
**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ashburnham with Penhurst Parish Council
held on Wednesday 31st July 2019 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Tina French, Andrew Hoad, Ron King, Zoe O’Sullivan, Jeremy Tucker-Wall and Richard White.

Parish Councillors absent: None

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

None

2. Disclosures of interest

No interests were declared.

3. Additional agenda items

The following items were decided by the Chairman as urgent and were added to the agenda (S.O. 10.1.2).

- 3.1 The Chairman announced that he wished to resign from the chair with immediate effect. As outgoing Chairman he proposed that Cllr Hoad become Chairman. Cllr King seconded the proposal and there being no other nominations Cllr Hoad was declared Chairman, signed the Acceptance of Office and assumed the chair.
- 3.2 The office of Deputy Chairman is, therefore, now vacant. Cllr King proposed and Cllr French seconded that Cllr White become Deputy Chairman. There being no other nominations Cllr White was declared Vice Chairman and signed the Acceptance of Office.
- 3.3 At 7.1.3.19, 20 and 21 recent invoices are presented for approval for payment.
- 3.4 At 9.2.3 a new Listed Building Consent application RR/2019/1685/L.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 29th May 2019 were circulated with the agenda. On the motion of the Chairman the minutes were adopted without amendment.

5. Open Forum

5.1 ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field reported as follows:

- 5.1.1 The closure of primary schools at Fletching and Broad Oak is out for consultation until mid October. The proposal is to close them before the start of the next academic year this autumn.

5.2 RDC Cllr Gary Curtis reported as follows:

- 5.2.1 The integration of the new domestic refuse collection service is proceeding without problems.
- 5.2.2 Speedwatch continues and the Catsfield co-ordinator, Keith Robertson, is trying to organise joint action with other villages. The police are also deploying more resources to speeding.

5.3 A member of the public, Mr Brian Thompson, and a senior member of his teaching staff attended in order to answer any questions that the Council might have relating to planning application RR/2019/1498/P.

The Chairman then changed the order of business (S.O.10.1.7) and moved to item 9. Planning before resuming at item 6.

6. Community Matters

- 6.1 Rural Broadband – the Chairman tabled a detailed report noting the failure of the Contract 3 database to materialise, the current disagreement between ESCC and their supplier, BT, and the failed attempt by residents at Brigden Hill to invoke a Community Fibre Partnership. The Chairman proposed that he and Andrew Wedmore request a further meeting with Becky Shaw, the Chief Executive of ESCC. **(Action: Chairman)**
- 6.2 Local Action Plan 2020 – 2025
The Chairman tabled a paper outlining a roadmap by which a new 5 year plan might be developed. All Councillors agreed this in principle. The main milestones are as follows:-
31 Jul – Initial list of themes generated
31 Aug – Final list of themes and adoption by leaders.
25 Sep – Theme leaders present detail to pc meeting.
31 Oct – Write up and consolidate into one document.
01 Nov – Communication and implementation.
- 6.3 Parish website
The clerk reported that the domain had been transferred to a new registrar, GoDaddy, in the name of the parish council.
A review of the authority levels of different authors is to be conducted. The clerk will review the topic with Tim Wakeling (web site host and administrator). **(Action: Clerk)**
- 6.4 Phone box
Cllr French reported that she now has the regulation paint and is seeking volunteers to carry out the refurbishment work by the end of September. **(Action: All)**
The clerk will check the contract of sale from BT for any restrictions on interior decoration.
(Action: Clerk)

7. RFO Report and Governance

- 7.1 RFO report
- 7.1.1 Receipts and payments On the motion of the Chairman members resolved to approve the tabled schedule for the months of June and July 2019. A copy will be posted to the website.
- 7.1.2 Bank reconciliation Members received the reconciliation (on file) as at 25 July 2019 and Cllr French, having been on line prior to the meeting, confirmed the bank statement.
- 7.1.3 Payments On the motion of the Chairman members resolved to authorise the following:
- 7.1.3.1 Renewal of subscription to AiRS Community Buildings Advisory Service, £120 plus vat.
- 7.1.3.2 Quarterly web site maintenance and hosting, Tim Wakeling, £45 (retrospective)
- 7.1.3.3 Clerk expenses March '18 to June '19, B P Holdstock, £94.98
- 7.1.3.4 Robins of Herstmonceux, shingle and top soil for pavilion, £1,092 plus vat (retrospective)
- 7.1.3.5 Douglas Andrews, new fingerpost at Mansfield Cross, £832.32 plus vat (retrospective)
- 7.1.3.6 R&M Fencing, boundary fence and gate, £854.40 plus vat.
- 7.1.3.7 Nigel Turner, window cleaning pavilion, £26 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.8 Amazon, key safe for pavilion, £10.99 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.9 Curtis & Shaw, combination padlock for pavilion, £29.40 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.10 C.Brewer & Son, finger post maintenance materials, £65.14 + £27.98 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.11 Jewson, fixings for benches at pavilion, £19.19 + £24.24 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.12 Nisbets, hand towels and toilet rolls, pavilion, £45.56 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.13 Amazon, fixing for benches at pavilion, £3.75 retrospective).
- 7.1.3.14 World of Flags, Sussex flags (3) for pavilion, £17.97 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.15 Upper Bridge Enterprises, domain hosting for half year, £24.00 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.16 Cotswold Seeds, grass seed for pavilion, £113.00 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.17 World of Watering, Gardena auto micro drip irrigation, £197.29 (retrospective).

