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**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council of Ashburnham with Penhurst held on  
Wednesday 28th September 2022 at 7.30pm in the Ashburnham Sports Pavilion.**

**Parish Councillors present:** Cllrs Jay Ashworth, Ron King, Paul Spicer (Vice Chairman),  
Chris Sinden and Fraser Williamson.

**Parish Councillors absent:** ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field, Parish Cllrs Nicci Gagel and  
Richard White.

**District / County Councillors present:** RDC Cllr Gary Curtis.

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

The Vice Chairman chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chairman.

**1) Apologies for absence**

ESCC Cllr Kathryn Field, Parish Cllrs Nicci Gagel and Richard White.

**2) Disclosures of interest**

Cllr Chris Sinden declared a pecuniary interest in two planning applications at 6) b) for Red Barn  
Thatch as he is the applicant.

**3) Additional agenda items**

At 9) c) iii) (1) Council to consider purchase of shed.

**4) Adoption of Minutes**

- a) The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 27th July 2022 were circulated with the agenda.  
On the motion of the Chair the minutes were adopted without amendment.
- b) The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 were  
circulated with the agenda. On the motion of the Chair the minutes were adopted without  
amendment.

**5) Open Forum**

a) Expression of condolence

This being the first meeting since the death of the queen, members were united in wishing to  
record the Council's sadness at the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II and to send its  
condolences to members of the royal family.

b) RDC Cllr Gary White reported as follows

The controversial planning application for the construction of a Wunderhaus in the AONB at  
Sedlescombe, the subject of the parish council's recent extraordinary meeting, was discussed  
at the meeting of Rother District Council on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022. The council was invited to  
adopt a motion rescinding the granting of planning permission granted by its Planning  
Committee. Amid a disorderly meeting the Council refused to adopt the motion. Earlier that  
day the Secretary of State for Dept for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
communicated with the responsible Planning Officer directing that RDC do not grant  
permission for the Wunderhaus pending his consideration of calling it in for his decision.  
Cllr Curtis expressed serious misgivings about the procedural irregularities and the  
misinformation which has bedevilled this application from the start.

c) Traffic calming

Nicky Bishop, a member of the public, made a presentation to the council about traffic calming measures under schemes known as Quiet Lanes and Twenty's Plenty. She suggested that of the two schemes, Quiet Lanes was the less bureaucratic and more easily adopted route. The scheme focuses on giving priority to non-motorised road users in line with the most recent edition of the Highway Code. It has the support of Natural England, the Dept of Transport and CPRE.

Trial in Kent and Suffolk of measures to create greater awareness of the rights of non-motorised road users include signage at the entrance to an area and false cattle grids. Councillors made comments and asked questions. Several suggested that the parish council write to the Farm Yard Nursery asking them to speak to the parents dropping off and collecting their children as they are perceived to be some of the worst offenders in terms of inconsiderate and inappropriate driving.

Ms Bishop provided a briefing document which is being circulated to members. Members resolved to take the matter up at the next SLR meeting with Highways in November.

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

a) Ongoing applications *Current position:*

**RR/2022/849/P, RR/2022/850/L** - Horseshoe Cottage, Brownbread Street, Ashburnham TN33 9NX - Removal of existing timber clad addition, rebuild with increased footprint and with dressing-room in roof. Removal of modern internal partition wall.

*Members viewed the application and resolved to support it.*

*Refused*

**RR/2022/813/P** - The White Cottage - Land opposite, Brownbread Street, Ashburnham TN33 9NX - Retention of pond and associated earth works. Retention of hardstand next to pond and summer house. (Retrospective) New planting of indigenous species throughout the site.

*Members viewed the application on line and resolved to post a comment that the parish council takes a neutral stance on this application.*

*Undecided - remain on agenda*

**RR/2022/691/P** - Burnt Barns Farm, Freckley Hollow, Ashburnham TN33 9LZ - Conversion of existing garage into an osteopathic practice work studio. *Members viewed the application on line and resolved to post a comment that the parish council supports it.*

*Approved*

**RR/2022/1395/P** - Redpale Farm, North Road, Bodle Street Green, Ashburnham BN27 4RJ - Proposed entrance to the Redpale Barn and the Red pale farmhouse. Installation of two roof lights and the introduction of the bathroom replacing the tank room.

*Council has posted support.*

*Refused*

**RR/2022/1398/P** - Red Barn Thatch, Herring's Road, Ashburnham TN33 9PE - Proposed balcony extension and sitting room extension to existing holiday accommodation / annexe building.

*Members viewed the application and resolved to support it.*

*Refused*

**RR/2022/1732/P** - Thornden Sawmill, Herrings Road, - Erection of extension to machine shop and link to connect handle/sanding shed to wood store.

