

**ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Etchingham Parish Council**  
**held on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2020**  
**at 7.30pm via ZOOM electronic communication**

**Members Present:** Cllrs, J Barnes (in the Chair), Mrs M Barnes, Mr R Beeney, Mr C Boylett and Mr D Lambert.

**Also present:** District Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green, Ms P Barton – Clerk to the Council and members of the public.

**The Chairman would normally explain that the Parish Council meeting was a meeting held in public but not a Public Meeting. Any person present wishing to speak about any item on the agenda should do so under agenda item 6 'Public Time'. There would not be any other opportunity for the public to speak at the meeting but as no members of the public were present did not do so on this occasion.**

**2115. Apologies for Absence:**

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Barrow, Cllr Turner and Mr Paul Stott Chairman of ETSR, which were all accepted.

**2116. Minutes of the previous meetings:**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July having been previously circulated, were agreed and will be signed as a correct record of that meeting as soon as is practical.

**2117. Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr. J Barnes declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 13, Village Community Halls as a Trustee of ETSR and that he is now appointed first substitution should a member of RDC Planning Committee be absent.

Cllr. M. Barnes declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 13, Village Community Halls as a member of the Parochial Church Council and reminded Council that she is a member of the RDC Planning Committee.

Cllr. Boylett declared a personal interest in agenda item 8a, Planning as the applicant at 7 The Orchard is a personal friend.

**2118. Etchingham Parish Council – Dispensations**

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

**2119. Chairman's Announcements:**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

**2120. Public Time:**

- a) The work of ESCC continues but there is little new to report at this time except that work continues to balance the unprecedented and unforeseeable costs of the pandemic against future income and reserves.
- b) RDC faces similar financial strain as County and continues to address the issue.
- c) A member of the public asked if the RDC grant towards the Cricket Field project could not be transferred to the more current fundraising for the playgrounds. While this will be fully discussed under item 9b, District Cllr Kirby-Green explained that as a grant is made against a particular project - rather than a loan to be spent as needed – a transfer from one project to another is not possible.
- d) As no members were to be excluded this right was not exercised.

**2121. Parish Matters:**

a) **Village Amenities:**

- i) ***It was Resolved that the 'rent holiday' for the tenant of The Old Stores continue for at least another month, to be reviewed thereafter.*** In addition the Clerk informed council that work on the new lease continues.
- ii) For Queen's Garden and Viper ***it was Resolved that the monthly inspection reports be approved and that tenders for a post and rail fence for the western boundary Queen's Garden be obtained by the Clerk.*** It was noted that the new picnic table unit has been installed by the handyman with assistance from Cllr Lambert.
- iii) ***It was Resolved that there should be an Autumn Clean Day and that suggested dates be put to the Bistro to check availability.***
- iv) There were no other matters to consider.

- b) **Children and Young People:**
- i) In Cllr Turner's absence the Clerk reported having met the new head teacher, Mr Matthew Montebello. Council welcome him and reiterated it's thanks to the retiring head, Mrs Margaret Williams for her many years of unstinting service.
  - ii) Cllr Boylett presented the report on ERGT fundraising for the playground which had been previously circulated and on file. The report was approved and accepted. Cllr Boylett added that to date £770 had been received into the bank account specifically against the CIC call for donations to cover the cost of the surfacing.
  - iii) Cllr Lambert reported that while most work on replacing the equipment in Queen's Garden still remains on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the lifting of some restrictions might open up opportunities which will be discussed by the relevant members of the working party.
  - iv) There were no other matters to consider.
- c) **Highways, Footpaths and Community Safety:**
- i) ESCC Highways are on schedule with the drainage works being undertaken in the High Street. The Clerk reported that SLR meetings can now be resumed but will be conducted via Zoom. A date towards the end of October will be explored with the team at Highways.
  - ii) Cllr Boylett's Speedwatch reports were presented to the meeting, having been previously circulated and they are on file. The reports were approved and accepted. It was confirmed that police attendance at sessions is frequently requested and accepted as often as possible. Discussion continues as to the sharing of a mobile unit to determine speeds which can be used against prosecution but surrounding villages are not currently expressing an interest.
  - iii) Cllr Lambert has been re-imbursed for the cost of servicing the council strimmer and the Borders Lane footpath remains clear.
  - iv) The report of the theft of a quad bike and a large number of tools from a local farm has been received, the Rural Crime Squad have been informed and is investigating. This news will be circulated via E Bulletin by the Clerk asking residents to be additionally security minded as there is a marked increase in this type of crime occurring in gardens, allotments and smallholdings as well as farms in this area. There were no other matters to consider
- d) **Environment and Other issues:**  
***It was Resolved that no action would be taken regarding Climate Change without further guidance from RDC & ESCC but that an article for the Parish Magazine might be requested from the High Weald Unit explaining their current thinking for this area.***  
 There were no matters to consider.

**2122. Planning:**

Cllr Mary Barnes reminded Council that she is a member of Rother District Council Planning Committee and Cllr John Barnes reminded Council that he is now listed as a substitute member of Rother District Council Planning Committee should there be an absentee. Cllr Boylett also reminded Council that he is a personal friend of the applicant at 7 The Orchard.

- a) RR/2020/1100/T - 7 The Orchard, Church Lane - Works to Oak tree (T1). Fell as diseased & dangerous.  
***It was Resolved to support this application.*** Reference OWPC25497refers.

RR/2020/620/P - The Orchard/High Street - Construction of a pair of semi-detached dwellings.  
***It was Resolved to object to this application.*** Reference OWPC25498 refers, see Appendix 1.

