

ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual General (Statutory) Meeting of Etchingham Parish Council
held on Thursday 18th May 2023 at 7.00pm The Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft, Etchingham

Members Present: Cllrs: John Barnes (in the Chair), Mary Barnes, Sid Barrow, Colin Boylett, Trevor McGregor and Roma Turner.

Also present: P Barton – Clerk to the Council. There were six members of the public.

2630. Declaration of Acceptance of Office by all Members duly appointed in an Uncontested Election on 4th May
Were duly completed, signed and confirmed in the presence of the Proper Officer save for Cllr Beeney and it was resolved to accept his Declaration as soon as it was possible.

2631. Election of the Chairman. There being a single nomination for Cllr John Barnes he was unanimously elected to the office of Chairman.

2632. Apologies for Absence:

There were apologies for absence from County Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green and Cllr Rob Beeney which were accepted.

2633. Declaration of Acceptance in respect of the Chairman.

Was duly completed, signed and confirmed in the presence of the Proper Officer.

2634. Election of the Vice-Chairman. There being a single nomination for Cllr Trevor McGregor he was unanimously elected to the office of Vice-Chairman.

2635. Declaration of Acceptance in respect of the Vice-Chairman.

Was duly completed, signed and confirmed in the presence of the Proper Officer.

2636. Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Other Registerable Interests.

The forms were collected to be completed for onward transmission to the Monitoring Officer Rother District Council.

2637. Declarations of Interest:

Cllr. M. Barnes reminded Council that she is a member of the RDC Planning Committee.

Cllr. J Barnes declared that he is the substitute Conservative member of RDC Planning Committee.

2638. Etchingham Parish Council – Dispensations:

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

2639. Review of Portfolio and appointment of Portfolio Holders.

The previous list remains unchanged but a new portfolio has been added: Climate Emergency, the holders to be Cllrs Barrow and McGregor. The new list to be published on the website. Also attached Appendix I.

2640. Election of Representatives to Outside Bodies.

- a) East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC) – Cllrs J and M Barnes
- b) Rother Association of Local Councils (RALC) – Cllr J Barnes and R Turner

2641. Schedule of Meeting dates for 2023/2024. Were circulated and agreed. To be published on the website. Also attached as Appendix II.

2642. Minutes of the previous meetings:

To record that the AGM in 2022 could not be held due to it being inquorate. This has been minuted and authorised by the Chairman presiding who signed said minutes on 22nd July 2022.

2643. Chairman's Announcements:

The Chairman had no announcements to make except that while this meeting was a meeting held in public it was not a Public Meeting. Any person present wishing to speak about any item on the agenda should do so under agenda item 15 'Public Time'. There would not be any other opportunity for the public to speak at the meeting.

2644. Public Time:

- a) In her absence County Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green submitted her report which is available on file.
- b) Cllr John Barnes reported that borrowing in order to 'balance the books' cannot continue indefinitely. In order to make savings some larger parishes are being asked to take on services previously provided by RDC.
Post-election, there is still a 'hung' council and while there will probably be changes within Cabinet the leadership remains with Rother Association of Independents. There were no questions.
- c) TESAG has received an initial response from ESCC Highways regarding its submission which falls somewhat short of total acceptance. Accepting some of the 'cut backs' in order to proceed with those that remain will allow the project to proceed and not preclude resubmission (e.g. 20mph zone around the school).
- d) There were no comments or questions from the members of the public.
- e) As no members were to be excluded this right was not exercised.

2645. Finance:

- a) It was decided that the review of annual pay for the staff be taken in closed session following the next monthly meeting on 15th June.
- b) The renewal of the Insurance Policy was acknowledged and to be paid as it is the final year of a 5-year contract.

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

May 2023			
		VAT	TOTAL PAID
PCC	Grass cutting of churchyard, as this is a public green space.		600.00
PCC	Part sponsorship of Village Fete		300.00
Etchingham Music Festival	Part sponsorship of the Opera Supper		750.00
BACT	Support for voluntary local transport group		120.00
Rural Rother Trust	Support for local charity		50.00
CPRE	Annual donation		60.00
Etchingham Improvements Committee	Part sponsorship of village Coronation event and commemorative mug for every child resident		1000.00
KSS Air Ambulance Charity	Double donation as appeal arrived too late for 2021-2022		300.00
1066 Line	Grant for purchase of 2 planters for Station platform		400.00
Etchingham Primary School	Commem item for each child in school		650.00
Focus Group	Final bill on office phone	0.98	5.90
B Online Ltd	Monthly payment due to broadband supplier		32.91
B Online Ltd	Monthly payment due to broadband supplier		32.91
EDF	Electricity for Shop		15.00
EDF	Electricity for Shop		15.00
Paulette Barton	Salary & Expenses for May 2023		1799.04
Olga Bilai	Salary & Expenses for May 2023		381.90
Laurence Worton	Salary & Expenses for April 2023		74.95
Bistro@the Station	Coffee and cake x 11		34.80
Bistro@the Station	Coffee and cake x 10 (various hot drinks)		142.00
Bistro@the Station	Various hot drinks and rolls		79.95
Zurich Town	Insuriance		1155.68
English Heritage Gardens	Tree planting	133.60	801.60
Bistro@the Station	Coffee and cake x 18		55.00
Total Payments			8856.64

It was Resolved that the payments for May 2023 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.

