

BARNHAM PARISH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 2018
Held in Eastergate Parish Hall at 6.30 p.m. on Monday 9th April 2018

MINUTES

Note: The Parish Assembly was a Joint Assembly with Eastergate Parish Council hosted by Eastergate, but the minutes are produced as minutes of the Barnham Parish Assembly only.

In attendance:

Barnham Parish Council: John Robinson (Chairman): Susan Forrester: Sue Groome: Stewart Pritchard: Ella Simmons: Isabel Thurston: Alison Crabb (Clerk)

District Councillors John Charles and Christopher Hughes

Apologies: County Councillor Derek Whittington

The meeting was Chaired by Chris Allington, Chairman of Eastergate Parish Council as the host authority.

CHAIRMANS WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Parish Council's Annual Parish Assembly. He introduced the members of both Parish Councils.

1. Minutes of Meeting of Annual Assembly held on 3rd April 2017

The parish clerk had distributed copies of the minutes of the previous year's Annual Assembly, held in Barnham Parish Hall on Monday 3rd April 2017. All present agreed that the minutes were a true record of the Assembly. The minutes were adopted and signed by the chairman.

2. Annual Report by Chairman of Barnham Parish Council

The Chairman of Barnham Parish Council, John Robinson, delivered a report of the Council's activities during the year. A copy of his report is attached.

3. Proposal to Merge Barnham and Eastergate Parish Councils

The Chairman of Eastergate Parish Council addressed the meeting on behalf of both Parishes and made the following points:

We have reported for some six years now that we aimed to seek a review of the parish boundaries to best represent the residents of Barnham, Eastergate & Fontwell. For example, Barnham is one village, one community but represented by two Parish Councils.

We believe that the time is now right for our community to consider this and Barnham and Eastergate PC's have requested that Arun District Council carries out a governance review to look into the feasibility of the two Parish Councils merging. On the 10th January Arun District Council voted to carry out the statutory process of community consultation that is required to consider such a merger.

The two Parish Councils have made this request following 6 years of working very closely together on key topics including newsletters, joint meetings, annual assemblies and most importantly of all, the Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan.

A consultation letter and voting slip had been sent by Arun District Council to every household and voting will close 11th April 2018. We would encourage everyone to express their views.

The January Joint Parish newsletter laid out the case in more detail, but I wanted to just touch on a couple of key points:

Democracy

The majority of the village of Barnham is in the parish of Eastergate and from surveys and feedback over decades many residents are unsure of which Parish they live in and to which Parish their 0.8% of Council Tax goes to. The Barnham Parish Clerk regularly refers resident communications to Eastergate Parish as understandably most people in Barnham Village naturally assume that they are in Barnham Parish.

Following a merger this will no longer be an issue.

Unique character of each village (Barnham and Eastergate)

A merger is primarily about local governance and resources and it is not about merging the villages. Eastergate and Barnham villages each have individually strong historic and cultural identities, which are important to preserve. The community facilities are run by charities who remain as independent entities receiving grants, as appropriate, from the new combined parish.

Together stronger

will be a clear focal point for the whole community.

Precept

Based on current occupied houses (as published by ADC)

| 18/19 Financial Year | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| | 18/19 Precept | 18/19 Tax Base | Band D Tax |
| Barnham | £54,135 | 606 | £89.33 |
| Eastergate | £58,790 | 1,396 | £42.11 |
| Combined | £112,925 | 2,002 | £56.41 |

Using some sensible growth forecasts

| 20/21 Financial Year | | | |
|----------------------|---|----------------|---------------------|
| <i>Assumptions:</i> | | | |
| | 400 increase to the 18/19 tax base (number of properties) | | |
| | Precept 3% increase YOY | | |
| | 20/21 Precept | 20/21 Tax Base | Band D Tax |
| Combined | £104,681 | 2,402 | £43.58 |
| | Change on for Barnham Parishioners | | £45.75 51% decrease |
| | Change for Eastergate Parishioners | | £1.47 2% increase |

Questions were invited and the chairman indicated that a joint BPC and EPC council would be the 8th largest in Arun District and even with an additional 3000+ houses would only be 7th.

It was unknown how the seats on the council would be allocated and quite possibly there would be 3 wards to attain the appropriate representation. The council would likely have the benefit of help from Mr Gibb MP and Mr Herbert MP.