*Members viewed the application and resolved to support it.*

*Approved*

b) New applications *Determination of the council's response to consultation.*

**RR/2022/2204/P** - Red Barn Thatch, Herring's Road, Ashburnham TN33 9PE - Erection of solar panels within curtilage of Grade II Listed Building

Cllr Sinden declared a pecuniary interest and left the meeting.

*Members resolved to support the application on the grounds that the panels are only visible from the field behind the property and green energy generation should be encouraged.*

**RR/2022/2225/P** - Brays Hill Farm House, Brays Hill, Ashburnham TN33 9NZ - Erection of rear extension incorporating internal alterations to a previously approved and extant permission.

*Members were unable to form any view as there is insufficient information online. The same drawing is posted multiple times with different titles and comparison between DGC-22038-110 and -111, which might indicate the changes, is not possible.*

**RR/2022/2231/P** - Red Barn Thatch, Herring's Road, Ashburnham TN33 9PE - Proposed balcony extension and sitting room extension to existing holiday accommodation / annexe building.

Cllr Sinden declared a pecuniary interest and left the meeting.

*Members viewed the application which is a revision to the refused application*

*RR/2022/1398/P. They noted the revised materials and elevations and deletions of the extensive glazing and replacement with conventional windows to match the existing. They resolved to support the application believing that it has addressed the concerns raised in the refusal decision notice.*

**RR/2022/2026/PN3** - Church Farm, Penhurst Estate, Penhurst Lane, TN33 9QP -

Notification for Prior Approval for the change of use to building 1 from agricultural to C1 (Hotel/Guest house) and a change of use from agricultural to B8 storage and distribution to building 2 and 77m<sup>2</sup> of its associated curtilage.

*Members were made aware that this is not a planning application so planning policies are not considered. Assessment is not based on whether or not the proposal is appropriate, but whether or not it complies with the criteria pertaining to the relevant General Permitted Development Order. Correspondence with a concerned resident, Andrew Hoad, was discussed and members resolved that their and his concerns be amalgamated into a letter to the planning officer as comments on the PN notice.*

c) **Breaches and Enforcement** – to note updates and progress.

- i) **ENF/262/22/ASH** – Oak Bank Farm, Farthing Lane, Ashburnham RR/2012/1053/P – Erection Of New Dwelling Without Planning Permission In Relation To Refusal Of RR/2017/1522/P. *Waiting on further enforcement action.*
- ii) **ENF/303/20/ASH** - Springside Farm, Herrings Road, Ashburnham, TN33 9PE - Change of use of agricultural land to store materials for business use. *Latest action: Contra Notice Served, deadline for response has passed. 10th June 2022. Members understand that the land owner is in dialogue with RDC planning and is complying with requirements.*

7) **RFO Report**

a) **Receipts and Payments**

Members received the tabled schedule of receipts and payments for the period 21st July 2022 – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

b) **Bank reconciliation**

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

c) **Income and expenditure against budget**

The RFO tabled a report (on file) against budget to 19<sup>th</sup> September. There are no new variances since those reported to previous meetings.

d) **Earmarked reserves**

The RFO tabled a report on movements in earmarked reserves for the year to 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022. The RFO asked for a decision on the source of funds for the following two items –

- i) The Bell Orchestra was engaged to play on the evening of the Country Fair at a subsidised cost of £325. Cllr Ashworth said that she doubted that the Country Fair committee would have agreed to it had they been asked. Other members noted that the Country Fair has already benefited from the Parish Council paying for the flower show marquee. After discussion the matter was put to a vote and all were in favour of splitting the cost 50/50 with the Village Hall Appeal Fund.
- ii) Second hand kitchen equipment has been obtained from a site which was going to scrap it. It is a substantial amount of equipment made entirely of stainless steel and thought to have a replacement value of £70,000. The recommendation to purchase, at a cost of £400, came from members of the New Hall Steering Group. On the motion of the Chairman members resolved that it should be charged to the New Hall earmarked reserve as there are no competing plans for spending this year's allocation to the earmarked reserve.

e) Payments to authorise

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

Details	Payee	Budget head	Total £
Pavilion cleaning Apr - Jum	Carol Lovett	Pavilion and Grounds	202.50
Finger post repairs	Douglas Andrews	Reserve: Finger posts	1260.32
Purchase of goal on eBay	Clive O'Sullivan	Reserve: Community	100.00
Internal audit	Mulberry & Co	General administration	198.00
Book of Condolence	/Shaw & Co	Pavilion and Grounds	59.94
			1,820.76

**8) Governance**

- a) A date was set for a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes committee to discuss the first draft of the budget for 2023/24. The meeting will be held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022.
- b) It was noted that some topics of interest to the parish council have no lead and no correspondent. In particular, housing and public transport are yet to find a lead.

