

ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Etchingam Parish Council
held on Thursday 15th October 2020
at 7.30pm under strict Covid-19 regulations

Members Present: Cllrs, J Barnes (in the Chair), Mrs M Barnes, Mr S Barrow Mr R Beeney, Mr C Boylett and Ms R Turner.

Also present: Mr Paul Stott - Chairman of ETSR - and Mr Nicholas Smith - Trustee of ETSR – and Ms P Barton – Clerk to the Council, there were no other members of the public.

The Chairman explained that the Parish Council meeting was a meeting held in public but not a Public Meeting. Any person present wishing to speak about any item on the agenda should do so under agenda item 6 'Public Time'. There would not be any other opportunity for the public to speak at the meeting.

2149. Apologies for Absence:

There were apologies for absence from District Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green, which were accepted.

2150. Minutes of the previous meetings:

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 17th September 2020 having been previously circulated, were agreed and signed as a correct record of that meeting.

2151. Declarations of Interest:

Cllr. J Barnes declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 12, Village Community Halls as a Trustee of ETSR and that he is now appointed first substitution should a member of RDC Planning Committee be absent.

Cllr. M. Barnes declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 12, Village Community Halls as a member of the Parochial Church Council and reminded Council that she is a member of the RDC Planning Committee.

Cllr S Barrow declared a personal interest in the planning application to be considered under 8a.

2152. Etchingam Parish Council – Dispensations

The Clerk confirmed that no written requests for dispensations had been received.

2153. Chairman's Announcements:

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

2154. Public Time:

- a) ESCC has adopted the East Sussex Outbreak Control Plan working through the Health & Well Being Board. It has been decided that, even though there will be a deficit at year end to be met from reserves, there can be no further cuts. While there are no guarantees this will mean relying on HM Government support.
- b) RDC now has a sole CEO in Malcolm Johnson as Dr Tony Leonard leaves his post. Revenue is down while expenditure is up and reserves are falling more quickly than anticipated. This current financial year is viable but next year and beyond will be very difficult.
- c) None.
- d) As no members were to be excluded this right was not exercised.

2155. Parish Matters:

a) **Village Amenities:**

i) ETSR – A preliminary forecast for the next six months was presented by Mr Paul Stott, Chairman of ETSR, supported by Mr Nicolas Smith, a Trustee, for consideration by Council as Custodian Trustee as well as Guarantor of the lease for the Community Halls. He reported that in the half year prior to Lockdown 1 ETSR was in profit and the forecast was to break even at least or a small profit by year end. However, despite making all possible cuts and applying for all available aid there is a loss, month on month, of £1,500 so that by April 2021 – if no contingency plan could be found – ETSR would be forced to close, ceasing all operations and pass responsibility for its outgoings etc to the Guarantor i.e. the Parish Council.

ETSR asked Council to consider creating a financial support package to enable ETSR and the Community Halls to continue in its current form so full operations could be resumed as soon as it was legal to do so. Complete closure would incur virtually all the current costs falling to the Guarantor (EPC) and the possibility of a huge loss to the local community long term.

Council was asked to consider working with ETSR to create a Rolling Program of financial support, a total amount to be agreed within the Financial Year commencing 1st April 2021 to that financial year end or cessation of restrictions and resumption of normal working practices, with provision for a transition period if that is deemed necessary, whichever comes sooner. ETSR will provide a monthly update and only request draw down of funds as necessary. It was suggested that quarterly might be appropriate.

A question and answer session followed.

Thanking Council for their time Mr Stott and Mr Smith left the meeting.

Further discussion and resolution will be made under agenda item 12, Village Community halls.

- ii) ***It was Resolved that the 'rent holiday' for the tenant of The Old Stores continue for another month, to be reviewed thereafter*** but that the Clerk would speak with the tenant regarding payments going forward.
- iii) For Queen's Garden and Viper ***it was Resolved that the monthly inspection reports be approved.***
- iv) ***It was Resolved to defer the Autumn Clean Day for the foreseeable future, Covid restrictions making the logistics very difficult.***
- v) ***It was Resolved that the 'old' Village website be updated as recommended.***
- vi) ***It was Resolved that ESCC Highways should continue to undertake additional grass cuts in 2021-2022 at an additional cost to EPC as during 2020-2021.***
- v) The Clerk reported under 'consideration of any other matters' that trees on Council land at the junction of Fysie Lane and Burgh Hill were causing problems with the Openreach overhead telephone wires and it was Council responsibility to correct this. ***It was Resolved that the Clerk should instruct the tree surgeon to undertake this work as urgently as possible.***

There were no other matters to consider.

