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Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer: James Roberts

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**Barnham & Eastergate Parish Council – Full Council meeting,
Tuesday 2nd June 2026, 7:30pm at Barnham Community Hall**

MINUTES

Present:

Chris Allington, Simon Parkin, Heather Kilroy, Andrea Rainger, Chris Wells, Ray Coggin, John Robinson, Phil Cramp, Rob Bates, Andrew Crawford and Penny Wycherley.

In attendance:

James Roberts (Clerk & RFO), Nina-Maria McMaster (Assistant Clerk – Community), Gemma Hindson (Assistant Clerk – Planning & Environment) and one member of the public.

1. Open public session

No points raised by the public.

2. Apologies

Apologies received and accepted from Sue Wallsgrove.

3. Declarations of interest

None declared.

4. County Councillor, District Councillor and PCSO reports

Sue Wallsgrove provided her apologies in advance of the meeting. No PCSO was in attendance and no report was received.

5. Minutes of Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 28th April 2026 – for approval

Resolved:

1. The minutes of the BEPC Annual Parish Council meeting held on 28th April 2026 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chair of the Council.

6. Finance

6.1 To note and retrospectively approve the list of payments made since the last meeting.

6.2 To note the latest overall financial position of the Council.

It was noted that there were anomalies in the circulated budget variance report. The Clerk advised this is due to a move to a new accounting system and data entry for previous months was still ongoing. The Clerk reported it was anticipated that all of the data entry will be completed by the time of the next meeting.

Resolved:

1. To note and retrospectively approve the list of payments since the last meeting.
2. To note the current financial position of the Council.

7. Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2026

This agenda item was **deferred** to a future meeting, to be arranged, prior to 30th June 2026. This was to allow time for the Internal Audit Report to be received and considered by the Council.

7.1 To approve the Internal Audit Report as prepared by Smithe & Co

7.2 To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26 as detailed in the Annual Return

7.3 To approve Accounting Statements for 2025/26 as detailed in the Annual Return, for signature by the Chair

7.4 To approve the publication of Notice of Public Rights and submission of the Annual Return to the External Auditor

8. Update and recommendations from Community & Infrastructure Working Group – for approval

James Roberts (Clerk) provided a verbal update and shared the recommendations from the last Community & Infrastructure Working Group meeting held on 27th April 2026. The recommendations of the group were for the Council to prioritise and begin working on the following community projects:

- Internal works at Barnham Community Hall to expand the Cutten Room into the Marshall room
- Eastergate Village Hall extension and creation of a Men's Shed
- Replacement of the Eastergate Village Hall roof
- Installation of gym equipment at Murrell's Field
- Improve field security at Murrell's Field
- Improvements to the patio area at the rear of Barnham Community Hall
- Installation of additional benches and noticeboard at Murrell's Field

Following discussion by the Council, it was agreed that the Clerk would prepare and circulate a report detailing the estimated preliminary and scoping costs associated with each project.

Resolved:

1. To ask the Clerk to prepare a report as detailed above and circulate to the Council.
2. To approve expenditure of £3,000, using CIL funds, for additional benches and planters at Murrell's Field.

9. Updated policies – for approval

The Clerk had circulated the policies listed below for the Council to review and adopt.

- 9.1 Data Protection Policy
- 9.2 Complaints Procedure
- 9.3 Vexatious Complaints Policy

Resolved:

1. The Council resolved to adopt the Data Protection Policy, Complaints Procedure and Vexatious Complaints Policy.

10. Planning & Environment Committee

Chris Wells, Chair of the Committee, gave a verbal update about recent planning matters. Chris also reported that at the last meeting, the Committee received a presentation from Susan Leeson regarding a proposal for new dwellings at Eastmere Paddocks, Eastergate Lane. He noted this proposal is pre-planning stage.

11. Community facilities in the Parish

Nina-Maria McMaster, Assistant Clerk – Community, gave a verbal update about community matters. Nina reported that both community buildings had been extremely busy with community events and bookings. Nina reported that the WSCC waste prevention grant was approaching the end, however as activities had been extremely successful, Barnham & Eastergate Community Trust planned to continue these activities. Following a discussion by the Council, the Council wished to note the noticeable improvements to the community offer at both community buildings over the past three years.

12. Working Group Updates**12.1 Community Resilience (Ray Coggin)**

Nothing to report.

