

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council
held on Wednesday 12th July 2017 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Carol Andrews, Nicky Bishop (Chair), Tina French, Richard Hann, Andrew Hoad, and Richard White.

Parish Councillors absent: Cllr Ron King

District / County Councillors present: RDC Cllr Gary Curtis, ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field

In attendance: Brian Holdstock, Clerk to the Council
3 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies for absence have been received from Cllr Ron King.

2. Disclosures of interest

2.1 No interests were declared.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The draft minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 16th May 2017 were circulated with the agenda. On the motion of the Chair the minutes were adopted without amendment.

4. Open Forum

4.1 ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field reported as follows:

4.1.1 The latest statistics on road traffic accidents make uncomfortable reading with casualty numbers having risen.. Members discussed a number of road safety issues and Cllr Field commented that experience has shown that omitting a white line in the centre of the road causes traffic to drive more slowly than when there is a white line.

4.1.2 A self congratulatory note on the excellence of broad band provision is in circulation. Members noted the irony.

4.1.3 Cllr Field reminded members that they are free to send a written question to ESCC, are entitled to be present at the council meeting where it is answered and to then ask a supplementary.

4.2 RDC Cllr Gary Curtis reported as follows:

4.2.1 Surface dressing of roads in the parish is due to commence shortly.

4.2.2 Speed Watch continues to operate and if particular problem areas associated with a business enterprise can be identified he is happy to visit the organisation.

4.2.3 Stevens Crouch was noted as a particular problem as the bends in the road are a delight to speeding motor cycles.

5. Community Matters

5.1 Local Action Plan

5.1.1 The Chair reminded members that they undertook to write a short piece about the part of the plan for which they are taking the lead so that these can be published on the village web site. To date she has not received those contributions and urged members to commit to completing them before the next meeting.

5.2 Rural Broadband

5.2.1 Cllr Hann recounted a personal anecdote which is illustrative of some of the problems in this area. Penhurst Retreat received a letter from BT congratulating them on the faster speed of their broadband. He took exception to such a monstrous inexactitude but his very robust phone call produced results not far short of astonishing. A helpful member of staff

- responded ‘wonderfully’ and sent engineers to site to survey the problem. It was revealed that a new fibre enabled cabinet (cabinet 8 near the Ashburnham chapel) has been inserted in the route the cable to his property takes from The Pound. This could shorten the distance to his nearest cabinet to less than 2 km which should enable a broadband service to be installed at the Retreat for the first time (they currently have a slow ADSL connection).
- 5.2.2 Cllr Hann commented that communications from BT are appalling and he had no idea that the new cabinet could service The Retreat. During his exchanges with the broadband team he gleaned that they too have problems communicating with Open Reach and are unable to access pertinent engineering information from people on the ground.
- 5.2.3 ESCC Cllr Field noted that the member responsible for the broad band rollout is Cllr Rupert Simmons who also suffers from little or no broadband service.
- 5.2.4 Members were reminded of the Rural Vulnerability Service publications which frequently take up the issue of inadequate rural broad band provision.
- 5.3 Parish Website – nothing to report
- 5.4 BT payphone box
- 5.4.1 A range of ideas for making use of this box have been heard in the community. These include a monthly mystery, games for children waiting for the school bus, a book club cum library and a museum of Ashburnham & Penhurst life (with voice recordings).
- 5.4.2 Cllr Tina French volunteered to take a lead on this topic and has a small group who will help her.
- 5.4.3 Options for renovating and painting the box were discussed including employing a suitable craftsman. This was put on hold pending progress reports from Cllr French.
- 5.4.4 Members suggested that the forthcoming Country Fair is an opportunity to canvass for support and/or ideas for uses for the box.
- 5.5 Public Transport
- 5.5.1 Cllr Tina French reported on discussions with the community bus service and that the option of diverting the bus so that it called at Ashburnham Place is being evaluated. Unfortunately it is time critical as the bus has another scheduled route before and another after the Battle to Robertsbridge service which calls at The Pound.
- 5.5.2 It seems likely that the minutes of slack in the time table of the community bus service will not be sufficient for a diversion in which case Cllr French proposes to lobby the providers of the service bus.