2646. Parish Matters:

a) Village Amenities:

- i) Village Shop/The Old Stores: The Clerk informed Council that another offer had been received and there is possibly another to follow.
- ii) The Monthly Inspection Reports for the playgrounds were accepted. The new playground build has now reached the point where the new surfacing is about to be laid.
- iii) Cllr Boylett had submitted his report on ERGT fundraising which was approved and is available on file.

- b) **Highways:**
Balfour Beatty seem to have made a good start as the new sub-contractors but have a huge backlog to manage. The local Highways Steward is pleased with progress so far.
- c) **Community Safety:**
There have been a number of shed break-ins and thefts of catalytic convertors relatively locally, full details on the website.
Speedwatch continues successfully, new volunteers have been would be welcomed achieving 20 or so sessions in the month, mainly around school hours.
- d) **Environment and Other issues:**
A very bad sewage leakage into the River Dudwell has been reported to the Environment Agency. The EA have tested the water.
There is a blockage in the culvert under the railway line that must be addressed. Network Rail/Railtrack aware.
The new drainage work in Church Lane is working well but as there is still work to be done by Network Rail/Railtrack.
The MP will be approached to try and get his support to ask the EA to dredge the River Rother, a much longer-term answer to this localised flooding.
With permission from the Chairman, a member of the public reported successful negotiations with Network Rail/Railtrack which have achieved the promise of a 90% reduction in lighting levels at the station only activating to higher levels when sensing movement.

2647. Planning:

Cllr Mary Barnes reminded Council that she is a member of Rother District Council Planning Committee, Cllr John Barnes is also a substitute member of the Rother District Council Planning Committee.

- a) RR/2023/782/FN : Kitchenham Farm, Sheepstreet Lane : Application to determine if prior approval is required for the proposed erection of an agricultural building. Noted by the Council as this notification was purely for information.
- b) (i) The chairman gave a brief update on Beech Farm. The Secretary of State has decided not to call in the Application. This is disappointing but matters will continue to be monitored. (ii) A 'watching' brief will be maintained on New House Farm and adherence to the planning conditions regarding ' events. (iii) The latest revisions to the Neighbourhood Plan are currently with RDC which will be opening its new Local Plan up for discussion in September/October.

2648. To review Etchingham Parish Council Policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

It was Resolved that a new policy be prepared to address Climate Change, the clerk to work with the Portfolio Holders.

Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Fixed Assets Register to be top priority and review completed at the earliest opportunity.

2649. Correspondence

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

2650. Etchingham Parish Council – Notification to members of Council decisions:

There were no notifications.

2651. Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Thursday 15th June 2023 in The Parker Hall at 7.30pm not mentioned in the minutes above.

Signed By the Chairman original held on file

Date..... 15th June 2023

APPENDIX I

Etchingam Parish Council Portfolio Holders 2023/2024

PORTFOLIO			Total No. of Holders	Vacancies
H.R. (Personnel)	John Barnes Roma Turner		2	0
Property Management	Robert Beeney Trevor McGregor		2	0
Environment	Sid Barrow Robert Beeney		2	0
Climate Change	Trevor McGregor Sid Barrow		2	0
Children & young people	Roma Turner Mary Barnes		2	0
Highways & Transport	Colin Boylett John Barnes		2	0
Financial Management	Robert Beeney Trevor McGregor		2	0
Council Communications	John Barnes Colin Boylett		2	0
Senior Citizens	Mary Barnes		1	0
Community Safety & Police Liaison	Colin Boylett John Barnes		2	0
Flood Warning	Colin Boylett		1	0
OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES				
Speedwatch Coordinator	Colin Boylett			
Strengthening Local Relationships (with ESCC)	John Barnes Colin Boylett			
Planning Committee	John Barnes Sid Barrow Colin Boylett Roma Turner			
Etchingam Recreational Ground Trust (Queen's Garden & Viper). Registered Charity Number 1093289	Etchingam Trust for Sports & Recreation Registered Charity Number 1076642		JB/CB/MB/SB/RB/TM/RT Both ERGT & ETSR.	

May 2023

**APPENDIX II
ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING PROGRAMME 2023-2024**

Thursday	18 th May 2023	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Annual General 'Statutory' Meeting & ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.00 p.m. & 8.00 p.m.
Thursday	15 th June 2023	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	20 th July 2023	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	17 th August 2023	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	21 st September 2023	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	19 th October 2023	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	16 th November 2023	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	14 th December 2023	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	18 th January 2024	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	15 th February 2024	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	21 st March 2024	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	18 th April 2024	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	7.30 p.m.
Thursday	16 th May 2024	FULL COUNCIL MEETING Annual General 'Statutory' Meeting & ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft	Times to be confirmed

Please note that all Parish Council meetings are advertised on the Village Notice Board, the Etchingham Village website and via the E-Bulletin. If you wish to receive an agenda direct, or any other relevant papers, please register your e-mail address with the Parish Clerk.

In addition to the above monthly meetings, the Parish Council is sometimes required to convene Special Meetings. These meetings are also open to the public and details of any such meetings will be published in the same way as the regular meetings.