

ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Etchingham Parish Council

held on Thursday 19th October 2023 at 7.30pm The Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft, Etchingham

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

Also present: P Barton - Clerk to the Council and a member of the public.

2712. Apologies for Absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Roma Turner and County Cllr Eleanor Kirby- Green which were accepted.

2713. Minutes of the previous meeting:

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st September 2023, having been previously circulated, were agreed and then signed as a true and accurate records of those meeting.

2714. 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.

2715. Etchingham Parish Council - Dispensations:

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

2716. Chairman's Announcements:

The Chairman had no announcements.

2717. Clerk's Report:

The Clerk reported briefly (report on file) on progress across a number of active projects which will be minuted in full through this agenda. On the subject of repairing the fence on Station Approach extending from Viper towards the Station ***it was Resolved that the handyman be instructed to carry out this minor repair for the safety of pedestrians using the footpath.***

2718. Public Time:

- a) County Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green, although absent, had issued her report in advance which had been circulated. She particularly wished to highlight the County's push to find more people willing to foster and to adopt children currently in their care.
- b) Cllr John Barnes reported that at Rother District Council despite its savings plans there is still a £3.8M gap in the net cost of services. The new program board is having to make unpopular cuts to address this including reducing the number of public conveniences in Bexhill, Rye and Battle. Although all services are being scrutinised, as 70% are statutory, it is not easy to find where savings can be achieved. The use of increased IT services will hopefully help. The Local Plan is running late.
- c) The member of the public was attending in order to present his planning application for Russets, Straight Mile and answer any questions in advance of it being discussed and decision of EPC resolved later in the Agenda. This duly took place and the outcome minuted under Planning.
- d) As no members were to be excluded this right was not exercised.

2719. Parish Matters:

a) **Village Amenities:**

i) Village Shop/The Old Stores:

Cllr McGregor, under his delegated authority, met with the Environment Agency and th two

immediate neighbours. It was agreed that a solution using gabions would be acceptable but the draft plan presented still required some minor adjustment. The work definitely required a Flood Risk Activity Permit. A list of possible statements/surveys to support the application is needed and quotes are being sought on the cost of the permit and Structural Engineer.

- ii) The Monthly Inspection Reports for the playgrounds were accepted and are on file. Sourcing replacement caps and screws is ongoing. A Working Party of Cllrs McGregor, Mary Barnes and the Clerk to establish the correct procedure to adopt a lay-by, in respect of the one in Church Lane, and the cost, including the likely on-cost.
 - iii) Bids against Community Grants to also come under the aegis of the above Working Party.
 - iv) The Clerk was authorised to continue to explore the possibility of hiring out the Recording Studio/Practice Room to the RVA Outreach team.
 - v) There were no other matters to consider.
- b) Children and Young People**
- i) Cllr Turner reported that the Ofsted results have been made public.
 - ii) Cllr Boylett that GAYL remains consistent. The full report is on file.
 - iii) There were no other matters to consider.
- c) Highway, Footpaths and Community Safety**
- i) Residents are reporting the nuisance being caused by a horsebox that seems to parking permanently in Oxenbridge Lane as it rises towards the A265. The PCSO will be asked if there is anything she can do. The drains that should be taking the overflow from the ESCC drains on Church Lane itself are still not cleared. Answers continue to be sought.
 - ii) ***It was Resolved that the Council would adopt Option 2 for the ESCC grass cutting season 2024, i.e. pay for two extra cuts.***
 - iii) Cllr Boylett had submitted his Speedwatch report which is on file. Volunteer sickness and holidays continue making it difficult to fill all the potential rota sessions.
 - iv) Cllr Boylett submitted the reports from the Rother Police and our PCSO, a quiet month. The full report is on file.
 - v) There were no other matters to consider.
- d) Environmental and Other issues**
- There were no issues to report.
- e) Communications**
- The administrator and Clerk continue to work on updating the website to hold all necessary Council documents now required, particularly in advance of the Interim Audit.

2720. 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:**
- RR/2023/1526/P : Russets, Straight Mile : Erection of replacement hay and machinery store for agricultural and equestrian use incidental to the main dwelling and engineering operations for the construction of sand school for private use. Following further discussion based on the MOP's information supporting this application ***it was Resolved that EPC would support this application.***

RR/2023/2039/P : Shortridge Farm, Sheepstreet Lane : Demolition of existing dwelling, barn and garage to be replaced with 1 x new 4-bedroom dwelling and attached garage. This was discussed at some length and ***it was Resolved that EPC would comment on its concerns regarding the high level***

of visibility from the road and that if demolition is granted then the original building should be properly documented prior to this. It queried whether the design complied with the High Weald AONB guidelines, with particular regard to the garage and the amount of hardstanding. It would not otherwise object.

b) Any other planning matters:

- i. The response to the consultation on the High Weald Management Plan to be delegated to Cllrs Barnes and the Clerk.
- ii. There were no other planning matters to consider.

2721. Finance:

- a) The Qtr 2 Bank Reconciliation was presented and approved.
- b) The schedule for Receipts and Payments for October was presented and approved.

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| Paulette Barton | Salary & Expenses for October 2023 | 2275.23 |
| Olga Bilai | Salary & Expenses for October 2023 | 396.30 |
| Laurence Worton | Salary & Expenses for September 2023 | 272.81 |
| NALC | Membership fee | 52.04 |
| Bistro @ the Station | Coffee & Cake Club coffee and tea for 13 people | 36.35 |
| Co-Operative Bank | Auto Chg Fee Sweep D/D 05/10/2023 | 30.00 |
| B Online Ltd | Monthly payment due to broadband supplier (October) | 36.84 |
| EDF | Electricity for Shop | 23.00 |
| Total Payments | | 3122.57 |

2722. Review of Etchingam Parish Council Codes, Policies, Statements and Protocols. And any other Consultations.

- a) **i and iv** The Employee Code of Conduct and Lone Working Policy were presented and approved for review as required.

i and iii The Health and Safety Policy and Risk Management Policy were presented and approved but with review after 3 months (February 2024)
- b) **Job Description and Contract of Employment for the Clerk/RFD:** the Clerk was reminded that the Contract of Employment had already been approved. However, the Job Description remains under discussion.
- c) **The RDC public consultation** As there were no changes to polling districts or polling places affecting Etchingam **it was Resolved to offer no objection.**

2722. To receive reports from Members and Representatives passing such resolutions as may be necessary

- a) **ESALC** - the AGM will be held on 14th November.
- b) **RALC** - a meeting was held, items included agreement that the new Highways contractors seemed to be doing a better job than the previous.
- c) No other meetings or conferences had been attended by either members or the Clerk.

2723. Correspondence

None received not already circulated.

2724. Etchingam Parish Council - Notification to members of Council decisions:
There were no notifications.

2725. Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Thursday 14th December 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

Dated.....14th December 2023