6. RFO Report and Governance

- 6.1 RFO Report
- 6.1.1 Members received the bank reconciliation and the current account bank statement.
- 6.1.2 Members received the income and expenditure report against budget for the first quarter ending 30 June 2017.
- 6.1.3 The RFO reported that by moving the insurance from Zurich to Allied Westminster the premium was reduced by more than £300. However, as the bonfire at the November bonfire and fireworks event is less than 100m from the pavilion, the insurers declined to cover risks associated with the bonfire apart from public liability.
Members suggested approaching the fireworks organiser, Battel Bonfire Boyes, to see if their existing cover in respect of the fireworks display could be extended to cover the bonfire.
- 6.2 Receipts and payment
- 6.2.1 On the motion of the Chair, members approved the following future payments
- 6.2.1.1 Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS), one day’s consultancy - £385 + vat (hard copy needed)
- 6.2.1.2 Tim Wakeling, quarterly web maintenance March – May - £45
- 6.2.1.3 Upper Bridge, domain name services - £60
- 6.2.2 On the motion of the Chair, members retrospectively approved the following payments from the credit card:
- 6.2.2.1 Defibrillator adult pads £121.18

- 6.2.2.2 Defibrillator paediatric pads £156.06
- 6.2.2.3 Pavilion coffee machine £191.98

7. Planning

- 7.1 Applications on previous agendas – members noted the current status
 - 7.1.1 RR/2017/855/P - Beechurst, Marl pits Lane, Ashburnham TN33 9LE - -Erection of single storey rear extension and balcony with log store under. RDC decision by 23/5/17 (*PC is neutral; RDC Approved Conditional*)
 - 7.1.2 RR/2017/863/P - Burnt Barns Farm, Freckley Hollow, Ashburnham, TN33 9LZ, Erection of stables. RDC decision by 25/5/17 (*PC supports; RDC Approved Conditional*)
- 7.2 Applications on the agenda for the first time. –members noted the council’s response as determined by the council’s Planning Committee
 - 7.2.1 RR/2017/1046/P – Naulakha, Lakehurst Lane, Ashburnham TN33 9PE - Use as dwelling house (currently holiday lets). (*PC Planning Committee met and resolved to oppose*)
- 7.3 Breaches and Enforcement – to note updates and progress
 - 7.3.1 Burnt Barns Farm, Freckley Hollow - ENF/11/17/ASH – breach of condition 3 of RR/2013/829/P “the boat house . . . shall be used only for purposes incidental to the occupation and enjoyment of the occupants of Burnt Barns Farm . . . and not for any trade or business.”
- 7.4 Appeals – to note updates and progress
 - 7.4.1 To note the following appeal against the enforcement notice ENF/14/15/ASH above. APP/U1430/C/16/3156685 –(RDC portal ref 2408) - Little Acre (Clear View Farm), Brays Hill, Ashburnham - Appeal against Enforcement Notice RR/2016/2630/ENF requiring land to be reinstated to former use. *Status: Appeal dismissed; enforcement upheld; 19 June '17 Further inspection date*
 - 7.4.2 The Stables, Brays Hill, TN33 9NZ – Appeal against refusal of planning applications RR/2016/1570/P and RR/2016/1766/P. (*Appeal started 3 May, representations by 3 June '17; RDC ref no. 2459*)

8. Highways matters

- 8.1 Fly tipping
 - 8.1.1 Cllr Hann reported fly tipping in Penhurst which he has reported online.