12.2 People, Places and Spaces (Penny Wycherley)

Penny Wycherley reported that the hot weather had delayed some of the planned planting. Penny noted that the seep hose in the raised bed at Barnham Community Hall had been replaced due to a number of leaks. Penny reported that gateway sign planting had been tended to and 1,000 snowdrops were planted in April with the support of the Barnham Guides.

12.3 Communications (Simon Parkin)

Simon Parkin reported that the monthly email newsletter continues and the group had commissioned professional photography for use in newsletters and the annual printed newsletter. Simon reported that an area the group are focused on was to educate the public about what the Parish Council does for the community and what

the responsibilities of other authorities are.

12.4 Barnham Road project (Andrew Crawford)

Nothing to report.

12.5 Community & Infrastructure (James Roberts – Clerk)

Nothing further to report following update in agenda item 8.

13. Murell's Field Section 106 improvement project – item for approval

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk (Planning) provided a verbal update on the progress of the field works. It was reported that the field reopened on 6th May 2026 and the final handover meeting with the Grounds Maintenance Association had been completed on 8th May 2026. It was noted that numerous positive comments about the field had been received by Officers and Councillors. A recommendation to appoint a Civil Engineer to complete an assessment regarding water runoff from the path on the western edge of the field was made to the Council.

Resolved:

1. To approve the Clerk to instruct a Civil Engineer to undertake an initial assessment and feedback findings to the Council.

14. Bus shelter project

Nina-Maria McMaster, Assistant Clerk – Community, provided a verbal update on the progress of the project. Nina reported the bus shelters in our Parish were scheduled installed by the end of June. The Council considered a request from Yapton Parish Council for another meeting to discuss additional bus shelters and whether project meetings could continue. The Council decided not to engage in further meetings at this stage due to resource capacity.

15. Eastergate Playing Field – repairs and replacement swing for playground – for approval

The Council considered the circulated quote to undertake repairs and the installation of a replacement swing. The Council also discussed the poor condition of the path at Eastergate Field, it was noted and would be investigated further.

Resolved:

1. The Council unanimously approved the proposed work to carry out repairs and install a replacement swing for the Eastergate Playing Field.

16. Outside body meetings

16.1 BEWAG Advisory Group

Chris Wells provided a verbal update following the last meeting of the group. It was noted that the next meeting will take place in November 2026.

17. Report by Chair of the Council

Chris Allington, Chair of the Council, reported he had received a positive email from a long term resident of Eastergate. The resident wished to thank the Council for the support given during challenging times and wished the Council well for the future, with a hope that the character and quality of the Parish would continue to thrive.

18. Report by the Clerk

18.1 Removal of members addresses in local authority registers

The Clerk advised that from 29th June 2026, local authorities would no longer be required to publish elected or co-opted members home addresses on register of interest documents. The Monitoring Officer had contacted the Clerk to advise of this and asked whether any members wished for their addresses to remain public. No members wished for this to be the case.

18.2 Triangle of green space outside The Murrell Arms Pub, Barnham

John Robinson spoke about the above named piece of land looking unsightly and in need of improving and maintaining. The Council discussed this and agreed to explore options for how this could be maintained and protected in future. During the discussion it was noted this area may have village green status.

18.3 Annual GDPR (data protection) training

The Clerk advised that he is in the process of arranging annual GDPR training and the provisional date of this would be Thursday 9th July 2026, 7:30pm at Barnham Community Hall.

18.4 WSALC Networking Meeting

The Clerk reported that he, Nina-Maria McMaster and Andrew Crawford recently attended this meeting. The meeting included networking with other Parish Council's, an update was given regarding Local Government Reorganisation.

18.5 Consideration of a Thank You letter

The Clerk asked the Council to consider sending a Thank You letter from the Chair to Linda Cranfield, for the administration support she provided to the Council over the past year. The Council agreed and the Clerk will draft a letter for the Chair to sign.

19. Date of next Parish Council meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of Full Council is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 21st July 2026, 7:30pm at Barnham Community Hall.

20. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chair closed the meeting to the Public and Press as it was **resolved** that pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 because of the nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of all items within Part II of the meeting.

21. Staffing matters

The Council considered a confidential item relating to staffing matters.

22. Legal matters

The Council considered a legal matter.

The meeting closed at 21:46hrs.

Signed by: _____

Chair of Barnham & Eastergate Parish Council.

DRAFT