
**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council of Ashburnham with Penhurst held on
Wednesday 30th March 2022 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Jay Ashworth, Andrew Hoad (Chairman), Chris Sinden, Richard White (Vice Chairman), Fraser Williamson.

Parish Councillors absent: Parish Cllrs Ron King, Paul Spicer, ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field

District / County Councillors present: RDC Cllr Gary Curtis

In attendance: Brian Holdstock, Clerk to the Council
1 member of the public

1) Apologies for absence

Parish Cllrs Ron King, Paul Spicer, ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field

2) Disclosures of interest None

3) Additional agenda items

a) At 6) b) Timber Yard planning

At 7) e) Additional payment to authorise and one amendment

At 9) d) Ukraine

b) On the motion of the Chairman seconded by Richard White, Fraser Williamson was co-opted to the parish council who then signed the Acceptance of Office form.

4) Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 26th January 2022 were circulated with the agenda. On the motion of the Chair the minutes were adopted without amendment.

5) Open Forum

a) RDC Cllr Gary White reported as follows

i) A Speedwatch meeting has been held between ESCC and Catsfield PC. The Chief Constable has set up a system whereby police officers who have time available, check on the Speedwatch list to see which parishes are active and then go to assist with speed monitoring.

ii) The planning system is in some turmoil after Westfield forced a judicial review of a Section 106 Agreement being disregarded. Planning consent for a housing development stipulated a 60/40 split between social and market priced housing but the housing association, Optimum, then proceeded with a development of 100% social housing.

iii) RDC are planning to make changes to the way planning applications are processed. The decision about whether or not an application decision is delegated or goes to full committee is to go to a new sub committee who will in effect triage applications. Cllr Curtis urged consultation with the parish clerk at Westfield for more information.

6) Planning (*updates or decisions in italics*)

a) Ongoing applications Current position:

RR/2021/1700/P - Ashbourne Oast, Kitchenham Road, Ashburnham TN33 9NA - Convert and extend garage building to create a holiday let with accompanying parking and landscaping. *Council has objected* *Approved with conditions.*

RR/2021/2072/P - Springside Farm, Herrings Road, Ponds Green, TN33 9FB - Widened access and agricultural use. (Retrospective) (Resubmission of RR/2021/52/P)

Parish Council objected.

Refused

RR/2021/2711/P - 1 Church Farm Cottages, Penhurst Lane, Penhurst TN33 9QP - Single storey side extension. *New drawings viewed on line. Members approved and will comment to that effect on line.*

Approved

RR/2021/2530/P - Furnace Cottage, The Furnace, Penhurst TN33 9PG - Proposed conversion of an outbuilding.

Parish Council supported.

Applicant has withdrawn application

RR2021/2956/P - Springfield, Forge Lane, Penhurst, TN33 9QR - Extensions to the front, side and rear of the property and alterations to existing dwelling.

Parish Council has posted support.

Remains undecided

RR/2021/2948/O - Ponds Green Bungalow, Ponds Green, Ashburnham TN33 9PA - Lawful development certificate for the proposed stationing of mobile home for ancillary use.

Parish Council supported.

Approved

RR/2022/36/O - Thornden Sawmill, Herrings Road, Ponds Green, TN33 9FB - Certificate of lawfulness for the existing static home on site which has been fixed to ground since occupancy.

Approved

b) New applications

RR/2022/28/P The Woodman's Yard, Penhurst Lane, Penhurst TN33 9BW - Demolition of existing storage building and construction of building for brewery production, parking, landscaping and associated works. Use of existing access and retention of existing buildings. *Councillors have visited. Members noted the massive support voiced on the Rother planning portal. Members confirmed their support for the application (already posted)* *Undecided*

c) **RR/2022/455/P** - Frankwell Farm, Brays Hill, Ashburnham TN33 9NZ - Erection of first floor side extension and balcony above existing porch.

Members viewed the application on line and resolved to post a comment that they are neither opposed nor supportive.

i) Breaches and Enforcement

(1) 1 Church Farm Cottage, Penhurst - possible breach of planning regulations regarding erection of oak building adjacent to the cottage. *Report: the clerk has spoken to the planning officer as instructed. Planning officers will now decide how to proceed.*

(2) Oak Bank Farm - possible breach of planning regulations in respect of siting of a temporary agricultural workers dwelling in contravention of planning application RR/2017/1522/P and Appeal APP/U1430/W/18/3204034. The clerk will write to the owners of Oak Bank Farm and ask how they intend to proceed with gaining approval.

