

ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Etchingham Parish Council
held on Thursday 17^h August 2023 at 7.30pm The Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft, Etchingham

Members Present: Cllrs: John Barnes (in the Chair), Mary Barnes, Colin Boylett, Trevor McGregor and Roma Turner.
Also present: County Cllr Eleanor Kirby- Green, P Barton – Clerk to the Council. There was one member of the public.

- 2682. Apologies for Absence:** Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Rob Beeney and Sid Barrow, which were accepted.
- 2683. Minutes of the previous meeting:**
The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th July 2023, having been previously circulated, were agreed and then signed as a true and accurate records of those meeting.
- 2684. 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.
- 2685. Etchingham Parish Council – Dispensations:**
The Clerk confirmed that no written requests for dispensations had been received.
- 2686. Chairman’s Announcements:**
The Chairman had no announcements.
- 2687. Clerk’s Report:**
The Clerk confirmed that the surplus junior goal post set had been collected for use by the Swan Meadow Recreation ground. A donation to ETSR will be made in due course. Zurich insurance has confirmed that it has closed the file on the subsidence claim previously made by 1 The Orchard. Answers are still awaited from the Environment Agency regarding required surveys prior to granting a permit for work to on the river wall at the Old Stores. As the hedges in Viper were becoming a problem the caretaker has done some minimal work to avoid danger to users and passers-by.
- 2688. Public Time:**
- a) County Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green reported that she has received confirmation that the urgently needed road repairs to both Fysie and Ludpit Lanes is on the ESCC Highways works schedule for the next financial year (2024-25). More funding is coming through, £5M to capital and extra to go into revenue. The new contractor, Balfour Beatty, continue to give good service and currently 90% of potholes are at least being inspected. Flexibus continues to be under-utilised, more information is promised for Parish council and clerks, including hard copies of leaflets and posters is promised.
 - b) Cllr John Barnes reported a typical summer period with little to report. Legal opinion has been obtained regarding New House Farm but this has yet to be discussed. The coalition has now officially been reformed.
There were no questions for either speaker.
 - c) Cllr Boylett spoke on behalf of an absent MOP. She informed EPC that a tree branch had come down and was in a dangerous position near the footpath entrance on Church Lane. That the footpath sign is broken and lying on the ground. That the gullies were still blocked and non-operational between Church Lane and Barnfield. And asked how Gray Nicolls could be made to complete the necessary work on their land. County Cllr Kirby-Green confirmed that ESCC is currently carrying out an Enforcement process in order to do this. Cllr Boylett undertook to pass this information back to the MOP.

Cllr McGregor had been asked to raise the issue of the oak pedestrian gate into Queen's Gardens being self-closing. The Clerk will talk to both the annual safety inspector and also to the EPC insurers, Zurich.

The Council notice board situated at the Post Office needs a substantial repair to one of the doors.

d) As no members were to be excluded this right was not exercised.

2689. Parish Matters:

a) Village Amenities:

- i) Village Shop/The Old Stores: The Clerk will ask Zurich to confirm in writing why the repairs to the river wall cannot be subject to a claim. The Clerk will also chase the Environment Agency for an answer to the query regarding surveys necessary to gain a permit for the job to be properly put out to tender and for work to commence.
- ii) The Monthly Inspection Reports for the playgrounds were accepted and are on file. Cllr Boylett has all reusable materials from the broken notice board and will store until required. ***It was Resolved to ask the council handyman to assess if he can expedite the repair and if not to find another carpenter as quickly as possible. To report the broken footpath sign in Church Lane to ESCC.***
- iii) There were no other matters to consider.

b) Children and Young People

- i) Cllr Turner reported that the Ofsted results would be made available to the public in September.
- ii) Cllr Boylett had submitted his report on ERGT fundraising which was approved and is available on file. He stated that the current month's contributions were 8 out of 10 from Sainsbury's.
- iii) There were no other matters to consider.

