
**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council
held on Wednesday 25th July 2018 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion**

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

Parish Councillors absent: Cllr Neil McConkey

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

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

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies for absence have been received from Cllr Neil McConkey.

2. Disclosures of interest

2.1 No interests were declared.

3. Additional agenda items

To consider such other items as the Chair decides are urgent and due notice of which has been given to the clerk by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

At 7.1.4.19 Upper Bridge Enterprises – payment - £24

At 11.1 Correspondence from Laurence Keeley

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 9th May 2018 were circulated with the agenda. On the motion of the Chair the minutes were adopted without amendment.

5. Open Forum

5.1 ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field reported as follows –

5.1.1 Spending on Adult Social Care in 2018/19 is increasing by £2.7m or about 4.5%

5.1.2 With regret she reports planned cuts in support for individual music tuition and after schools clubs for children with special educational needs.

5.1.3 A feasibility study into the provision of a pedestrian crossing in Battle near Tesco and the brief is to decide where it should go and not to determine the need.

5.2 RDC Cllr Gary Curtis reported as follows –

5.2.1 Planning control enforcement actions continue to occupy him with regard to the site at Buckwell Ghyll, Lakehurst Lane (reported residential use of motor home) and Oak Bank Farm (breach of planning condition). Both breaches were discussed later by the council at 9.4.

5.3 From members of the public present the following representations were made.

5.3.1 Ms Jay Ashworth made a presentation on behalf of a number of residents, three of whom were present, requesting the support of the parish council in having pedestrian access restored to a footpath connecting Ashburnham and Penhurst. The Ashburnham end starts close to Green Pastures on the back track to Ashburnham Place and the Penhurst end is at The Forge. Ms Ashworth tabled a letter signed by 8 residents setting out their case.

5.3.2 The Chair invoked Standing Order 10.1.7 and changed the order of business bringing forward agenda item 10.5. Members then discussed the detail of the closure and the clerk reported that he had already made enquiries and been advised that the footpath is not a public footpath and has never been designated as such. The land is owned by the Ashburnham Estate but has a tenant and a third party has the shooting rights.

- 5.3.3 The clerk was instructed to approach the land agents, Strutt & Parker, and enquire whether the parties involved in the ownership, tenancy and shooting rights would agree to some accommodation without prejudice, such as permissive access, which would enable a degree of pedestrian access by local residents. Discussion about legal processes claiming a de facto right of way were not pursued as the council wishes to focus exclusively on developing an amicable outcome.

6. Community Matters

- 6.1 Rural Broadband – Cllr Andrew Hoad reported as follows –
- 6.1.1 Contract 3 has been awarded to BT (thought not exclusively) and before any work can start on the ground BT must complete a household level survey to establish existing provision (though whether actual in practice or theoretical is unclear). This will take the rest of 2018 to complete at least.
- 6.1.2 Following his meeting at County Hall, county requested that future liaison be conducted via ESALC rather than RALC. Accordingly, Cllr Andrew Wedmore (Brightling PC) went to the last ESALC meeting to find that Katy Thomas, the key liaison person for county, was absent and claimed to not have been invited.
- 6.1.3 The promised improvements to the county website have materialised but are not sensational.
- 6.1.4 The current survey work on the ground relates to the completion of Contract 2, not Contract 3.
- 6.2 1066 Community are launching a travelling information service comprising a coffee shop set up for two hours in a village about once a month. If a village already has a monthly community social gathering they suggest they might participate in that.
Members requested that the clerk approach the village monthly Coffee Stop (first Friday of the month) and see if they are interested in having the new information service present.

