

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council
held on Tuesday 19th May 2015 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Nicky Bishop, Richard Hann, Ron King, Andy Proudfoot, Richard White

District / County Councillors present: None

In attendance: Clerk to the Council
2 members of the public, Cllr Roger Burfoot (outgoing Chairman)

1) Apologies for absence

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

2) Election of Chairman

The election for Chairman was conducted by the outgoing Chairman, Roger Burfoot, who called for nominations. Cllr Bishop was nominated by Cllr Hann and seconded by Cllr White. There being no other nominations Cllr Nicky Bishop was declared Chair and assumed the role.

3) Election of vice chairman

Cllr Hann was nominated by the Chair (Cllr Bishop) and seconded by Cllr King. There being no other nominations Cllr Hann was declared vice-chairman.

4) Declarations of Acceptance of Office

This being the first meeting of the Council since the election, all five members present signed declarations of Acceptance of Office and an undertaking to uphold and abide by the Code of Conduct. In addition the Chair signed a Declaration of Acceptance of that office.

5) To approve the Asset Register of council property

The total value of assets on the register is shown as £76,000. Of this, £62,500 represents the sports pavilion. Members suggested that this be revalued upwards next year so that the value always represents the current replacement cost. This is important because the terms of the lease of the land specify that, in the event that the lease be not renewed by the landlord, the landlord must compensate the tenant to the value of the property.

6) To appointment members to serve on outside bodies

East Sussex Association of Local Councils – on the motion of Cllr King, Cllrs Bishop and Hann were appointed as representatives and both agreed to serve in this role and to attend meetings where appropriate to do so.

7) To fix the dates and times of future meetings

a) Ordinary Council meeting dates

2015

29th July

23rd September

25th November

2016

27th January

23rd March

18th May

b) All meetings will commence at 7.30 pm

- c) Annual Assembly – Thursday 21st April 2016

8) Disclosures of interest

- a) For this meeting - Declarations of non pecuniary interest were made in respect of agenda item 16 by Cllrs Bishop, Hann and White – members of the Village Hall Management Committee. Cllrs were granted a dispensation to speak and to vote.
- b) For future meetings – standing order amendments will be tabled at the next meeting permitting the granting of dispensations to speak and to vote on village hall matters for a period not exceeding one year.

9) Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 25th March 2015 and the Special Meeting held on 8th April 2015 were circulated prior to the meeting. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting were approved without amendment but those of the Special Meeting were corrected. Minute 3) b) iii) was not binding on a future council but it did give advice and members believed that the intention of the minute was to advise that construction of a new village hall should not commence until a certain level of funds has been secured. This level was intended to be a minimum of 50%, but ideally 75%, of the total funds planned as being required for the project. A hand written amendment to the minutes was made after which both were signed by the Chair as being a correct record of the proceedings. The revised version will be scanned and posted to the village web site.

10) Vacancy for two parish councillors

- a) One vacancy is for the Ashburnham ward and the other is for the Penhurst ward.
- b) Three people have expressed willingness to be co-opted. They are Mrs Carol Andrews, Mrs Tina French and Mrs Judy Petty. All live close enough to the parish boundaries that they could be co-opted to either vacancy.
- c) Councillors discussed the vacancies and the candidates and were of the view that having three such excellent candidates would make the decision difficult.
- d) Councillors considered the Ashburnham ward vacancy. The profile of the council has changed markedly in the last two years with the balance between long term residents and more recent arrivals having shifted in favour of the more recently arrived residents. Therefore, by a majority of 4 to 1 the council resolved to co-opt Mrs Tina French, a long time resident, to the Ashburnham ward vacancy.
- e) Councillors then considered the Penhurst ward vacancy and resolved by a vote of 4 in favour with 1 abstention to co-opt Mrs Carol Andrews to fill the vacancy as she brings previous experience of having served on a parish council elsewhere. The Clerk was instructed to write to Mrs Petty explaining the decision, to thank her for being willing to be co-opted and to express the hope that at some time in the future, if a vacancy should arise, that she might be willing to be co-opted.

11) Finance

- a) The RFO reported that the balances carried forward at the end of the financial year ending 31st March 2015 were £14,020.
- b) The following payments were approved:
- i) East Sussex Association of Local Councils - £109.54 (subscription)
- ii) Rother Citizens Advice Bureau = £100 (donation, Section 137)
- c) The RFO advised the council that the provision of £1,500 in the budget for the cost of conducting a poll on election day was not needed. Therefore, this sum is open for virement to another project. The subject will be revisited at the next meeting.
- d) Copies of the Annual Return were circulated with the minutes. Councillors approved the annual governance and accounting statements which were duly signed by the Chair.

