

ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Etchingham Parish Council
held on Thursday 15th April 2021
at 7.30pm via Zoom

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

Also present: Ms P Barton – Clerk to the Council, District Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green and a member 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.

The meeting commenced with a one minute silence called by the Chairman to honour HRH the Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh.

2240. **Apologies for Absence:**
There were no apologies for absence.
2241. **Minutes of the previous meetings:**
The Minutes of the Meetings held on Thursday 18th March 2021 having been previously circulated, were agreed and signed as an accurate record of that meeting.
2242. **Declarations of Interest:**
Cllr. J Barnes declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 13, Village Community Halls as a Trustee of ETSR and that he is now appointed as a substitute should a Conservative member of RDC Planning Committee be absent.
Cllr. M. Barnes declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 13, Village Community Halls as a member of the Parochial Church Council and reminded Council that she is a member of the RDC Planning Committee.
2243. **Etchingham Parish Council – Dispensations**
The Clerk confirmed that no written requests for dispensations had been received.
2244. **Chairman's Announcements:**
There were no announcements.
2245. **Operation Forth Bridge**
The appropriate action has been taken on the website and notices posted on the other EPC social media sites, including the E Bulletin. Discussion and a decision regarding the planting of a commemorative tree in QG to be deferred to the July meeting
2246. **Public Time:**
- a) This being the pre-election period County Cllr Barnes had nothing to report.
 - b) Similar restrictions being in place for RDC only on-going issues to be reported. The costs of the new Town Hall for Bexhill have been referred to the Scrutiny Committee. Affordable housing remains a high priority along with Eco credentials for all new build. Discretionary Grants are being made available to businesses looking to restart after the lifting of Covid restrictions.
 - c) The member of the public took the floor and asked for a detailed explanation of the rise in rate for the Parish compared to other parishes and rateable authorities. The Chairman explained that the over-riding issue had been the likelihood at the time of setting budget and requesting the Precept that ETSR would be forced through lack of funds to call on the Parish Council to honour its position as Guarantor and Custodian Trustee and take back the Community Halls. It was resolved that a better outcome would be for EPC to offer a grant, only to be called down through the financial year as necessary, to enable ETSR to continue to manage the Community Halls rather than to incur the same cost and have to take on management of the Halls in addition. The subsequent booking of the Hall/s as a vaccination centre by the NHS was not known at that time. In addition, two new accounting conventions were also imposed on EPC to complete its budget calculations which have necessitated a small rise as well as further unexpected fabric repairs to the shop premises. As there is no way to reimburse residents, assuming ETSR will not need to call down any of the grant given the new circumstances, EPC has resolved that the remaining portion of this grant up to and including 100% of the amount will be 'Ear marked' for a specific use of benefit to the village and not remain in general reserves. The actual project is to be resolved at financial year end.
The member of the public suggested, and this is already in hand, that EPC communications need to be more timely and visible. EPC should also consider working more closely with the tenant of the shop to assist the local profile of the business.
 - d) As no members were to be excluded this right was not exercised.
2247. **Parish Matters:**
- a) **Village Amenities:**
 - i) As Covid restrictions seem to be easing more quickly than feared discussions with the tenant will commence shortly.
 - ii) The Monthly Inspection Reports for the playgrounds were accepted. The issues with the agility trail will be investigated further.
Before any action is considered over the concrete block causing difficulties with the Viper fence the various utility companies will be contacted to make sure it is nothing to do with them.
 - iii) As face to face Parish Council meetings must commence after 7th May and the Parker Hall will not be available until mid-August at the earliest, after discussion, the Clerk was asked to secure the Etchingham club premises for exclusive use of the forthcoming meetings. It was **Resolved that the rate per evening offered should be accepted.**
There were no other matters to consider.
 - b) **Children and Young People:**
 - i) Cllr Turner had nothing new to report from the school.

