

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ashburnham with Penhurst Parish Council
held on Wednesday 27th March 2019 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, ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field
- In attendance:** Brian Holdstock, Clerk to the Council
1 member of the public

1. Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence have been received from Cllrs Carol Andrews and Andrew Hoad .

2. Disclosures of interest

- 2.1 No interests were declared.

3. Additional agenda items

The following items were decided by the Chair as urgent, due notice of which has been given to the clerk by 12 noon this day:

- 6.4.3 Phone box refurbishment
- 7.2.2.8 Credit card payment Dragon Signs
- 7.3.2 Date of annual meeting
- 7.3.3 Parish council elections
- 8.2.2 Play café request for storage

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 30th January 2019 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 that -
- 5.1.1 The County Council budget has been approved including the proposed cuts in services.
 - 5.1.2 The help point in Market Square has had to be closed due to flooding. It has moved temporarily to Battle Library (on Fridays).
- 5.2 RDC Cllr Gary Curtis reported that -
- 5.2.1 Rural theft from vehicles is on the increase and the public is urged to be vigilant.
 - 5.2.2 Speedwatch continues in Catsfield and the number of speeders is reducing. The typical speed is 40 mph and the highest recorded is 59 mph.
 - 5.2.3 On 11th March recruitment starts for additional police – for the whole of Sussex it is 100 PCSO's and 72 PC's.
 - 5.2.4 Marley Lane is to be temporarily closed on 11th May.

6. Community Matters

- 6.1 Rural Broadband. In the absence of Cllr Hoad the clerk was able to report that the community in the locality of Brigden Hill, having been informed that their fibre-to-the-premises scheme that commenced in November 2018 had been put on hold indefinitely, has embarked on an application for a Community Fibre Partnership. The range of public funds per premises varies greatly. On the county broadband roll out programme the Value For Money (VFM) criteria in

Contract 2 was £1700 per premises (which was cited as the reason for ceasing the Brigden Hill scheme). Contract 3 started in January 2019 and the VFM criteria is £2600 per premises. Starting in January 2020 BT has a Universal Service Obligation which is capped at £3400 per premises. Brigden Hill residents have been told that the Community Fibre Partnership attracts Gigabyte credits of £500 per premises for residential use and £2500 per premises for business use.

Members asked the clerk to liaise with Cllr Hoad to publicise information in the parish magazine.

- 6.2 Local Action Plan. The Chair reported that no progress has been made. She proposes to email the current draft to members. Cllr Tina French agreed to compile it into publishable format (A5) with IT support from Cllr Neil McConkey.

6.3 Parish Website

- 6.3.1 The 60 days moratorium on changing the domain name host has now expired and the transfer will be undertaken.

- 6.3.2 No progress has been made on finding an administrator to replace the Chair who wishes to relinquish that role.

6.4 Other community matters

- 6.4.1 Rother Rural Trust. Members are aware of a deserving cause where practical help would be appreciated. The clerk will put Cllr Tina French in contact with Stephen Hardy who is clerk to RRT.

- 6.4.2 Litter. Members noted the recent litter picking party and voted their thanks to Helen Hoad for organising it. The clerk reported that RDC have just announced that they have some funds available to provide support equipment. Members asked the clerk to make a bid for litter pickers, high viz vests and hoop supports for rubbish sacks.

- 6.4.3 Phone box. Cllr Tina French reported that she has a quote for the repair of the door in the sum of £60. On the motion of Cllr French members resolved that the quote be accepted and that no further quotes need be obtained.

7. RFO Report and Governance

7.1 RFO report

- 7.1.1 The RFO tabled a previously circulated income and expenditure report against budget to today which is effectively the year end position. However, a formal year end statement will follow. There are no significant variations from budget. Movement to and from earmarked reserves will be an agenda item for the new council whose first meeting is in May.

- 7.1.2 The RFO tabled the bank reconciliation up to today's date.