12) Planning

- a) *Existing 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) – *Prior Notice refused. Full planning application required.*
 - RR/2015/928P Burnt Barns Farm, Freckley Hollow - variations of Conditions 2 and 5 of planning permission RR/2014/349/P re alter internal layout and external elevations – *undecided*
- b) *New applications*
 - RR/2015/998/P - Ashburnham Recreation Ground, Church Road, Ashburnham, TN33 9NU - Proposed new Ashburnham & Penhurst Village Hall. – *Members felt it inappropriate to comment on their own application, but the Clerk was instructed to write to the architect requesting that he submit a supporting document giving details of the ballot held on 7th May 2015.*
- c) *Enforcement Update*
 - i) ENF/14/15/ASH - Little Acre (Clear View Farm), Brays Hill, Ashburnham - New building and tarmac drive – *Application requested*
 - ii) 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*
- d) *Appeals*
 - i) ENF/ASH/2013/231 - Anderson Wood, Ashburnham - Importation of Moot type 1 onto bridle path. Application requested and received end of Sep 2013. Enforcement action off 14/6/14 - 3 Mths to comply. - *Application (retrospective) refused 22/11/13; enforcement June '14; Appeal Oct '14; Appeal decision is that culvert can stay but road surface must be removed.*
 - ii) APP/U1430/W/15/3003547 - Corner House Farm, Brown bread Street, Ashburnham TN33 9NY - Erection of agricultural machinery store – *Appeal against refusal of application RR/2014/2396/P - Current*
- e) The Clerk asked Members to consider creating a planning sub committee or group with delegated powers to determine the Council's response to planning applications. After discussion members concluded that they preferred all planning applications to be notified by the Clerk to all councillors and to collate the responses to formulate and post the appropriate response to the RDC planning portal.

13) Governance

- i) The Clerk advised Members that he was reviewing standing orders and would be tabling some revisions before the next meeting. These would take account of current practice in terms of public participation and dispensations when certain declarations of interest arise.
- ii) The Clerk advised members that he was conducting a periodic review of Financial Regulations and will report to the next meeting.

14) Highways matters

- a) Finger posts
 - i) Old Thatch Lane / Tower House Road – the sign has been replaced by ESCC Highways.
 - ii) The Pound – One finger has been damaged – probably by a vehicle. One arm has been broken in half.
- b) Cllr Hann reported that East Sussex Highways had advised him that future replacements of finger posts could only be undertaken as funds permit. However, if the Parish Council pay 50% of the cost then the PC can nominate two posts per year for replacement or refurbishment provided they use a contractor from the approved list.
The Clerk advised that JAKK Designs were already working in the area and have just completed two signs in Brightling. On the motion of Cllr Hann the Clerk was instructed to

obtain quotes from JAKK for the sign at The Pound and the one at Penhurst on the triangle by the church. In both cases JAKK will be asked to advise on the most suitable repair and to quote accordingly.

- c) The Clerk advised that JAKK are offering parishes a finger post annual maintenance scheme at £75 per post per year. Members felt that consideration of this should be deferred until all posts had been surveyed and were in reasonable condition.

15) Sports Pavilion

- a) The Clerk reported that he had surveyed the sports field with Nigel White and agreed the first actions as part of a programme which is in the council budget. This provides for approximately four days per year of planned maintenance.

16) Village Hall

- i) Cllrs Bishop, Hann and White declared a non pecuniary interest as members of the Village Hall Management Committee.
- ii) Following the ballot on 7 May when, on a turnout of 67%, there was a majority of 2 to 1 in favour of the new village hall project, members considered future organisational arrangements. Cllr White reported that the Village Hall Management Committee, of which he is chair, would be likely to remove the new Village Hall from its agenda at future meetings. He anticipates that the committee will be very much reduced in number.
- iii) Members resolved to set up a Parish Council subcommittee with the working title, New Village Hall Subcommittee. Cllrs Bishop, Hann and White will be Parish Council members but others will be co-opted to it. These three will meet very soon to discuss who should be asked to join the committee. The Clerk will draft some terms of reference.
- iv) The clerk was asked to draft a letter, to be circulated first to all members, thanking ATT for their pledge of a donation. The letter will also explain that the project will be taken over by the Parish Council from the Village Hall Management Committee

17) Community Matters

- a) New parish website: Cllr Bishop reported that progress chasing had given way to the higher priority of the new village hall ballot.
- b) The Clerk reported that he had received an assurance in writing from the Gardening Club that a number of sponsors were ready to support with donations the Parish Council's proposal that the Council provide the marquee at the annual flower show and fete. The Council budget includes a sum for the net cost of the marquee after donations from sponsors and these are now considered firm. On the motion of the Chair the Clerk was instructed to place the order with Meridian Marquees.

18) Correspondence

- a) A letter of thanks for the donation from Battle Area Community Transport (BACT).
- b) A letter of thanks for the token of appreciation from John Cumming, internal auditor.
- c) A letter of thanks was received from Roger Burfoot for the token of appreciation presented to him at the Annual Assembly in recognition of his long service to the Parish Council including a long period .

19) Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items – none

20) Date of next meeting

- a) 29th July at 7.30pm in the sports pavilion.

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.25pm

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Signed (Chair)

Date