7) **RFO Report**

a) Receipts and Payments

Members received the tabled schedule of receipts and payments for the period 20th January to 19th March 2022.

b) Bank reconciliation

Members received the bank reconciliation (on file) as of 19th March 2022.

c) Income and expenditure against budget

The RFO tabled a report (on file) against budget to 19th March 2022.

d) Earmarked reserves

The RFO tabled a report on movements in earmarked reserves for the year to 19th March 2022. The RFO drew members' attention to the inevitable overshoot of spend from the Community reserve due to unforeseen spend on broadband publicity, football goals, an additional marquee for the Platinum Jubilee and the damage to the notice board caused by Storm Eunice.

e) Payments to authorise

On the motion of the Chairman seconded by Cllr Sinden members resolved to authorise the following payments:

Details	Payee	£	+ vat £	Total £
PAYMENTS >£100 FROM BANK				
Accessibility website changes	Tim Wakeling	308.00	0.00	308.00
Qrtly maint plus accessibility final	Tim Wakeling	161.00	0.00	161.00
Country Fair marquee deposit	The Main Event Marquee Co	230.46	0.00	230.46
PAYMENTS >£100 BY DEBIT CARD				
Broadband flier printing	Dox Direct	106.71	0.00	106.71
Broadband flier postage	Royal Mail Group	568.92	0.00	568.92
Football Goals	Net World Sports	205.42	41.08	246.50
Windows pavilion 16 Nov 2021	Nigel Turner	26.00	0.00	26.00
Pavilion water	Castle Water	7.71	1.54	9.25
PAYMENTS <= £100 BY DEBIT CARD				
Postage for broadband mailing	Post Office	99.00	0.00	99.00
1L Sadolin Classic wood prot'n	Decorators Warehouse	16.63	3.33	19.96
Blue spray marker dye	Amazon	11.00	0.00	11.00
				1,656.84

f) Annual authorisations of regular periodic payments

Members approved monthly payments to Opus Electricity for the pavilion and to Microsoft for Office 365 and quarterly payments to Tim Wakeling for website hosting and maintenance.

8) Governance

- a) Annual Assembly The clerk reported that road side notices have been ordered, refreshments booked and village organisations invited to mount table top displays. The police will also be invited. Members requested that audio visual equipment be provided for the business meeting and discussed the agenda.
- b) RALC Annual subscription has been pegged at £30 for many years and RALC are seeking the consent of members to raise it to £40. Members agreed to pay a higher subscription of £40.
- c) Parish notice board The notice board at the chapel was all but destroyed by Storm Eunice. The doors and basic framework including the header board have been salvaged but everything else, including new posts and footings, needed to be replaced. Rob Dedman & Son completed the work today and the invoice is expected to be several hundred pounds.

9) Community - Village Action Plan & Lead Responsibilities

- a) Rural character preservation (Cllr)
No report
- b) Website and communications (Cllr)
The clerk reported that The Retreat at Penhurst is holding its annual open day on 11th June and has invited the parish council to mount a small table top display. Members agreed that this was a good opportunity to publicise the activities of the parish council and the clerk volunteered to man the stand for a period during the afternoon.

c) Affordable Housing (Cllr)

The Chairman plans to make one more attempt to engage with the planning process and will reach out to Amy Fearn asking that we be informed “when resources are available to carry out a needs survey.”

d) Environment, Sustainability & Wellbeing (Cllr)

i) New football goals have been purchased and placed in situ. The council expressed thanks to Clive O’Sullivan for sourcing one of the pair of goals on ebay at a much reduced price and for assisting with rapid installation. Already they are being used.

ii) Members discussed further provision of play equipment and Cllr Jay Ashworth showed pictures of a range of play activities which can simply be constructed from wood. Members resolved that, rather than source equipment ready made from commercial suppliers, they would ask a couple of local suppliers to bid for making something based on the photos. Cllr Ashworth will send photos to the clerk and he and the Chairman will each request bids from a local supplier whom they know.

iii) Ukraine - members discussed the possibility of making some active contribution to the support for Ukrainians displaced by Russia’s war on the country. In terms of any housing the Chairman noted that as there is no transport in the village which makes it unlikely any temporary accommodation would be approved.

Members noted the post by Gaye Hover on social median regarding a charity Aid for Ukraine-Eastbourne who are sending a truck weekly to the Polish/Ukrainian border. Donated materials can be dropped at Bexhill Hospital for tie in with Eastbourne DGH. The clerk was asked to contact Ashburnham Christian Trust to see what they are doing. Cllr White informed members that part of the funds raised by the Country Fair and Flower Show this year would go to support Ukraine.

e) Highways (Cllr King email report)

i) The Brownbread Street T-junction at Ponds Green has been completely resurfaced during a one day road closure.

ii) The DALLINGTON arm of the finger post in Herrings Road outside The Old Chapel has been knocked off by a vehicle. Before initiating repairs the clerk will ascertain the cost.