It was felt that all councillors supported both villages/parishes.

4. Local Plan and Barnham, Eastergate an Westergate Advisory Group

The Chairman addressed this matter by way of power point slides as follows:

He referred to a long and frustrating journey starting in October 2012. He detailed the various meetings and the BENP referendum. The failure of ADC to get the Local Plan through examination and the "calling in" of the Dandara site were some of the matters being dealt with.

Ultimately there appears to be a stark choice of shutting up shop and declaring Localism to be a failure or fighting for our current, and future, community the infrastructure needs of the community were identified, as was the reasoning behind the ADC Head of Planning refusing to attend this meeting.

Pauline Roberts presented a power point slide report on behalf of the Church Commissioners, Hanbury (PM) Ltd, CEG, Builtform and Cala Homes. The slides are attached to these Minutes. She then invited questions.

It was questioned why all of the development was not shown and it was said to be restricted to Barnham and Eastergate.. Concern was expressed as to the capability of the Fontwell roundabout with potentially 6000 additional cars. The consultants and WSCC were working together to deal with this problem. Audience members were concerned that they would be cut off from local places by the movement of the A29 and would need to drive where previously they had walked. Pollution near the primary school was referred to as was the use of a flood plain when a 1 metre rise in sea levels was expected which would flood all of the housing being proposed. Consultants were looking at attenuation ponds. Concern was expressed as to bus availability and it was felt that the development could help with that problem. There was to be more consultation and all the consultants would be available to answer questions. Concern was expressed as to the East/West movement of traffic and only one bridge over the railway line. Proposals for 2 level car parking facilities at the Barnham railway station were considered.

The representative of the Church Commissioners stated that they have committed to be straight forward and as honest as they can when dealing with these matters. It was noted that we need to keep the questions coming to get answers and to get contributions

5. Barnham Community Trust

Mr David Phillips presented a report on behalf of the Trust a copy of the full report is appended to these minutes but the main points noted were as follows:

The new Trust has now been in operation for just over 15 months and runs the Hall under a Licence to Operate with Barnham Parish Council paying a monthly licence fee to the Council.

The Hall is run by 3 part-time staff and 6 volunteer Trustees who meet regularly to discuss matters of importance and take key decisions in relation to the building, the field and the playpark.

The Trust has run and continues to run a number of fundraising events during the year including monthly Quiz Nights, MAMF and Bonfire night together with the Lottery.

The usage of the Hall continues to grow with more than 25 regular users during the week, together with weekend bookings. At times the Hall is at capacity with all rooms in use that the Trustees are now going to take a serious look at a possible phase 2 extension.

The Trust is in a strong financial position and has undertaken a number of improvements to the facility over the last year and has plans to make further improvements in 2018.

6. Eastergate Community Assets Annual Report

Mrs Nina McMaster, the Community Facilities Manager provided a report on the changes and improvements that have been undertaken at the Eastergate Parish Hall and Sports Pavilion.

7. Keep our Parish Tidy

Mrs Sue Groome mentioned that she currently organised 2 litter picks one the Spring and one in the Autumn, which covered the Parishes of Barnham and Eastergate, with the assistance of local residents and local groups. However, following the recent cancellation of the Spring Litter Pick she had been thinking of ways to keep the parishes tidy on a more regular basis and she proposes to try and get a regular monthly pick on the first Saturday of each month for a couple of hours 10-12 focussing on the main roads of the Parishes with the 2 main picks concentrating on other areas of the Parishes. She asked for volunteers to get in touch.

8. Open Forum

The following points were noted:

One resident raised concerns over the proposed merger saying that that Barnham Parish Council was trying to take over Eastergate PC, a suggestion refuted by members of Barnham Parish Council. It was also disputed that Eastergate Parish councillors had previously agreed to the takeover.

Discussion took place as to whose responsibility it was to deal with funding and it was said that Grant funding had been obtained for the A29 development. Claire Potts stated that it depended on the detail of the masterplan. Probably £3.5 billion would be available for developers to borrow to build roads first. Concern as to infrastructure being provided before housing remained.

Mention was made as to the amount of litter to be found on the railway station embankment. It was agreed that network Rail would be asked to clear this eyesore.

The Chairman thanked all for attending and he then closed the meeting.