

ETCHINGHAM

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Etchingham Annual Parish Meeting

held on Thursday 20th April 2017

at 7.00pm 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 twenty-nine members of the general public.

The meeting opened by Mr Frank Smith, Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Etchingham Neighbourhood Plan introducing Donna Moles of Moles Consultancy, the appointed consultants to the Etchingham Neighbourhood Plan. Her presentation followed outlining the history of Neighbourhood Plans, the role they play in local democracy, how they work and how it applies to Etchingham.

Having thanked her, questions were taken from the floor. Further clarification was sought and given on the selection of suitable sites for development, the likelihood of changes in the current Development Boundary (Village Envelope) and a better understanding of the whole consultation and referendum process. Having only received confirmation from RDC that afternoon, assurances were given that the 9 dwellings to be developed on the previous Bracon site could be deducted from the minimum requirement of 30. The future of the old school site cannot be firmly established until the Lease negotiations around the new school and community buildings are complete.

Concluding this part of the meeting with further thanks and applause for Donna, she retired. Additionally, some members of the public left the meeting at this point, twelve remaining.

01/17 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from District Cllr R Elliston and 4 residents.

02/17 Minutes of the previous meeting:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21st April 2016 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

03/17 Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.

04/17 Chairman's Annual Report 2017:

The Chairman welcomed everyone and thanked the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee for its work to date. He also thanked the District Councillors, in particular for their endeavours to overturn the planning consent to build on the corner of Church Lane and the High Street which, whilst ultimately unsuccessful, had resulted in stringent conditions being attached to the development. Careful scrutiny continues on applications looking for change of use to holiday accommodation ensuring this to be appropriate and compliant with the rules. Efforts also continue to enhance road safety, better parking arrangements and developing the footpath system within the parish. Progress with the Cricket Field is slow but proceeds while the facilities at Parsonage Croft go from strength to strength, thanks being due to the administrator and Trustees. Costs continue to rise which has led to an inevitable rise in the rate, this has been kept to a minimum while continuing to support necessary services and resources in the parish. The understanding of the residents is appreciated.

In proposing approval of the Report Cllr Lucas took the opportunity to thank County and District Councillors, and also the Clerk. Seconded by Cllr Childs the Report was adopted unanimously.

05/17. Etchingam Annual Report 2017:

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.

Cllrs Lucas and Barrow proposed and seconded adoption of the Parish Annual Report and this was carried unanimously.

06/17. Report and/or Notices from the Parish Clerk:

The Clerk had no further reports or notices at this time but confirmed that copies of the Annual Report would be sent to County Archive as well as ESCC, RDC and the MP.

07/17. Public Time:

Most of the questions and comments from the public concerned road safety in the village, Cllr John Barnes undertook investigating the possibilities of re-routing the heaviest of the traffic via legislation but reminded the meeting that this could only happen in very restricted circumstances and there had to be a viable alternative route. He also added that work continued to encourage if not enforce the use of commercial sat navs by at least the largest commercial vehicles making lanes and smaller roads safer and less prone to damage.

If new and innovative traffic management schemes are created there is now a Community Match scheme available to local councils to work with County and move local schemes up the priority list and is something to be strongly encouraged and considered. To get any of these ideas to fruition the involvement and support of the County Highways Engineers is paramount.

The problem of the hawthorn hedge at the telephone exchange bordering one of the narrowest sections of footpath in the village, and already causing concern and difficulties for pedestrians was raised. This is an annual and on-going problem, BT will again be asked to consider removing the hedge and replacing with a wooden fence, the MP will be copied into the correspondence.

Asked about the pond, the Clerk replied that Gray Nichols had been contacted but had as yet to reply. Efforts to reinstate the condition of the pond will continue as, while it is not the property of the village, it has been a loved and respected local amenity over many generations.

08/17. Date of next Meeting:

To be advised but expected to be 3rd Thursday in April 2018.

09/17.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm thanking all for their attendance and inviting them to enjoy some light refreshments and some social time.

Signed

Date