9. Premises

- 9.1 New hall
 - 9.1.1 Governance - the clerk tabled a report, circulated before the meeting, concerning the significant options:
 - 9.1.1.1 At one extreme the parish council, while continuing to be the tenant of the Ashburnham Estate trusts, would build the new hall and then grant a long sub lease of it plus the pavilion and grounds to a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which would operate the hall. HMRC approval would be needed at the outset so that construction is zero rated for vat purposes. The tenancy agreement stipulates that the Estate must agree to a sub lease.
 - 9.1.1.2 At the other extreme the parish council would give up its lease of the pavilion and grounds and facilitate the creation of a new CIO to be the tenant of the Ashburnham Estate trusts.
 - 9.1.1.3 An intermediate hybrid option is for the parish council to give up the tenancy of that parcel of land needed for the new hall and facilitate the CIO becoming the tenant of the Estate.

9.1.1.4 After discussion members resolved that they are minded to pursue the option in 9.1.1.1 above subject to the approval of HMRC (and, of course, the Estate).

9.1.2 Design and Planning group

9.1.2.1 The Chair invited Mr Clive O’Sullivan to report and he did so as follows. The group last met with a full set of architects drawings of 15th June ’17.

9.1.2.2 Quotes for the alterations to the entrance are awaited. One has been received and one firm has declined and so two more are required.

9.1.2.3 As an alternative to a steel framed building a Glue Plan option is being evaluated.

9.1.2.4 The footprint of the new building has been sprayed onto the site to gain a better idea of scale. This confirmed the view that a fixed stage takes up too much space (over one third of it) and so collapsible stages are being explored.

9.1.2.5 Some minor adjustments, including to fenestration, are being explored with the intention of keeping them sufficiently minor as to not require a publicly advertised revised application.

9.1.2.6 Roof tiles have been sourced and await approval of RDC.

9.1.2.7 Window frames in black metal rather than wood are being explored in order to minimise maintenance.

9.1.2.8 Ground source heat pumps are being evaluated to provide space heating and perhaps hot water too.

9.1.3 Fund raising. Cllr Hann reported that the Awards for All bid has been drafted and just awaits the quotations sought for the entrance works (9.1.2.2 above).

9.2 Pavilion

9.2.1 The Clerk reported a number of issues:

9.2.1.1 The vacuum cleaner is troublesome again and, having spent £100 on a repair in the last 12 months, he proposed to explore other options and to report back to the next council meeting. There is no provision in the budget for a replacement.

9.2.1.2 The TV monitor has ceased to work via the new built in HDMI cable and it will be necessary to engage professional help to resolve the problem.

9.2.1.3 The boundary fence replacement and the final landscaping around the slab are both in abeyance until the end of the cricket season and the dormant period.

9.2.1.4 The Cricket Club will be asked to remove the piles of chicken wire by their shed which makes it difficult for the ground maintenance work.

9.2.1.5 The yoga group’s equipment is problematical as it is stored on site. The clerk proposed that a trolley be obtained so that it can be easily moved according to the use to which the pavilion is being put. He will report back to the next meeting.

9.3 Village Hall

9.3.1 Cllr White reported on the following issues

9.3.1.1 Professional help has been engaged to clear and then maintain the garden area.

9.3.1.2 The renewal of the insurance policy notes that it is time to certify the fitness of the electrical wiring again and this is in hand.

9.3.1.3 The smart meter fitted about a year ago now seems to be working as the bills are not showing as being based on estimates and a spot check of the reading on the bill corresponds to a similar reading on the meter.

10. Correspondence received

10.1 None

11. Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items

None

12. Dates of Next Meetings

12.1 The dates of council meetings for the remainder of the council year are as follows:

- 13th September
- 8th November
- 10th January
- 14th March
- Annual Assembly Thursday 26th April
- 9th May (Annual Meeting)

12.2 The dates of meetings for the Planning Committee for the remainder of the council year are as follows:

- 9th August
- 11th October
- 13th December
- 14th February
- 11th April

If there are no planning matters to consider the meeting will not be called.

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Signed (Chair)

Date