

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ashburnham with Penhurst Parish Council
held on Wednesday 28th November 2018 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Nicky Bishop (Chair), Tina French, Neil McConkey, and Richard White.

Parish Councillors absent: Cllrs Carol Andrews and Andrew Hoad

District / County Councillors present: RDC Cllr Gary Curtis,

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

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence have been received from Cllrs Carol Andrews and Andrew Hoad and ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field

2. Disclosures of interest

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.

None

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 26th September 2018 were circulated with the agenda. On the motion of the Chair the minutes were adopted without amendment.

5. Open Forum

5.1 RDC Cllr Gary Curtis reported as follows –

5.1.1 The waste collection contract is due for renewal next year and is out to tender.

5.1.2 Car parks in Battle will be free over the Christmas holiday period.

5.1.3 SpeedWatch continues in Catsfield and the police are due to set up their own speed trap from time to time.

The Chair asked if SpeedWatch or police traps could be set up in other locations such as on the A271 at Stevens Crouch. Cllr Curtis promised to find out and report back.

5.1.4 On county matters there is to be a by election for the Bexhill West division in January 2019.

5.2 Mr Ron Ridley, a member of the public, asked some questions relating to parish council finances.

5.2.1 He asked what effect on the precept the new village hall project has. He noted that the precept for the current year was a third higher than the previous year.

5.2.2 He also asked why the website pages relating to the fund raising for the new village hall have not been updated since bonfire night 2017.

5.2.3 In response the Chair advised that the large increase in the precept was due entirely to the increased outgoings of the parish council which is much more active in supporting the community and also has to share much of the cost of maintaining fingerposts. In addition there is an on going programme of maintenance projects at the pavilion and grounds.

The cost of supporting the new village hall project falls mainly to the Village Hall Appeal fund and the parish council has only paid for some modest items such as planning applications or a one day consultancy from Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS).

Mr Ridley said that it was hard to understand the finances from the published information. In response the Chair promised to explore the publication of the income and expenditure schedule which councillors receive before every parish council meeting. However, it will need to be anonymised to comply with data protection regulations.

6. Community Matters

6.1 Rural Broadband (Cllr Hoad written notes)

6.1.1 The expectation that ESALC would prove to be a beneficial channel to receive regular updates from ESCC on the topic of broadband has proven to be ill founded. They did not put this topic properly on their meeting agenda as was promised earlier and did not invite him or Andrew Wedmore to attend. There is little to indicate that ESALC take Broadband seriously.

Katy Thomas (ESCC Procurement Lead for Broadband) advised on 22 October as follows :-

- Contract 2 deployment is in its final quarter and is scheduled to complete on time at the end of December this year
- Superfast coverage across East Sussex as of today's date (24mbps +) is 96.5%. Wealden 94%, Lewes 97%, Rother 94%
- Surveys for Contract 3 continue to go well and is due to receive reports in December.
- Build is still due to start January 2019.
- The next move will be to press for details of the outcome of the household level survey very early in the new year.

6.2 Parish Website - no enhancements are planned but the Clerk advised members that new accessibility regulations are due to be enacted in 2019 which at some point may require changes to the website. Early indications that platforms such as WordPress, the basis of the village web site, will easily accommodate the new requirements.

6.3 Parish magazine – the Clerk invited members to contribute either material or suggestions for the content of the parish council page in the magazine. The object is to portray the activities of the parish council in a way which might attract people to put themselves forward for co-option.

6.4 School bus - Cllr Tina French continues to engage with issues of road safety at the boarding and drop off point at The Pound. Both the Dallington and the Claverham buses use this point and groups of children crossing the road is an issue. Cllr French is in dialogue with the county Transport Organiser, who has personally travelled the route, and their conversation will continue.

7. RFO Report and Governance

7.1 Financial reports

7.1.1 Members received an income and expenditure report against budget to the end of October 2018 and on the motion of the Chair this was approved.

7.1.2 A bank reconciliation to 5th November 2018 was tabled by the RFO. Cllr French will verify it.

7.2 Receipts and payments

7.2.1 Members received and approved the schedule of receipts and payments for the month of October 2018.

7.2.2 On the motion of the Chair, seconded by Cllr White, members approved the following payments

- 7.2.2.1 RALC for Parish Online - £40 – annual subscription renewal
- 7.2.2.2 Nigel Turner - £26 – pavilion window cleaning 23 October 2018
- 7.2.2.3 Carol Lovett – pavilion cleaning – £161.25
- 7.2.2.4 Rother CAB - £100 – Support grant
- 7.2.2.5 Battle Area Community Transport - £100 – Support grant
- 7.2.2.6 Ashburnham chapel - £100 – Support grant
- 7.2.2.7 Ashburnham PCC - £300 – Burial grounds maintenance
- 7.2.2.8 Penhurst PCC - £300 – Burial grounds maintenance

