- c) Gregory Barker MP has written a letter of appreciation of the working relationship he has had with councils during his time as an MP.

12) Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items

- a) The next meeting is a special meeting on 8th April to approve plans for the proposed new village hall.

13) Date of future meetings

- a) The date of the next ordinary meeting is confirmed as Wednesday 20th May 2015 at 7.30 pm in the sports pavilion. This will be the Annual Meeting of the council and also the first meeting of the newly elected council.

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Signed (Chairman)

Date