

ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Etchingham Parish Council
held on Thursday 18th January 2024 at 7.30pm The Parker Hall, Parsonage Croft, Etchingham

Members Present: Cllrs: John Barnes (in the Chair), Mary Barnes, Rob Beene, Trevor McGregor and Roma Turner.
Also present: County Cllr Eleanor Kirby- Green and P Barton – Clerk to the Council. There were no members of the public.

2750. Apologies for Absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sid Barrow and Colin Boylett which were accepted. Best wishes were conveyed to Cllr Boylett whose absence was occasioned by an injured shoulder.

2751. Minutes of the previous meeting:
The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th December 2023 having been previously circulated, were agreed and then signed as a true and accurate records of that meeting.

2752. 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.

2753. Etchingham Parish Council – Dispensations:
The Clerk confirmed that no written requests for dispensations had been received.

2754. Chairman’s Announcements:
The Chairman had no announcements.

2755. Clerk’s Report:
The Clerk did not present a report as all current matters were already on the agenda.

- 2756. Public Time:**
- a) County Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green reported that reserves would have to be used in order to balance the budget due to the huge increase in the cost of adult social care. Gritters are currently in full use and 2 more gangs have been allocated to pot hole repair. A survey is to be undertaken of Fysie Lane. There may be delays to work on Burgh Hill. The drain outside Woodpeckers, Straight Mile continues to cause problems as do a number of drains on Sheepstreet Lane.
 - b) Cllr John Barnes reported that the RDC increase in rate is likely to be 2.99%. £2.8M savings need to be made but cannot be accomplished this year so there will be a call on reserves. A new permanent Finance Director should be in situ by the end of March.
 - c) No members of the public being present there were no items raised in person but a MOP had asked a Cllr to check on the progress with Network Rail regarding flooding to houses in Church Lane, the broken Footpath Sign between the Gray Nicolls pond and the Barnfield Ind Estate and the dangerous pavement outside Ladyfield in the High Street. Cllr Kirby-Green undertook to look into these issues.
 - d) As no members were to be excluded this right was not exercised.

- 2757. Parish Matters:**
- a) **Village Amenities:**
 - i) Village Shop/The Old Stores: Cllr McGregor has asked for a Method Statement from another company and is also still waiting this document from the first company approached.
 - ii) The Inspection Reports on Queen’s Gardens and VIPER were accepted and possible work to a TPO oak requested by the resident at #6 Orchard to be progressed with RDC.

iii) Work progresses on the drawings to establish if Planning Permission is required and also to apply for an RDC grant towards an Eco-loo for Queen's Gardens.

iv) ***It was Resolved that a Lamp of Peace be purchased for use on the D Day anniversary and afterwards as appropriate.***

v) There were no further matters to report.

b) Children and Young People

i) Cllr Turner had nothing to report regarding the school.

ii) Cllr Boylett had tabled his report which had been circulated regarding ERGT donations which was accepted without questions and is on file.

iii) Council noted that ETSR had resolved to charge a nominal rent (to be discussed) for the Recording Studio/Rehearsal Room to the Outreach Group. Council agreed that it would be willing to receive an application for a s137 grant from the Outreach Group in the next round of grant giving.

iv) The project to install a memorial seat in QG has been delayed due to ill health on the treasurer for the donor group.

There were no other matters to discuss.

c) Highway, Footpaths and Community Safety

i) Apart from issues minuted under 2756 a & c which Cllr Kirby-Green is progressing there were no further issues.

ii) Cllr Boylett had tabled his report regarding Speedwatch which was accepted without questions and is on file.

iii) Cllr Boylett had not received a report from Rother Police and/or PCSO in time for the meeting.

iv) Cllr Turner offered her help in revitalising the Black Cat project, working with the Clerk.

There were no further matters to discuss.

d) Environmental and Other issues

There were no matters to discuss.

e) Communications

i) Cllr John Barnes will write the next EPC piece for the Parish Magazine on the Budget 2024-2025.

ii) There were no further matters to report.

2758. Planning:

Cllr Mary Barnes reminded Council 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 Etchingham applications listed for this meeting.

b) Any other planning matters:

RR/2022/840/P & RR/2022/2690/P : Demolition of storage building & roadway. Construction of carbon negative live work unit, parking and restricted curtilage. Addition of landscape & biodiversity enhancements to the wider site and new access to the B2244. Stopping up of access to the northern boundary of the site. ***As it is understood these two items are due to be subject to reapplication with a deadline on comments before the next Parish Council meeting the Clerk was delegated to strongly object to both reapplications in similar vein to the strong objections to the original applications.***

The structures in Burgh Woods continue in residential use without permission. Sited approximately 40mtrs into the woods just beyond the Etchingham boundary in Hurst Green. As What 3 Words can be used to pinpoint the site this will be established so that the Clerk can raise an enforcement query. Cllr M Barnes undertook to ask Hurst Green to follow up with an Enforcement request of its own.

It was Resolved that as the Government Consultation on Street Vote Development Orders did not include the AONBs EPC would not be responding.

2759. Finance:

- a) The amended Draft Budget for 2024-2025 was presented to Council. The Budget was accepted and ***it was Resolved to set the Precept figure for 2024-2025 at £82,000. Regretfully an unavoidable increase of £19.75 per annum or £1.65 per month at Band D.***
- b) The schedule for Receipts and Payments for January were presented and approved

TOTAL RECEIVED		0.00
		TOTAL PAID
Paulette Barton	Salary & Expenses for January 2024	2312.99
Olga Bilai	Salary & Expenses for January 2024	426.30
Laurence Worton	Salary & Expenses for December 2023	22.34
HMRC	Q3 PAYE & NI payment	2429.47
Bistro @ the Station	Coffee & Cake Club for 8 people	23.15
Bistro @ the Station	Coffee & Cake Club for 13 people	36.45
SLCC	Event fee	36.00
Mulberry & Co	Consultancy service	289.20
Co-Operative Bank	Auto Chg Fee Sweep	30.00
B Online Ltd	Monthly payment due to broadband supplier (December)	38.14
EDF	Electricity for Shop	45.00
	Total Payments	5689.04

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

2760. Discussion and resolution on any response to the New Local Transport Plan (deadline 25th February) will be deferred to the February meeting.

2761. To receive reports from Members and Representatives passing such resolutions as may be necessary

- a) **ESALC** – the EPC representative was unable to attend.
- b) **RALC** - there was no meeting
- c) **A Housing Development Event** was held in Bexhill, Cllrs J & M Barnes attended and reported useful contributions from all members of the expert panel and noted in particular that in many instances developers were ‘sitting’ on sites because of the slow response times experienced from all the utility companies.

No other meetings or conferences had been attended by either members or the Clerk.

2762. Correspondence

The clerk reported notification that morning from Balfour Beatty that the repairs to Fontridge Lane were imminent. Local residents have been notified.

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

2763. Etchingam Parish Council – Notification to members of Council decisions:

There were no notifications.

2764. Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Thursday 15th February 2024 in The Parker Hall at 7.30pm.

There were none other than those listed throughout the minutes.

Signed By the Chairman – original held on file

Date..... 15th February 2024