- 7.2.2.9 Ashburnham PCC - £300 Parish magazine support grant
- 7.2.2.10 CPRE Sussex Branch - £50 – Donation
- 7.2.2.11 Douglas Andrews - £503+vat – Ponds Green finger post repair (invoice awaited)
- 7.2.2.12 James Harris - £35 – PA system for Remembrance Service
- 7.2.2.13 Gill Ratcliffe - £27.28 – Reimbursement, catering for Remembrance Service
- 7.3 Budget for 2019/20
 - 7.3.1 Members received the first draft of the budget for the next financial year and commented as follows.
 - 7.3.2 The precept is to be increased by 2.5% which is below inflation.
 - 7.3.3 Pavilion lettings are difficult to estimate as yoga is expected to relocate by early summer.
 - 7.3.4 Any requests for changes to the amounts paid for the upkeep of the burial grounds in the future will need supporting evidence of the need for an increase.
 - 7.3.5 Support grants made under Section 137 powers should focus on local rather than national charities. Members decided to remove the grant to CPRE but to include Rother Rural Trust.
- 7.4 Governance
 - 7.4.1 The Clerk informed members that recent archival research has uncovered the Order made in 1954 which grouped the two parishes of Ashburnham and Penhurst for the purpose of creating one parish council representing both parishes. The provisions of the Order include the following –
 - 7.4.1.1 The common parish council “shall be called The Parish Council of Ashburnham with Penhurst”.
 - 7.4.1.2 Each parish must continue to have its own parish meeting.
 - 7.4.1.3 Penhurst parish is to be represented by 2 councillors and Ashburnham parish by 5 councillors.
 - 7.4.2 Members were relaxed about the name although found ‘with’ as a replacement for ‘&’ attractive.
 - 7.4.3 The need for a separate parish meeting for each parish was noted and a sensible way of meeting this requirement at the annual village meeting will be developed.
 - 7.4.4 The electoral representation with 2 councillors representing up to 30 electors in Penhurst and 5 representing close to 300 in Ashburnham is clearly not democratic. It could be changed by asking Rother District Council to conduct a Community Governance Review. Members will revisit this topic at a future meeting.

8. Premises

- 8.1 New village hall
 - 8.1.1 Members reviewed the previously circulated letter from Strutt & Parker regarding legal fees and a new lease for the playing field facility and the reply from the Clerk. Members now look forward to receiving a first draft of the new lease.
 - 8.1.2 Cllr Richard White advised that it has at last been possible to obtain a stand alone quotation for the supply and erection of a steel frame enabling comparison with the glulam estimate. For steel the price quoted is £36k compared with glulam which is £48k. Naturally, steel will be adopted for the specification of the building.
 - 8.1.3 Cricket field entrance widening
 - 8.1.3.1 Members took note of the previously circulated letter from the committee of the Village Hall Appeal Fund. However, they reaffirmed their intention to scrutinise expenditure especially in regard to professional fees.
 - 8.1.3.2 On the proposal of Cllr Neil McConkey seconded by the Chair members resolved to pay to Heringtons solicitors client account the requested payment of £1,350 plus vat to enable Heringtons to give the necessary undertaking to Adams & Remer acting for the Ashburnham Estate.
 - 8.1.4 Planning
 - 8.1.4.1 Cllr White advised that RDC have refused the recent application to change the window materials to aluminium and the tiles from clay to concrete. However, the

window element of the application was received favourably and so a repeat application, for which no fee will be payable, requesting in principle aluminium for the windows will be submitted by Pump House Designs. The colour of the material will be subject to a condition to be approved at a later stage and this and subsequent Discharges of Condition will in future be handled directly by the design team.

8.2 Pavilion

8.2.1 The proposed future rates of hire for the pavilion have been discussed with the Art Group and the yoga organiser who have acknowledged. A proposal has also been put to the Cricket Club whose committee does not meet until 2nd December.

Members noted comments and decided to delay implementation of the new rates until the new financial year.

On the proposal of the Chair members resolved that with effect from 1st April 2019 the session charge for the pavilion will be increased from £50 to £60 with a 50% reduction for parish residents. The charge for village groups will be increased from £15 to £18 and for those groups who pay by standing order the charge will be increased from £60 to £72 per calendar month.

8.2.2 The Clerk advised that a request from the East Sussex Section of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club to hold its annual show on the cricket field on Saturday 14th July 2019 had been passed via Strutt & Parker to the Estate trustees as it is outside the terms of the lease.

Trustees have given their consent.

Members were keen to support the venture but also gain some benefit for fund raising for the new hall such as providing the catering. The Clerk will discuss with the Motor Cycle Club.

8.3 Village Hall

8.3.1 Cllr Richard White reported on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee.

8.3.1.1 The car park has had some MoT Type 1 material spread and rolled resulting in a much improved surface. The cost will be no more than £800 of which three quarters will be paid by Ashburnham Thanksgiving Trust under their 3:1 subsidy.

8.3.1.2 The septic tank has been emptied and the Secretary has asked Strutt & Parker to approach the tenant of the School House for a contribution.

8.3.1.3 A series of training courses for the latest IEE Regulations is currently running at the village hall producing a welcome fillip to revenue. This, coupled with the booking for 5 days over the Christmas period, meant that rental income has been transformed.