7.2 Receipts and payments

- 7.2.1 Members approved the schedule of receipts and payments for the months of February and March to date noting those subject to approval in the next agenda item. A correction needs to be recorded to the payee for reimbursement of catering expenses for the refreshments following the Remembrance Sunday service. Reimbursement was due to Carol Lovett and not Gill Ratcliffe as minuted.

- 7.2.2 On the motion of Cllr French seconded by Cllr White members authorised the following payments -

- 7.2.2.1 ION Safety £47.50 Pavilion fire extinguishers annual service
- 7.2.2.2 Nigel White £400 Playing field maintenance for 2018/19 (invoice signed)
- 7.2.2.3 Carol Lovett £71.25 Pavilion cleaning Jan and Feb
- 7.2.2.4 Nigel Turner £26 Pavilion window cleaning
- 7.2.2.5 Castle Water £12.25 Pavilion water Direct Debit mthly starts March 2019
- 7.2.2.6 Tim Wakeling £45 Quarterly web hosting and support (retrospective)
- 7.2.2.7 Heringtons solicitors £1,470 plus £288.60 vat, entrance widening license (invoice signed)
- 7.2.2.8 Credit card (retrospective) Dragon Signs £48 Annual Assembly signs

7.3 Governance

- 7.3.1 Members briefly reviewed the arrangements for the Annual Assembly on Thursday 25th April convening at 7.00pm. The clerk reported that road side signs are ready and catering for the premeeting reception is in hand.
The agenda for the Penhurst Parish Meeting is likely to include street naming subject to Cllr Hoad being in a position to take it forward.
The agenda for the Ashburnham Parish Meeting will include an item on rural broadband and on the new village hall project.
- 7.3.2 Date of Annual Meeting of the parish council – the clerk advised members that in an election year the practise of meeting on the last Wednesday of the month does not meet the legal requirement for newly elected councils to meet within 14 days of the election. The viability of bringing forward the scheduled date of 29th May to 15th May will be tested in the next few days once those absent have been consulted.
- 7.3.3 Parish Council elections. Cllrs French, McConkey and White indicated that they intend to seek election for the parish of Ashburnham. In addition, interest has been shown by Ron King and Zoe O’Sullivan. The clerk has provided them with nomination papers suggesting that they stand for the parish of Ashburnham meaning that there are likely to be 5 nominations for the 5 seats. Cllr Hoad has indicated elsewhere that he intends to seek election for the parish of Penhurst where there are two seats.

8. Premises

- 8.1 New village hall
- 8.1.1 The clerk reported that the licence for the entrance widening has been received from the Ashburnham Estate trustees.
- 8.1.2 The clerk reported that a first draft of a new lease, requested by the parish council to permit under-leasing to the new C.I.O., is expected in the spring or early summer. In response to a member’s question about the implications of permission for under-leasing being denied the clerk advised that the principle issue is business rates. The new building would have a rateable value in excess of the threshold for Small Business Relief and business rates would be payable. Parish Councils get no relief but charities have a mandatory relief of 80% with the possibility of applying for the relief from the other 20% from the District Council. At current rates he estimates that the business rates payable would be not less than £6,000 per year.
- 8.1.3 With regard to design and construction Cllr Richard White reported that planning permission has been granted to allow aluminium doors and windows in an approved colour. Samples of clay tiles are to hand for submission for approval. In addition, members of the working party have been looking at Marley Cedral for the cladding. Marley Cedral is almost twice the price of timber, but the latter will need a preservative coating applied whereas Cedral is fire resistant and maintenance free.
The Chair requested that a meeting of the working party be convened to look at the proposals before Pump House Designs are authorised to seek the necessary Discharge of Conditions from RDC.
- 8.1.4 The preferred supplier of the steel frame for the building, Wealden AM, have commissioned the taking of soil samples from the site to allow the design of foundations to proceed. Wealden AM have donated the cost of soil analysis.
- 8.1.5 The boundary with the field which is part of the view towards Tent Hill has been tidied up with some small trees being removed and new country hedging planted.
- 8.2 Pavilion
- 8.2.1 The clerk requested guidance on fees chargeable to the Coffee Stop for special events. Members determined that the waiver of a hire fee for the monthly coffee morning is the

extent of the council's support for the venture and that additional hirings should be chargeable at the current rate.

