

# ETCHINGHAM

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

### Minutes of the Etchingham Annual Parish Meeting

held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016

at 8.00pm in the Parker Hall, Etchingham

**Members Present:** Cllrs. Mr J Barnes, Mrs M Barnes, Mr S Barrow, Mr F Brophy, Mr C Boylett, Mrs A Childs and Mr G Lucas.

**Also Present:** P Barton – Clerk to the Council; and nine members of the general public.

#### **01/16 Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from District Cllr R Elliston, Mr Paul Stott and Mr Charles Copland

#### **02/16 Minutes of the previous meeting:**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

#### **03/16 Matters arising:**

There were no matters arising.

#### **04/16 Chairman's Annual Report 2016:**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Mrs Mary Varrall the previous Chair of EPC, Rev Jean Manning representing the United Benefice and Mr Robert Banks from Burwash. The Chairman's Report had been published in the Annual Report, copies of which were available from the clerk. It will also be available in full on the Village Website.

The Chairman said that as budget cuts at both County and District go deeper more will be expected of the community. These cuts have also impacted on the level of grants being requested of EPC by village groups and associations. Choices had to be made and this was never easy. ETSR meanwhile has seen levels of receipts higher than anticipated and is very close to 'breaking even' – many new clubs and activities are taking advantage of the new Community facilities to the benefit of the village as a whole.

Thanks were given to the District Councillors and the Parish Councillors for their hard work throughout the year. The Speedwatch team were also thanked for their contribution to village safety. Nicky Menzies was also thanked for the excellent service she unstintingly gives in running the E-Bulletin which now had a distribution of over 400.

The Report was approved and adopted unanimously.

#### **05/16. Etchingham Annual Report 2016:**

The Clerk thanked all the contributors to the Annual Report for their hard work and interesting reports. Individual contributions were available via e-mail from the Clerk.

#### **06/16. Report and/or Notices from the Parish Clerk:**

The Clerk had no further reports or notices at this time but confirmed that a copy of the Annual Report would be sent to County Archive.

**07/16. Public Time:**

Questions were asked about parking arrangements at the new Community Halls and also about a facility to 'black out' the Parker Hall for slide shows. Comments were also raised at the excessive heat in Parker Hall Cllr John Barnes undertook to pass the comment and questions to ETSR but did mention that Cllr Boylett has the facility and has offered to convert slides into digital format so they can be displayed on the LED screen if speakers would find this useful.

The issue of the Lease situation for the school and halls was raised and Cllr John Barnes updated the meeting, negotiations are on-going and attention is being paid to the scenarios around school closure and if there was a change to Academy status for the school. Cllr Childs took the opportunity to explain that a close partnership already exists between the schools at Etchingham and Bodiam but that ESCC would require formalisation to create a 'federation'. All efforts remain focussed on an equitable outcome.

The question of road safety, particularly with reference to the siting of the new school, was raised and a brief discussion followed. A pedestrian crossing near the Post Office was discussed but unlikely to proceed, however Parish Council undertook to investigate further. A query as to whether a Neighbourhood Plan might be useful in pushing forward road safety issues was raised. Work proceeds with making a Neighbourhood Plan for Etchingham but while road and traffic issues would be part of the discussion it would not be the primary purpose.

The current status of the site on the corner of Church Lane and the High Street was raised and discussed. Parish Council will work with the Tree Officer at RDC to endeavour to get the owner, at the very least to tidy up the site while his Planning Application is processed.

Council was asked what plans there were to celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, apart from the celebration drink after the meeting. They were pleased to confirm that a new bench to commemorate the event had been commissioned and a grant from RDC secured to fund it. A grand 'unveiling' would take place at the Annual Flower & Dog Show. Should other village organisations wish to celebrate in some way then Council would be willing to consider limited support. A special commemorative booklet would be given to the school children and the Church is holding a Pets' Service on 12<sup>th</sup> June to honour the Queen and her great love of animals.

**08/16. Date of next Meeting:**

To be advised.

**09/16.**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9pm thanking all for their attendance and inviting them to join in raising a loyal toast to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday

**Signed** .....

**Date** .....