8.3.2 The Chair welcomed the change in fortunes and reiterated a previous view that a revival of the Ride and Walk is in everyone's interests as it was such a reliable and significant fund raiser. Members concurred but urged clarity about its purpose which should be simply stated as being in aid of the new village hall.

9. Planning

9.1 Members noted the current status (*in italics*) of the following applications on previous agendas

9.1.1 RR/2018/1910/MA - The White Cottage, Brownbread Street, Ashburnham TN33 9NX - Minor amendment to RR/2017/2343/P to allow enlargement of 2no. windows in front elevation of extension. Formation of a porch on the side elevation. *Remains undecided. Decision was due 17th August 2018.*

9.1.2 RR/2018/2084/P - Lattendens Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham TN33 9PB - Installation of free-standing greenhouse to south-west. *The council recorded that it had no objection. Application withdrawn after indicative intention to refuse.*

9.1.3 RR/2018/2169/P - Honeyland, Honey Lane, Ashburnham TN33 9PE - Hardstanding and landscaping. (Retrospective) *Approved conditional.*

9.2 Applications on the agenda for the first time – to determine the council's response.

9.2.1 RR/2018/2316P - Peans Farm, Penhurst TN33 9QR - Single storey oak framed orangery extension to west elevation and replacement of existing window with door to north elevation. Listed building consent also applied for.

Action: Clerk to circulate details which members undertook to review and send feedback to the Clerk.

- 9.3 Breaches and Enforcement – to note updates and progress
- 9.3.1 Neighbouring Parish (Catsfield): Land adjacent to Deer Park Lodge (*Cllr Hoad has indicated that he is contacting Catsfield parish clerk with a view to a joint approach.*)
- 9.3.2 Buckwell Ghyll – alleged planning breach by virtue of residential occupation of motor home. (*RDC Cllr Curtis advised that he has seen no further action by RDC.*)
- 9.3.3 ENF/107/18/ASH – Oak Bank Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham – Breach of condition of application RR/2012/1053/P. *The breach continues and a Notice of Breach on the perpetrator will be served in the next few days requiring a cessation of the breach within one month. There is no appeal process and failure to comply leads to an appearance in the Magistrates Court.*
- 9.3.4 ENF/112/18/ASH – Honey Lane, Slivericks Lane, Ashburnham – Laying of large hard standing on agricultural field. *Application requested, received (RR/2018/2169/P above) and approved conditional.*
- 9.4 Appeals – members noted the result of the only current appeal.
- 9.4.1 Appeal Ref: APP/U1430/W/18/3204034 Oak Bank Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham TN33 9PB – RR/2017/1522/P - Proposed temporary agricultural workers dwelling to serve the essential needs of the holding. *Appeal dismissed (new dwelling not opposed per se but opposed in the proposed location).*

10. Highways and Byways

10.1 Finger posts

- 10.1.1 Mansfield Cross post was demolished by a vehicle on 5th October 2018. The Clerk informed the police and obtained an incident number. He will explore the possibility of an insurance claim but in the meantime the finger boards have all been retrieved so that the letters can be reused. An estimate for replacement is awaited.
- 10.1.2 Ponds Green Brownbread Street sign is still away for repair. However, the 50% subsidy has been received from East Sussex Highways.

10.2 Byways

- 10.2.1 At the previous meeting members resolved to support a number of local residents in making representations to the Ashburnham Estate trustees to reopen access to the track from Ashburnham Place to the Forge. Members received a letter in reply explaining why, for a number of operational reasons, this would not be possible. However, individuals are encouraged to write to the trustees c/o Strutt & Parker requesting personal permission to use the track stating reasons for the request. Members felt that they had done as much as they could and the Clerk will forward the letter to the residents who have made representations.

10.3 SLR meeting

- 10.3.1 Members reviewed the content of the previous meeting and felt that it needed to have more direction minuted with specific actions and by whom.

10.4 Street naming – in his absence Cllr Hoad tabled a written sequence of proposed actions –

- 10.4.1 A note in the next Parish magazine (February edition) and Community Facebook page to tell people that we are taking up this subject. Interested parties will be directed to the village website for further on-going updates on this topic.
- 10.4.2 By mid February post extracts of the Parish map with street names as they now appear on the National Street Gazetteer and request feedback within 30 days regarding any changes proposed by parishioners.
- 10.4.3 By mid March consolidate these requests and publish the results on the website.
- 10.4.4 Provided that no further changes or amendments are requested thereafter, the consolidated name change/reversion requests can be submitted to the Street Naming Officer in Mid April.

11. Correspondence received

None

12. Future Agenda items

At the next meeting -

- 12.1 Set the budget and the precept for 2019/20
- 12.2 Draft the agenda for the next Annual Assembly
- 12.3 Finalise a draft of the Local Action Plan for submission to the Annual Assembly.

13. Dates of Next Meetings

- 13.1 The dates of meetings for the remainder of the council year are in 2019 and are as follows:

30th January

27th March

Annual Assembly Thursday 26th April

29th May (Annual Meeting)

- 13.2 The planning committee will meet only if required and then it will meet on the last Wednesday of February and April.

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Signed (Chair)

Date