- 8.2.2 Cllr Tina French reported that the Play Café, which currently meets at the Church Hall in the grounds of Ashburnham Place, is looking for an alternative venue as they have filled their available space and have had to start a waiting list for people wishing to join. The biggest problem is storage for all the play equipment and the pavilion clearly cannot provide this. Cllr White suggested speaking to the cricket club with a view to reviewing the use of the shed they have adjacent to the pavilion.
- 8.3 Village Hall
- 8.3.1 Cllr Richard White reported as follows –
- 8.3.1.1 The resurfacing of the car park was only a stop gap with 10 tonnes of material having been laid in November 2018. Another 20 tonnes is what is required for a longer term solution and during the summer this year this option will be pursued.
- 8.3.1.2 The sewage treatment plant is overflowing and emptying has been arranged for 28th March after which the drain to it will be rodded to clear any blockage.
- 8.3.1.3 The oil tank could not be filled as the tanker driver alleged that it was leaking. This may or may not be true and investigation is in hand.

9. Planning

- 9.1 Applications on previous agendas - members noted the current status.
- 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. No further information.*
Members requested the clerk to seek confirmation from Rother as to the status of this application.
- 9.1.2 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.
Council has opposed as being out of character. Remains undecided.
Members requested the clerk to seek confirmation from Rother as to the status of this application.
- 9.1.3 RR/2018/2906/P - Old Sprays Barn, Penhurst Lane, Penhurst TN33 9QN - Conversion of outbuilding to ancillary self-contained domestic accommodation, erection of shed for garden equipment and modification of S106 (RR/2000/591/P).
Council has supported this application "provided that the section 106 agreement is clear in not allowing the accommodation formed to be separated from the existing dwelling."
Remains undecided.
Members requested the clerk to seek confirmation from Rother as to the status of this application.
- 9.1.4 RR/2019/50/P - The Stables, Brays Hill, Ashburnham TN33 9NZ - Proposed single storey garden room extension and detached two bay garage and 5 no. rooflights to existing roof.
Approved (conditional)

9.2 Planning applications on the agenda for the first time

- 9.2.1 None

9.3 Breaches and Enforcement –updates and progress noted

9.3.1 On previous agendas

- 9.3.1.1 Neighbouring Parish (Catsfield): Land adjacent to Deer Park Lodge *carry forward*
- 9.3.1.2 Buckwell Ghyll – alleged planning breach by virtue of residential occupation of motor home. *No further information,*
Members resolved to ask RDC Cllr Gary Curtis to request information

9.3.1.3 ENF/107/18/ASH – Oak Bank Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham – Breach of condition of application RR/2012/1053/P. *Officers have visited; enforcement action continues.*

9.3.2 New to this agenda

9.3.2.1 ENF/40/19 ASH - Oak Bank Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham – Unlawful extension of lawful development. *(11th March list) Officers have visited; enforcement continues.*

9.4 Appeals – No new appeals.

10. Highways and Byways matters

10.1 Finger posts

10.1.1 The clerk reported that the replacement of the demolished post at Mansfield Cross remains a work in progress.

10.1.2 The clerk reported that a resident, Matt Cournell, has volunteered to carry out some maintenance this summer on the post at the junction of Old Thatched Lane and Tower House Road (post number 7).

10.2 SLR meeting

10.2.1 Members noted little progress on outstanding actions. Cllr Neil McConkey will take steps to put something in the parish magazine about ways of reporting pot holes.

10.3 Street naming – in the absence of Cllr Hoad this item was carried forward.

11. Correspondence received

None

12. Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items

None

13. Dates of Next Meetings

13.1 Council meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of alternate months at 7.30pm in the Sports Pavilion and the dates of the meetings for the remainder of the council year are

Annual Assembly Thursday 26th April

29th May (Annual Meeting)

13.2 Planning committee meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of alternate months at 7.30pm in the Sports Pavilion.

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

..... Date

Signed (Chair)