RR/2020/1327/P - South Lodge, Myskyns Road - Link between dwelling and single storey detached garden studio. This was a late addition to the list but requesting a response before the next meeting. Cllrs asked for time to consider and visit before making resolution.

- bi) NALC request for input on proposed Changes to Planning Law. To be deferred to the next meeting.
- ii) Upon provision of pdf copy of RDC request for input for Early Engagement to the local Plan update, Clerk to complete, taking advice as necessary.

- iii) To fulfil the request to facilitate the request for comments on the Local Plan up to 2039, Cllr Barnes offered to provide a first draft for discussion and completion with Cllrs Lambert and Beeney. Clerk to facilitate circulation of draft in editable format.

**2123. Finance**

- a) Authorisation of payments – the Clerk presented to Council the accounts for payment.

<b>Payments August</b>			<b>PAID</b>
CPRE	Annual donation		40.00
SLCC	Annual subscription		161.00
P Barton	Salary & Expenses August 2020		1,088.04
L Worton	Salary & Expenses July 2020		127.74
D Lambert	Reimbursement cost of strimmer service		58.80
NALC	Annual payment LCR		17.00
Commercial Picnic Benches	Replacement picnic table unit QG		346.93
Mulberry & Co	Fee for Internal Audit Yr End A/Cs 2019-2020		216.00
Crane Designs Ltd	NP Mthly charge for hosting site DD 06/08/2020		15.00
Crane Designs Ltd	EPC Mthly charge for hosting site DD 06/08/2020		15.00
Focus Group	DD 26/08/2020 Office Phone to 27/07/2020		23.72
	<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>£2,109.23</b>

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments for August 2020 be approved and that proof of the BACs payments together with copies of the relevant invoices be signed by two councillors to comply with Financial Regulations and best practice as soon as possible.

b) It was **RESOLVED** that RDC be advised the grant of £20k towards the Cricket Field project is not likely to be called down in the foreseeable future and should therefore no longer remain ring-fenced. Enabling RDC to clear this amount back into general reserve and to facilitate any future grant application to RDC that the council might wish to make in the future against other projects.

c) The Clerk explained that the grant of £100 to BACT had not been taken up in 2019 as the cheque had never been cashed due to an error. It was **RESOLVED** that on sending the grant for 2020 of £100 this will be in addition to a similar sum still owing from the previous year, therefore a payment of £200 will be made by BACs.

**2124. The Emma Beeney Award for Outstanding Service to the Parish of Etchingam**

Cllr Beeney confirmed that the family were happy that the Villager of the Year Award be named as above. Cllr Beeney was thanked. Cllrs Lambert and Boylett to work on a draft of the Terms of Reference.

**2125. Effective Comms and Engagement in a Post-Lockdown World**

Having circulated the presentation organised for clerks by SSALC on the above, councillors expressed interest but there will be no specific action at this time.

**2126. Etchingam Neighbourhood Plan**

The Clerk, as Acting Secretary to the NP Steering Committee, reported that pressure of work in the office is still preventing progress on the documents for Reg 14. It was **RESOLVED** that preparing for Reg 14 must be a priority, additional hours to be made available to the Clerk if necessary. Detail of arrangements to facilitate this to be discussed at the end of the next meeting in private session.

**2127. Village Community Halls**

In his absence Mr Paul Stott had submitted a report regarding the reopening of the halls on 7<sup>th</sup> September and the attendant revisions necessary to the hiring agreements to comply with Covid-19 regulations. Council wished ETSR well and hoped that hirers would indeed take advantage of the facilities again.

**2128. To receive Reports from Members and Representatives and pass such resolutions as may be necessary:-**

- a) SSALC – no meetings.
- b) RALC – no meetings.
- c) There were no other meetings or Conferences attended by the Members or the Clerk.

**2129. Correspondence**

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

**2130. Etchingam Parish Council – Notification to members of Council decisions:**

There were no notifications.

**2131. Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm**

As noted through the above minutes.

Signed.....

Date.....

DRAFT

## APPENDIX 1

### Application RR/2020/620/P The Orchard/High Street (Corner Site)

Etchingham Parish Council **objects** as it remains deeply concerned regarding the suitability of this site for residential units.

Four main areas must be subject to detailed and strictly enforceable conditions to address these concerns.

(1) this site used to be a village pond in living memory and remains an important element in preventing surface water during periods of heavy rain causing additional flooding risk to neighbouring properties some considerable distance away from the site itself. In the main it is currently lower lying than its boundaries. There has to be total assurance that the issue is being fully addressed not just be for the benefit of any future site residents but also for the surrounding area and properties.

(2) the stability of the bank to the rear (northward) of the site is threatened by the removal of any vegetation and of mature trees in particular. Two neighbouring properties, 6 and 7 The Orchard, could be severely impacted both in their grounds and the properties themselves if this bank is compromised.

(3) the proposed removal of mature trees, diseased or not, from the bank and the proposed location of the dwellings on the site will create unacceptable loss of privacy for the neighbouring property at 7 The Orchard in particular.

(4) last but not least. The building design illustrated on the application documents is markedly incompatible within the context of its location, opposite two fine Edwardian houses and a neighbouring Grade 1\* listed church and its churchyard. This must be taken into serious consideration. It is also thought that the footprint of the building, a pair of semi-detached houses instead of an earlier proposed single house, may be too great for this particular site bearing in mind its sunken location compared to neighbouring houses and the known drainage issues at this end of the village, not just of this particular site.