7. RFO Report and Governance

- 7.1 RFO report
- 7.1.1 Members approved the schedule of receipts and payments for the months of April – June 2018.
- 7.1.2 A bank reconciliation as at 30th June 2018, circulated with the agenda, was received by members. Cllr Tina French reported that she had been online to the bank and confirmed the figures as stated.
- 7.1.3 A statement of income and expenses for the first quarter to the end of June 2018 and a forecast of full year outcome against budget heads was circulated with the agenda and received by members. No significant variances against budget were reported.
- 7.1.4 On the motion of the Chair, seconded by Cllr Carol Andrew, members approved the following payments –
- 7.1.4.1 EDF daily standing charge increase from 18.90 pence to 23.28p/day (£15.99 p.a.)
- 7.1.4.2 SSP Direct Defibrillator cabinet at The Retreat £214.29 + £42.86 vat (retrospective)
- 7.1.4.3 ESALC annual subs invoice £124.38 (retrospective)
- 7.1.4.4 AiRS - CBAS subscription - £120 + £24 vat (retrospective)
- 7.1.4.5 Carol Lovett, pavilion cleaning Jan-Apr 2018 - £146.25 (retrospective)
- 7.1.4.6 BHIB insurance brokers – insurance renewal - £475.14 (retrospective)
- 7.1.4.7 Keith Robertson, internal audit fee - £84.08 (retrospective)
- 7.1.4.8 Paul Clark, materials for scale model - £87 (reimbursing V Hall) (retrospective)
- 7.1.4.9 P.G.R.Hodges – painting and decorating pavilion - £480
- 7.1.4.10 SJF Electrical – PAT testing in pavilion - £50 + £10 vat
- 7.1.4.11 Tim Wakeling – web site hosting and maintenance quarterly fee - £45
- 7.1.4.12 Nigel Turner, pavilion window cleaning 5th June and 10th July - £52
- 7.1.4.13 Decorators Warehouse – painting and decorating materials - £125.62 + £25.12 (card payment)

- 7.1.4.14 XL displays, pop-up exhibition panels £132 + £26.40 vat (card payment)
- 7.1.4.15 Kit Print, Annual assembly road side banners - £54 (card payment)
- 7.1.4.16 Orbital Fasteners, barrier fencing and pins - £47.70 + £9.54 vat (card payment)
- 7.1.4.17 Lidl UK, annual assembly refreshments - £24.87 + £4.97 vat (card payment)
- 7.1.4.18 Water Choice – final water bill pavilion - £25.94
- 7.1.4.19 Upper Bridge Enterprises – Domain name annual fee - £20 + £4 vat
- 7.1.5 Members asked the clerk to investigate why domain name renewal is effected via Upper Bridge Enterprises, the providers of the previous web site.
Members also asked the clerk to explore options for future electricity prices as the EDF rate of 17.38p per unit seems high.
- 7.2 Insurance
 - 7.2.1 Members approved the increase in the value of buildings cover to £120,000.
- 7.3 Governance
- 7.4 Members reviewed the casual vacancy for a parish councillor but had no suggestions as to who might be approached for co-option. Advertising the vacancy in the parish magazine will continue.

8. Premises

8.1 New Village Hall

- 8.1.1 Members were pleased to note that the Charity Commission has approved the registration of the CIO named Ashburnham and Penhurst Community Centre. The Chairman of the charity is Keith Finch and the Vice Chairman is Clive O’Sullivan.
- 8.1.2 The clerk tabled a previously circulated letter to the landlord for a deed of variation of the existing lease of the sports field to permit an under-lease to the new CIO and a wider variety of permitted activities. Members suggested that the request that the 50 year term of the lease be reset to start in 2018 be made more explicit. There were no other changes and on the motion of the Chair members resolved that the letter be sent.

8.2 Pavilion and recreation ground

- 8.2.1 Members noted the previously circulated letter from Strutt & Parker confirming that trustees will grant permission for the improvements to the entrance from the highway. The clerk reported that he had instructed Heringtons Solicitors to act for the parish council and that their preliminary advice was to question the need for a Deed of Variation and that they suggested that an exchange of letters with appropriately detailed maps would suffice. Their observation has been relayed to Strutt & Parker who will relay it to Adams & Remers. Members resolved to meet the legal fees as requested by Strutt & Parker but would like clarification on whether the Strutt & Parker costs are a fixed fee or an estimate which will be supported by an itemised account.
- 8.2.2 Members noted progress with the following maintenance matters:
 - 8.2.2.1 The exterior of the doors and windows have been recoated and the interior walls below the ring beam painted throughout.
 - 8.2.2.2 PAT testing has recently been completed.
 - 8.2.2.3 A trolley, probably a frame roll cage, to make it easier to move the yoga equipment has yet to be procured although a budget sum is in the current budget. A special purpose trolley to move stacked chairs is also being investigated.

8.3 Village Hall

- 8.3.1 Cllr Richard White reported that village hall funds are at an all time low of just a few hundred pounds after outstanding invoices are paid. However, most of the annual income has yet to come in and most of the annual expenditure has been incurred already. There is a safety net of some £3500 in the Appeal Fund which represents money raised from past fund raising events. Although intended to be used to fund projects subsidised by Ashburnham Thanksgiving Trust, it may have to be used in part to meet any revenue shortfall.
- 8.3.2 The implications of the deteriorating financial position of the village hall were discussed by members. It was agreed that Cllr White should confer with Cllr McConkey and the clerk

and jointly carry out some scenario planning for parish council finances over the next two or three years.

