

ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Etchingham Parish Council
held on Thursday 21st March 2024 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, Trevor McGregor and Roma Turner.

Also present: P Barton – Clerk to the Council. There were no members of the public present.

2781. Apologies for Absence: Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr Eleanor Kirby- Green which were accepted.

2782. Minutes of the previous meeting:

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th February 2024 having been previously circulated, were agreed and then signed as a true and accurate records of that meeting.

2783. 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.

Cllrs. M Barnes and C Boylett declared an interest in the Village fete to be considered for a grant under 10a as members of the Committee (not a Council committee).

Cllr S Barrow declared an interest in item 8a.iii.

2784. Etchingham Parish Council – Dispensations:

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

2785. Chairman’s Announcements:

The Chairman had no announcements.

2786. Clerk’s Report:

The Clerk did not present a report as all current matters were already on the agenda.

2787. Public Time:

- a) County Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green had been unable to send a report through to the clerk in time for the meeting.
- b) Cllr John Barnes reported that RDC has two task forces – one to review Housing strategy and one to address Planning Enforcement issues.
- c) There were no members of the public present.
- d) As no members were to be excluded this right was not exercised.

2788. Parish Matters:

a) **Village Amenities:**

i) Village Shop/The Old Stores: Cllr McGregor asked that even if the reply was ‘no comment’ councillors replied to his emails regarding progress with this matter to avoid any unnecessary delays. The new method being offered is less obtrusive than the previous so likely to be more acceptable to the EA. Costs etc cannot be assessed before EA approval but should be speedily completed thereafter. As the cost of the total project is to be split it is unlikely that the EPC share will fall foul of the £30k rule for going out to tender. Advice on seeking a bridging loan rather than a PWLB loan to be taken from ESALC in the first instance.

ii) The Inspection Reports on Queen’s Gardens and VIPER were accepted. It was **Resolved that the village handyman be authorise to purchase mixed hedge ‘whips’ to secure the hedge boundary of QG with the A265.** Cllr Barrow thought he might have a spare spring suitable for the self-closing gate to Viper. Cllrs Barrow and Beeney to effect repairs to the Basketball back plate.

iii) Cllr Barrow reminded the meeting he had declared an interest in this item and would not take part in the discussion nor any subsequent vote. Having received the necessary quotations to undertake village maintenance such as grass cutting and hedge trimming of the council owned public green spaces the contract was awarded to James Barrow, Agricontractors, subject to final confirmation of the one-off cost for clearing the land between the housing at the Orchard and the pond owned by Gray Nicholls.

iv) A Certificate for Lawful Development is to be sought for the Eco-loo for Queen's Gardens as the most cost-effective way forward.

v) Cllr J Barnes reported back from the Dark Skies Community meeting that as it was working towards a recognised status and did not require a huge work input from individual parishes that it was worth further investigation. Cllr M Barnes agreed to lead a working party for its first year and will contact David Field (the organiser) for next steps including setting up a list of 'top polluters' and arrangements for the annual Dark Skies Festival.

vi) There were no further matters to consider.

b) Children and Young People

i) There was nothing to report on Children and Young People.

ii) Cllr Boylett had submitted his report on ERGT fundraising remarking that the majority of income was being received from Sainsbury purchases, which was approved and is available on file.

iii) This item (the use of the recording studio etc) will no longer be on the Parish Council agenda but will revert to the ETSR Trustee meeting.

iv) There were no further matters to consider.

c) Highway, Footpaths and Community Safety

i) County Cllr Kirby-Green remains active in getting work done regarding local pot holes.

ii) Cllr Boylett had submitted his Speedwatch report which is on file. By far the worst issues in the village arise around the school vicinity and not caused by the parents. Pressure continues on ESCC. Black Cat – to be known as Traffic Radar – Cllr Boylett is chasing the suppliers and has possibly selected a suitable laptop to support the system.

iii) There was no report from Rother Police or the PCSO this month.

iv) The issue of the footpath diversion created when parsonage Croft was developed continues to confuse. Cllr Kirby-Green is trying to correct.

v) There were no other matters to consider.

d) Environmental and Other issues

i) The raw sewage in the field behind the shop and other houses is getting worse and the water board has been called out on numerous occasions but the issue is not being dealt with and seems to be exacerbated by a blockage under the railway line which is not being resolved. Cllr J Barnes was delegated to write to the MP to inform and to ask for help.

ii) There were no other matters to consider.

e) Communications

There were no matters to consider.