**9) Community - Village Action Plan & Lead Responsibilities**

a) The human world and society

i) Communications (Cllr Ashworth)

Members discussed the pros and cons of publishing the dates that village shoots operate. All were in favour of not publishing but encouraging shoot organisers to make those residents most affected aware of the dates. Members are aware that this already happens.

ii) Rural broadband (a correspondent) – no new information, still waiting on government policy statement.

iii) Village events (Cllr Sinden)

The following events are in the diary - 29<sup>th</sup> October garage sale Street Cottage; 11<sup>th</sup> November Village Bonfire; 13<sup>th</sup> November Remembrance Sunday service; 19<sup>th</sup> November Arts Coffee Morning Village Hall; 18<sup>th</sup> February 2023 Quiz Night Village Hall. In addition there is a programme of village walks.

iv) Police liaison (Cllr Williamson)

Cllr Williamson attended a police liaison Teams meeting where the road traffic accident at the entrance to Ashburnham Place was discussed. There was confirmation that, being a derestricted road, it was not possible to involve Speedwatch. However, members believe that more could be done by way of information and signage. It was resolved that Cllr Williamson and the Clerk will confer and develop some proposals to put to the next SLR meeting with Highways in November when the Traffic & Safety Manager would normally be in attendance.

v) Phone box museum (Cllr Gagel) *nothing to report*

vi) *Public transport (a correspondent) nothing to report*

vii) *Public health: defibrillator (Cllr Sinden) nothing to report*

viii) *Public health: exercise facilities (Cllr White) nothing to report*

b) The natural world

i) Verges (Cllr Spicer)

It is the time of year to review the Highways pilot scheme which desisted from mowing any rural verges until the autumn in order to promote wild life. Members had not received any adverse comments from members of the public and Cllr Ashworth noted that there were wild flowers evident which were in addition to those in the designated and protected verges. Members were unanimous in asking Cllr Spicer to request an extension to the pilot scheme.

- ii) Rights of way (Cllr Spicer) *nothing new to report*
- iii) Environment: Litter (Cllr Ashworth) – another litter pick will be organised in due course.
- iv) Environment: Ecology and climate change  
There is no designated correspondent and so Cllr Ashworth agreed to take a lead. She is aware that there is much online support from sites including the RSPB.

- v) *Environment: Aircraft noise (a correspondent)*  
The correspondent is Andrew Hoad and Cllr Ashworth reported that he has drafted a letter to Huw Merriman M.P. in his role of Chairman of the Transport Select Committee. She noted that the contents of the letter, which urges that the Gatwick holding stack be moved out to sea, is quite technical, but suggests that this is entirely appropriate given the nature of the product.

Members discussed the matter and resolved that the letter be sent from the parish council and signed by its Chairman, Cllr White. However, open (editable) copies should be sent to the neighbouring parishes of Brightling, Dallington and Mountfield urging them to send their own versions of the letter. Furthermore, a template could be put online urging members of the public to write on their own authority.

c) The built environment

- i) Highways (Cllr King)

Salt containers in strategic locations at hills have all been filled.

The next SLR meeting is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> November and a number of topics are emerging. Traffic calming and Quiet Lanes has already been mentioned. In addition, the clerk recently visited Brays Hill after a local resident, who lives at the bottom of the hill, called him to say that the drainage arrangements (gulleys and ditch), are all blocked. The clerk has alerted Highways but it is clear that their two yearly cleaning cycle is nowhere near adequate. It needs a more robust arrangement to carry the water to Huggets Stream which crosses the road a very short distance away.

- ii) *Housing (a correspondent)*

- iii) Premises (Clerk)

(1) Pavilion and grounds – Now that the verge reinstatement is complete, Highways will be asked at the SLR meeting to complete the adjoining carriageway repairs.

Members discussed the purchase of a shed to house the cricket club mowers and a number of options were viewed on line. Members resolved to vote a budget of £500 and charged Clive O’Sullivan and Bernard Baker (cricket club captain) to find something suitable.

(2) Village Hall – a new activity group has started with a monthly session of short mat bowls. The equipment is almost new but has lain unused in the boiler cupboard for some 20 years.

(3) New Village Hall – The New Hall Steering Group is now meeting regularly and minutes of the most recent meeting have been circulated to members.

10) **Correspondence**

- a) Paul Rees, VMCC branch Chairman, emailed his gratitude for the catering arrangements at their concours this year and expressed the hope that this would be a regular annual booking.
- b) Andrew Hoad, regarding RR/2022/2026/PN3 (discussed at 6) b) above.

11) **Information for Councillors / Future Agenda items**

None

12) **Date of Next Meeting**

The next ordinary meeting of the parish council will be on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022.

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Signed (Chair)

Date .....