iii) The clerk was alerted by neighbours on Sunday 6th March that the new bridge parapet below Peltham Farm where Farthing Lane crosses a stream was being dismantled by Louke Van Der Meer in order to widen access for the transportation of two sections of mobile home. The structure was rebuilt later that evening but not to the standard of the new build carried out by East Sussex Highways. The clerk informed ESx Highways (Case 00666258: Bridge parapet down) and met a representative on site on Monday 7th March. The matter will be pursued at the next SLR meeting.

f) Rights of Way / Verges (Cllr Spicer)

i) In the absence of Cllr Spicer the clerk reported that Cllr Spicer has agreed with ESCC on the verges which are to be left uncut until the autumn in order to allow wild flowers to grow.

ii) Separately, ESCC are piloting a scheme in rural areas whereby the default position is to cut verges once only per year and to do it in the autumn. The exception will be any places where visibility splays need to be maintained. These will be cut to schedule, but additional cuts to remedy specific visibility hazards can be requested by the parish council at any time.

iii) The clerk reported that the Rights of Way Officer, Matthew Harper, has agreed to meet him on site to review the bridging of the stream on footpath ASH/9/1 just before the path emerges on Brownbread Street at The White Cottage.

g) Premises (Cllr White)

i) Pavilion

(1) The clerk tabled a list of duties of the Custodian of the playing field which forms the basis of the job specification. Jo Fowler has offered to carry out these duties for an

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- annual fee of £650. On the motion of the Chairman members resolved to appoint Jo Fowler as Custodian for a trial period of one year.
- (2) The Coffee Stop have requested permission to fix a book exchange box on an outside wall of the pavilion where books can be donated and borrowed. As the mobile library service has been discontinued it was felt this would go some way to make up for it. Councillors agreed provided the box is of sensible dimensions (600 x 400?) and the Coffee Stop are responsible for it.
 - (3) The clerk reported that the planned reinstatement of the verge in front of the war memorial will be undertaken in the next two months.
 - (4) The clerk reported that exterior painting of the windows and front door is under way.
- ii) Village hall - The AGM of the committee is on 17th May 2022 and members (the trustees) will vote on adopting a motion to appoint the parish council as sole charity trustee after which they would resign. The implications for the parish council are significant in terms of the governance arrangements which will need to be put in place in order to keep at arms length from parish council business any matters relating to the village hall.
 - iii) New village hall - further meeting of the steering committee to be arranged.
- h) Village events and facilities - Queen's Platinum Jubilee 4th/5th June (Cllr Sinden)
- i) The clerk reported on a successful bid for a grant of £500 from Rother District Council.
 - ii) Members discussed at length the arrangements so far. On the Friday evening of 3rd June PANTS are staging a review in the marquee celebrating each decade of the Queen's reign. Saturday is clear during the day and open for others to stage something. In the evening there is a barn dance and on Sunday the churches are organising a service of thanksgiving. Sunday is the day when street parties are taking place across the land and the churches are encouraging people to bring a picnic lunch to the playing field making it a community event similar to a street party.
 - iii) Although this is a community celebration and not a fund raiser, ticketing is still necessary for events such as the PANTS review and the barn dance in order to have a control of numbers. An online ticketing software package has been used in the past by PANTS and the Chairman will liaise with PANTS in order for them to ticket their event and for the same package to be used for the barn dance.
 - iv) In order to co-ordinate the weekend it was agreed that one person is needed to lead on each of the main activities. For the barn dance this will be Cllr Richard White, for the Sunday celebrations the Revd Gary Cregeen and for the PANTS review a nominated person is needed. The clerk will liaise with James Harris Hire for the provision of a sound system.
- i) Rural connectivity (Cllr Hoad)
- i) Strutt & Parker have been asked to write to their tenants urging them to pledge their vouchers. However, once they understood that pledging involves an unenforceable but implicit commitment to take a fibre service when it becomes available, they toned down their letter.
 - ii) Ninfield continues to be difficult to motivate and difficult to communicate with. Total pledges to date are only 26%. Ninfield has 260 properties and their support is critical if the target is to have any chance of being achieved.
 - iii) Street banners are another way of reaching people and a quantity has been ordered.

10) Correspondence

- a) The clerk reported on correspondence with Denis Keeley, Sam Ford, Ron Ridley, Angie Nettle, Mark Bott and Air Ambulance.

11) Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items

The Chairman informed members that before the next council meeting he will be tendering his resignation as a parish councillor owing to a number of new professional commitments he has taken on. He thanked members for their support and said how much he had enjoyed his term.

Members reciprocated in like manner and thanked him for his service. The clerk will proceed with the process of advertising a Casual Vacancy.

12) Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the parish council will be the Annual Meeting and will be held on Wednesday 25th May 2022 in the sports pavilion.

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Signed (Chair)

Date