c) Highway, Footpaths and Community Safety

- i) The general consensus was that the new sub-contractor is continuing to show an improved service on the outgoing.
- ii) ***It was Resolved that the Clerk should draft an email to the existing committee members explaining the current situation and plans going forward.*** There is unlikely to be anything further from ESCC until after 11th December the date when ESCC will review the Etchingham proposals.
- iii) Cllr Boylett had submitted his Speedwatch report which is on file. Volunteers are still being actively sought.
- iv) Cllr Boylett reported that he is still waiting for the month's report from the PCSO and hopes to have it and the following month available for the next meeting.
- v) There were no other matters to consider.

d) Environmental and Other issues

There were no issues to report.

e) Communications

Cllr McGregor agreed to be appointed as the second representative to the Northern Rother Parish Councils Group to support Cllr John Barnes.

2690. 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) **To consider and make recommendations on local planning applications as follows:**
There were no planning applications to be considered for Etchingham
- b) **Any other planning matters:**
It was Resolved that EPC would respond to the RDC call for land to be considered for Gypsy & Traveller sites in the negative as it does not own any suitable land or property at this time. It was also Resolved that should it be required to comment on the planned upgrade of telecoms equipment at Squibbs Farm it would offer no objection.

2691. Finance:

- a) The schedule for Receipts and Payments for August was presented and approved.

Paulette Barton	Salary & Expenses for August 2023	1671.52
Olga Bilai	Salary & Expenses for August 2023	317.04
Laurence Worton	Salary & Expenses for July 2023	44.12
Bistro @ the Station	Coffee & Cake club x 13 19 th July 2023	44.20
S E Landbased Training Courses LLP	One day LANTRA course for Handyman/Lineman	184.80
Richard Pelham	Affixing gate stop, QG & Churchyard	40.00
HMRC	Qtr 1 PAYE & NICS	1594.34
Mulberry & Co	Services rendered in connection with a provision of policy review	171.60
PWLB	Half-yearly payment to PWLB	6724.44
B Online Ltd	Monthly payment due to broadband supplier	40.06
EDF	Electricity for Shop	23.00
	Total Payments	10855.12

- b) There were no other financial matters to consider.

2692. Review of Etchingham Parish Council Policies and Latest Consultations

- a) **Employee Handbook:** as ***it was Resolved that, while approving the Handyman and the Administrator Job Descriptions and Contracts of Employment, the Job Description and Contract of Employment for the Clerk/RFO should be subject to further scrutiny by the HR Portfolio holders and their findings brought to the next meeting to be reviewed by the full Council. Once approved then the Codes, policies, statements and protocols can be checked against these documents to ensure conformity between all the various documents.***
- b) **Job Description and Contract of Employment for the Clerk/RFO:** as detailed above these documents were not approved but were taken away for further scrutiny and re-presentation to Council at the next meeting.
- c) **RDC Consultation on Housing Allocation Policy.** Deferred from the July meeting, ***it was Resolved that the new draft Policy was an improvement on the old more clearly and in so doing better prioritised housing need. Further comments will not be made.***

2693. To receive reports from Members and Representatives passing such resolutions as may be necessary

- a) **ESALC** – while there has been no recent meeting Keith Stevens has now taken the Chair as, sadly, the previous Chairman has died.
- b) **RALC** - no meeting held.
- c) No other meetings or conferences had been attended by either members or the Clerk.

2694. Correspondence

The correspondence with Mr David Halliday continues and after discussion with County Cllr Kirby-Green (in attendance) it was confirmed that if ESCC Highways is not minded to progress any further with Mr Halliday’s suggestion for enhanced gritting there is nothing further the Parish Council can do at this time. While the provision of a second grit bin in the vicinity is welcomed its date of installation and exact site are not yet known. Also, of course, when needed it requires the good offices of willing and able residents to take advantage of either or both bins, which is not a given.

2695. Etchingham Parish Council – Notification to members of Council decisions:

There were no notifications.

2696. Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Thursday 21st September 2023 in The Parker Hall at 7.30pm not mentioned in the minutes above.

There were none other than those listed throughout the minutes.

Signed By the Chairman original held on file

Date..... 21st September 2023