b) **Children and Young People:**

- i) Cllr Turner had nothing to report this month.
- ii) Cllr Boylett presented the report on ERGT fundraising for the playground which had been previously circulated and is on file. The report was approved and accepted. ***It was Resolved that the second bank account held with Barclays Bank for 'playgrounds' – not the HSBC account lodged with the Charities Commission – could be closed as it no longer had a purpose. Funds would be transferred to the HSBC account.***
- iii) Cllr Lambert proposed that the Playground Working Party be disbanded as current Covid regulations prevent the opportunity for it to undertake its role. ***It was Resolved that the Working Party be disbanded.***
- iv) There were no other matters to consider.

c) **Highways, Footpaths and Community Safety:**

- i) A 'virtual' SLR meeting is to held on 26th October.
- ii) Cllr Boylett's Speedwatch reports were presented to the meeting, having been previously circulated and they are on file. The reports were approved and accepted. The local police are supporting are often as they can.
- iii) The latest Police newsletter reminds residents that as shorter days come in security lighting might be worth considering as a deterrent to burglars and vandals.
- iv) There was nothing to report on footpaths.
- v) An informal check will be made by councillors of their 'local' salt bins prior to icy weather conditions. There were no other matters to consider.

d) **Environment and Other issues:**

There is a raw sewage problem opposite the Willow Close drain, it will be reported.
There were no other matters to consider.

2156. Planning:

Cllr Mary Barnes reminded Council that she is a member of Rother District Council Planning Committee and Cllr John Barnes reminded Council that he is now listed as a substitute member of Rother District Council Planning Committee should there be an absentee. Cllr Barrow also reminded Council that he had a personal interest in the application to be considered so would take no part in proceedings, he was not required to leave the room.

- a) RR/2020/1213/P - 1 Clulow Cottages, High Street. **It was Resolved that there was no objection to this application.**
- b) In order to complete the consultation document on the Planning White Paper **it was Resolved that Cllr John Barnes, assisted by Cllrs Lambert and Beeney, be delegated to complete this work.** There were no other matters to consider.

2157. Finance

- a) Authorisation of payments – the Clerk presented the accounts for payment to the Council.

Payments October		TOTAL PAID
P Barton	Salary & Expenses Oct 2020 inc backdated pay award from 1/4/2020	3,430.96
L Worton	Salary & Expenses September 2020	128.73
HMRC	Qtr 2 PAYE & NI contribution due	857.33
NetwiseUK	Website package & support to 21/11/2021	300.00
RALC	Ann sub to Rother Assoc of Local Councils	30.00
Etchingham CE School	Refund of payment for new office IT equipment	685.37
Invicta Law Ltd	Legal fees & disbursements re Lease - Community Halls	887.04
Co-Op Bank	Auto Charge Fee Sweep	30.00
Crane Designs Ltd	NP Mthly charge for hosting site DD 06/10/2020	15.00
Crane Designs Ltd	EPC Mthly charge for hosting site DD 06/10/2020	15.00
Focus Group	DD 23/10/2020 Office Phone to 28/09/2020	23.18
	Total Payments	£6,402.61

It was Resolved that the payments for October 2020 be approved and that proof of the BACs payments together with copies of the relevant invoices be signed by two councillors to comply with Financial Regulations and best practice as soon as possible.

2158. The Emma Beeney Award for Outstanding Service to the Parish of Etchingham

Liaison between Cllr Lambert and Cllr Boylett regarding text for the website page continues. The Clerk was authorised to purchase the suggested trophy (shaking hands) and then arrange the attachment of a plinth.

2159. Etchingham Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk, as Acting Secretary to the NP Steering Committee, reported that there was no change to status since last month.

2160. Village Community Halls

Cllrs J & M Barnes reminded the meeting of their personal interest in ETSR.

The proposal made by ETSR was discussed, including advice received from Council's solicitor confirming the legality of agreeing to such a proposal under either s137 or s19. **It was Resolved that the RFO would budget for a full financial year's support in 2021-2022 and that this be available to ETSR to draw down quarterly during that year to the total figure agreed.**





- 2161. To receive Reports from Members and Representatives and pass such resolutions as may be necessary:-**
- a) SSALC – no meetings to report but the AGM is to be held soon.
 - b) RALC – again speeding and how to address the problem was discussed. The police are trying to make more officers available to assist and discussion on the Black Cat apparatus continued.
 - c) There were no other meetings or Conferences attended by the Members or the Clerk.

2162. Correspondence
All correspondence having been distributed by e-mail upon receipt there were no further items to discuss.

2163. Etchingam Parish Council – Notification to members of Council decisions:
There were no notifications.

2164. Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Thursday 19th November at 7.30pm
As noted through the above minutes.

Signed.....*AB*.....

Date.....*19.11.2020*.....