- ii) Cllr Boylett did not present a written report to this meeting but said that with a change to Give as You Live's administrative arrangements it would be for the Council to reclaim Gift Aid. The Clerk to check with Charity Commission and HMRC how to facilitate.
 - iii) There were no other matters to consider.
- c) **Highways, Footpaths and Community Safety:**
- i) The next SLR meeting will take place virtually on 19th April so a report will be given at the next meeting. Road markings will be completed on the repaired lengths of A265 during May.
 - ii) As the Speedwatch sessions are still suspended because of the Covid restrictions there is no report this month.
 - iii) Cllr Boylett has not received the monthly reports from Rother Police and from the PCSOs yet so they will be circulated as soon as available.
 - iv) Unfortunately due to sickness the Clerk had been unable to attend the monthly meeting for PCSOs, clerks and interested councillors, as there are no follow up notes there was nothing to report.
 - v) There were no known issues with footpaths.
 - vi) There were no other matters to consider.
- d) **Environment and Other issues:**
There were no other matters to consider.
- e) **Communications:**
The next Councillor article having already been received, Council was asked if any particular issue of the magazine would be their choice for their page. Cllr Turner suggested that as she holds the portfolio for Children and Young People she would like to take the Christmas issue. There were no other requests so a roster will be set up.

2248. **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 Conservative member of Rother District Council Planning Committee should there be an absentee

- a) RR/2021/205/P- Badgers Wood, Myskyns Road. *It has been confirmed that the groundwork required to support the additional parking area is not being visible from the public highway.*
RR/2021/272 & 273/P – 2 Church Cottage, High Street. Following a site visit by the EPC Planning Committee, which reported to Council, *it was Resolved that these two related applications could be supported.*
- b) The removal of the industrial unit placed on the agricultural land adjacent to Church Lane has been completed.

2249. **Finance**

- a) The annual audit has been briefly postponed and will be completed after the next meeting in May.
- b) Authorisation of payments – the Clerk presented the accounts for payment to the Council.

Payments April		TOTAL PAID
P Barton	Salary & Expenses April 2021	1292.70
L Worton	Underpayment Feb 2021 of expenses	227.99
L Worton	Salary & Expenses March 2021	61.60
Zurich Insurance	Annual Premium EPC Insurance	970.24
Air Ambulance	Donation towards 2 specialist ventilators	150.00
The Etchingham Trust for Sport and Recreation	Contribution to running costs of the Parish Office 1/3/2021 - 31/08/2021	500.00
Surrey Hills Solicitors LLP	Legal advice re ETSR Trust and powers to make contributions and grants	240.00
HMRC	Qtr 4 PAYE and NICs	1,405.93
Etchingham Church	Ann donation towards upkeep of churchyard	500.00
East Sussex County Council	4 additional urban cuts 2021-2022	265.20
Steve Millea	Contribution to cost of MailChimp for E Bulletin	174.27
Crane Designs Ltd	NP Mthly charge for hosting site DD 08/04/2021	15.00
Crane Designs Ltd	EPC Mthly charge for hosting site DD 08/04/2021	15.00
Total Payments		£5,817.93

It was Resolved that the payments for April 2021 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.

2250. **Etchingham Neighbourhood Plan**

Work progresses on the Plan and discussions are held regularly with RDC. A June date for Reg 14 is being worked towards.

2251. **The Emma Beeney Award for Outstanding Service to the Parish of Etchingham**

The trophy with an oak plinth will soon be returned to enable the first engraved plaques to be affixed to name the recipient and the year of presentation. If turn around can be arranged the award will be made at the Annual General Meeting if Covid Regulations allow.

2252. Village Community Halls

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

All the issues surrounding the Lease are finally resolved and it has been signed by all parties and registered with the relevant authorities. A signed copy is with the clerk for safekeeping along with other Council legal documents. Sincere thanks were made to the many people who have worked on bringing this to a final conclusion.

The future of the old school site is still being discussed between ESCC and the Diocese.

2253. To receive Reports from Members and Representatives and pass such resolutions as may be necessary:-

- a) ESALC – Cllr J Barnes reported that, as planned, East Sussex ALC began to operate on 1st April 2021.
- b) RALC – following Cllr Lambert’s resignation there is still a vacancy for a rep along with Cllr J Barnes who remains in position. The main focus of RALC at present is on pedestrian and driver road safety. Discussions with the Police and with ESCC Highways continue at a high level. RDC is arranging a Planning Conference. It is hoped to shorten the backlog of planning applications.
- c) There were no other conferences or meetings attended.

2254. Correspondence

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

2255. Etchingham Parish Council – Notification to members of Council decisions:

There were no notifications.

2256. Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Thursday 23rd May 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom

As noted through the above minutes.

Signed.....

Date.....23.V.2021