- 7.1.3.18 GoDaddy, domain name hosting for 9 years, £128.79 plus vat (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.19 Curtis & Shaw, combination padlock and chain for new gate for pavilion, £37.50 (retrospective).
- 7.1.3.20 Meridian Marquees, marquee, £1125 plus vat less £375 from Appeal
- 7.1.3.21 PHS Group, 2 plant troughs at pavilion, £87 plus vat
- 7.1.4 Income and expenditure The RFO tabled a report (on file) against budget to the end of July 2019. There were no exceptional adverse variances.
- 7.1.5 Earmarked Reserves – the RFO tabled documents (circulated before the meeting and on file) showing the progress of earmarked reserves since they were created from zero in April 2018. Four reserves have been established for Finger Posts, Recreation Ground, Community and New Village Hall.
The proposed allocations were adopted and the current situation will be reported at each parish council meeting. **(Action: Clerk)**

7.2 Governance

- 7.2.1 Councillors' Lead Responsibilities (*The Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015/494*)
The Chairman tabled a document suggesting lead responsibilities for councillors. Members discussed these in the context of the Local Action Plan (6.2 above). The roles below were agreed in general terms with a view to start working on some detail within each area.
Cllr French – Care for our environment
Cllr Hoad – Rural broadband
Cllr King – Highways and Byways
Cllr O'Sullivan - Communication and Community
Cllr Tucker-Wall – Financial and governance oversight
Cllr White – New village hall
- 7.2.2 New village notice board (Penhurst) - it is proposed to position a board close to the boundary fence of the church and The Retreat where there is an area of no-man's land not claimed to be within the curtilage of either the highway or The Retreat.
Pricing proposals are to be obtained for the next parish council meeting for a notice board to be made of wood and glazed and large enough to display 6 sheets A4 size. **(Action: Clerk)**
- 7.2.3 Risk Assessment – a table was circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members adopted it as tabled with the following amendments.
The wording of the risk at the recreation ground is to be amended describing it as 'unauthorised occupation'.
The code on the padlock is to be changed periodically. **(Action: Clerk)**

8. Premises

- 8.1 New village hall - Cllr Richard White reported as follows:
- 8.1.1 **Planning and Design:** Pump House Design are shortly to lodge with RDC samples of bricks, tiles and cladding plus an exterior lighting scheme with an application for Discharge of Planning Condition. **(Action: Cllr White)**
- 8.1.2 **Construction:** the entrance widening enabling works have commenced with the main work scheduled for 20th August 2019. Space has been cleared for a shipping container for temporary storage during the construction phase. Cllr White will discuss with the Chairman the sourcing of the container. **(Action: Cllr White)**
- 8.1.3 **Funding:** Fund raising events in planning are the village bonfire night and some involvement with a proposed Jane Eyre ball at Ashburnham Place next spring **(Action: Cllr White)**
- 8.1.4 **Landlord and Legal:** A license for the widening of the existing entrance was granted in March 2019. Request for amendments to the lease (or possible new lease) to support the New Village Hall project was requested by the parish council in August 2018. This has not been agreed yet and is becoming critical to the project proceeding further. Update needed

from landlords agent. **(Action: Clerk)**

8.2 Pavilion and Sports Field

8.2.1 **Letting income** - the clerk reported that income from lettings is in line with budget.

8.2.2 **Pavilion maintenance** – the clerk advised that both the remaining original panel wall mounted electric heaters are to be replaced. One has ceased to work and it is more cost effective to replace both without waiting for the final one to fail. No other maintenance work is planned and further painting and decorating has been deferred until next year.
(Action: Clerk)

8.2.3 **Sports Field maintenance** – the clerk advised that all the work to the old pavilion slab area and the boundary fence with the road has now been completed.

8.3 Village Hall

8.3.1 More stone is to be rolled into the car park before the winter. **(Action: Cllr White)**

8.3.2 Surface water drains are to be investigated as there is some suspicion that surface water is draining into the septic tank. **(Action: Clerk)**

8.3.3 Painting of the barge boards will be undertaken this summer. **(Action: Clerk)**

9. **Planning** (*Updates in italics*) (considered in this meeting between items 5 and 6)

9.1 On-going applications

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. Significant changes were subsequently made and the application is now 'Approved conditional'.