2789. 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:
- i). RR/2024/253/O : The Spinney Annexe, Straight Mile : Lawful Development Certificate for the Existing Use of the flat known as the Annexe as a separate dwelling. ***It was Resolved that the Council had no objection to this application.***
- b) Any other planning matters:
- RR/2023/2184/P : Braemar – land to the North, High Street : Outline permission with all matters reserved for the erection of 2x four bed, two storey detached dwelling houses, access drive, parking & turning area, refuse and cycle storage provisions, and private amenity spaces. : ***It was Resolved that EPC would re-iterate its strong objection to this application in spite of new assurances being made by the developer and the opinion of ESCC Highways.*** This application remains subject to Call-In if necessary.

A ‘walk round’ to view the encampment in Burgh Woods (Hurst Green Parish boundary) is being organized by HG PC and will be attended by EPC councilor/s if possible.

2790. Finance:

- a) After due consideration of the applications for a grant/donation in 2024/25 the following were awarded.

Club/Group	2024/2025 Awarded	Notes
GRANTS		
PCC	600.00	Contribution to grass cutting of churchyard, as this is a public green space.
PCC	500.00*	Sponsorship of visiting silver band for Etchingham Fete and for Flimwell Flushers 8 th June 2024
Coffee & Cake Club (@ the Bistro)	800.00	A Monthly ‘club’ open to all residents
Baby Barn Owls	700.00	Contribution to replacing the mud kitchen & equipment
DONATIONS		
BACT	120.00	
Rother Rural Trust	60.00	
CPRE	60.00	
Etchingham Poppy Appeal	50.00	Wreath for the War Memorial
Air Ambulance	150.00	.
Current Total	£3,040.00	
PCC – Village fete grant consists of £250 from EPC and a further £250 from a resident who asked EPC to donate to something for the benefit of the village.		Further applications are welcome throughout year to the budget maximum.

b) The schedule for Receipts and Payments for March was presented and approved.

Etchingham Parish Council Statement of Receipts and Payments March 2024		
Receipts		
		0.00
		TOTAL PAID
Paulette Barton	Salary & Expenses for March 2024	1842.97
Olga Bilai	Salary & Expenses for March 2024	341.04
Laurence Worton	Salary & Expenses for February 2024	26.81
Bistro @ the Station	Coffee & Cake Club 21st February 2024 for 20 people	52.70
ETSR	Half yearly contribution	500.00
B Online Ltd	Monthly payment due to broadband supplier (January)	38.25
EDF	Electricity for Shop	45.00
	Total Payments	2846.77

c) *It was Resolved that the Clerk purchase the special D-Day commemorative flag to be raised in QG on the village flagpole on 6th June 2024 in line with national timings.*

d) There were no other financial matters to consider.

2791. To receive reports from Members and Representatives passing such resolutions as may be necessary

- a) **ESALC** – The representative/s were unable to attend.
- b) **RALC** - the next meeting is in April.
- c) No other meetings or conferences had been attended by either members or the Clerk.

2792. Correspondence

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

2793. Etchingham Parish Council – Notification to members of Council decisions:

There were no notifications.

2794. Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Thursday 18th April 2024 in The Parker Hall at 7.30pm.

There were none other than those listed throughout the minutes.

2795. Minute of Resolution made in Closed Session: the Administration Assistant hours of work per week will rise to 8 hours from the current 6 hours. All other contract arrangements remain unchanged.

Signed..... **By the Chairman**

Date..... **21st March 2024**