9. Planning

- 9.1 Members noted the current status (*in italics*) of the following applications on previous agendas of either the council or its planning committee -
- 9.1.1 RR/2018/504/P - Hill Farm, Tower House Road, Penhurst, TN33 9QS – Repairs and changes to the use of outbuildings at Hill Farm including the renovation of Sussex Barn, the conversion of Oast to ancillary living accommodation, the replacement of dilapidated small barn with holiday let unit and removal of redundant modern barns.
Approved conditional.
- 9.1.2 RR/2018/702/MA – The White Cottage, Brownbread Street, Ashburnham, TN33 9NX – Minor amendment to planning permission RR/2017/2343/P in respect of: 1) The new roof is to have a central valley with double pitched roofs either side. 2) Lower sill of corner window by 250mm, making a window height of 1350mm. *Minor Amendments approved.*
- 9.1.3 RR/2018/845/P - Ashburnham Recreation Ground, Church Road, Ashburnham TN33 9NU - Variation of Conditions 2 and 10 imposed on RR/2015/998/P To allow for some design changes to the approved building. *Approved conditional.*
- 9.1.4 RR/2018/1020/O - Green Pastures, Ashburnham Place, Ashburnham TN33 9NE - Lawful Development Certificate for an existing conversion of residential annex building and use as a separate residential building. *Lawful DC approved.*
- 9.2 Applications on the agenda for the first time – to determine the council’s response (*in italics*).
- 9.2.1 RR/2018/1400/P – Brays Hill Farm House, Brays Hill, Ashburnham, TN33 9NZ - Extensions to dwelling, internal alterations and replacement of two modern windows as previously approved under RR/2014/2456/P and RR/2014/2457/L. *Council’s position to be determined.*
- 9.2.2 RR/2018/1764/P – Glydes Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham, TN33 9PB - Enlarging of ensuite and dressing room to master bedroom by increasing height of roof and adding dormer window. Plus adding two new rooflights to existing master bedroom. *Members will look online at the detail and respond to the clerk with a view.*
- 9.3 Breaches and Enforcement on previous agendas.
- 9.3.1 Buckwell Ghyll – alleged planning breach by virtue of residential occupation of motor home. *RDC Cllr Gary Curtis is pursuing this with enforcement officers. Members resolved that the clerk should write to RDC enforcement urging them to gather evidence as to whether or not there is a planning breach and to then take appropriate action.*
- 9.4 Breaches and Enforcement – to note new planning enforcement complaints and status (*italics*).
- 9.4.1 ENF/107/18/ASH – Oak Bank Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham – Breach of condition of application RR/2012/1053/P. *Awaiting reports.*
- 9.4.2 ENF/112/18/ASH – Honey Lane, Slivericks Lane, Ashburnham – Laying of large hard standing on agricultural field. *No further information.*

10. Highways matters

- 10.1 Finger posts – the post at the junction of Brownbread Street with the C18 at Ponds Green (post number 6) has what appears to be damage or rot near the base of the post. Members instructed the clerk to have it surveyed by an approved contractor and an estimate prepared.
- 10.2 SLR meeting – members reviewed the promised actions at the 8th May meeting regarding the speed of vehicles at Stevens Crouch. The clerk will follow up as the chevrons have not been cleaned and the SLOW signs in the road have not been repainted.
- 10.3 Verges – the clerk reported that he has responded to complaints about reduced visibility caused by overhanging bracken by posting a number of problem reports on the highways portal.
- 10.4 Street naming – consideration of the naming of Penhurst Lane vs Tower House Road is carried forward to the next meeting..

- 10.5 Countryside access – closure of the private track from Ashburnham Place to The Forge was considered at 5.3.2

11. Correspondence received

- 11.1 Laurence Keeley has written to the parish council seeking support for a Rother-wide scheme to promote the building of affordable housing in the villages. Hard copy of his detailed proposals were given to members who will consider them and formulate a response at the September meeting of the council.

12. Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items

None

13. Dates of Next Meetings

- 13.1 Ordinary council meetings are scheduled for the last Wednesday of alternate months at 7.30pm in the Sports Pavilion and that the dates of meetings for the remainder of the council year are as follows:
2018: 26th September, 28th November
2019: 30th January, 27th March, Annual Assembly Thursday 26th April, 29th May (Annual Meeting)
- 13.2 Planning committee meetings are scheduled for the last Wednesday of alternate months when there is no parish council meeting. Meetings are at 7.30pm in the Sports Pavilion.

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

..... Date

Signed (Chair)