RR/2019/855/P - Bunces Farm, Lakehurst Lane, Penhurst TN33 9PG - Proposed new barn for storage of machinery and meadow hay. *Parish Council has posted concern. Application refused. Appeal lodged 17 July '19 and recorded by RDC as 2646 and by DETR as APP/U1430/W/19/323341*

9.2 New applications

RR/2019/1242/P - The White Cottage, Brown Bread Street, Ashburnham TN33 9NX – Detached single garage. *Parish Council has lodged no objections. Remains undecided – decision due 29th July.*

RR/2019/1498/P - Distant Holding For Olivers Hill Farm, Olivers Hill, Lakehurst Lane, TN33 9PE - Change of use of existing care farm facility into a school.

and to bring forward agenda item 9, Planning, commencing with 9.2.2 - RR/2019/1498/P - Distant Holding For Olivers Hill Farm, Olivers Hill, Lakehurst Lane, TN33 9PE - Change of use of existing care farm facility into a school.

*The applicant Mr Thompson briefed the meeting on the current activities and teaching curriculum at the site and answered questions about the intended future activities. Having satisfied themselves regarding numbers on site and future development, members resolved unanimously that the application should be supported with the condition that numbers of students does not change. The Chairman agreed to visit the site on 01 Aug morning and to then email members with a report and proposed text of the council's response to RDC's consultation. **(Action: Chair / Clerk)***

RR/2019/1685/L - Ashburnham Place, (The Boat House), Ashburnham TN33 9NF - Convert redundant boat house and ancillary shed to over night accommodation and shower room. *While members understood that the building is currently unsafe and that the proposal will safeguard its future, they also resolved to register their view that this is a radical change of use and*

should require planning permission. (Action: Clerk)

9.3 Breaches and Enforcement –updates and progress noted

Neighbouring Parish (Catsfield): Land adjacent to Deer Park Lodge. *No Further Action – item closed.*

Buckwell Ghyll – alleged planning breach by virtue of residential occupation of motor home. *RDC Cllr Gary Curtis advised that the motor home in question has left the site. This item is therefore closed but the situation will be periodically reviewed as a different motor home has been reported in an adjacent field.*

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. Complainant parties are being kept informed directly by the Enforcement Officer.*

ENF/40/19 ASH - Oak Bank Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham – Unlawful extension of lawful development. *(11th March list) Officers have visited. Enforcement action continues. Complainant parties are being kept informed directly by the Enforcement Officer.*

9.4 Appeals

New appeal lodged 17 July 2019 against refusal of RR/2019/855/P Bunces Farm. Recorded by RDC as 2646 and by DETR as APP/U1430/W/19/323341.

10. Highways and Byways

10.1 Finger posts

Cllr King requested that the clerk send him a list of those known to have volunteered to ‘adopt’ a finger post. **(Action: Clerk)**

A quantity of painting materials has been obtained and the clerk has issued some to the ‘adopters’ of the two finger posts at Slivericks (post numbers 11 and 12). **(Action: Clerk)**

10.2 SLR meeting

The Chairman reported that the last meeting (23 July) was considered useful and new information about ways to influence the direction of future maintenance was obtained. One key objective going forward will be to encourage the public to more actively report road damage when they see it. **(Action: Cllr King / Clerk)**

The Chairman reminded the Council that it has the option to invite any area of ESCC to the SLR, not just the Highways team.

A link to the East Sussex Highways problem reporting website is to be put on the village website. **(Action: Clerk)**

10.3 Street Naming

The Chairman has written to the RDC Street Naming Officer (SNO) with the results of the public consultation made in early 2018 (on file) The SNO has acknowledged receipt and agreed in principle to make the changes that we have requested, subject to us providing substantive evidence that the public were properly consulted. **(Action: Chair)**

11. Correspondence received

11.1 From PKF Littlejohn (External Auditor)

Advance warning of a possible ‘Except for’ notice to be attached to the audit report to reflect the fact that when the assets were restated, the prior year should also have been restated.

11.2 From a resident

Angie Nettle asked what provision is to be made for a play area for children at the new hall. Members were aware of the need but expressed the view that it was too soon to make more than a very general commitment to some provision even if only a fenced play area without

equipment. **(Action: Clerk to advise resident)**

12. Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items

The Chairman advised that it was his intent to review with the clerk the order of agenda and preparation process for future meetings with the objective of retaining the quality of discussion whilst containing the length of the meeting whenever possible to less than 90 minutes.

13. Dates of Next Meetings

Members noted 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 - 2019: 25 Sep, 27 Nov; 2020: 29 Jan, 25 Mar, (Parish Meetings Thursday 23rd April), 27 May (Annual Meeting of the Council)

Members noted that 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)