

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Beckley Village Centre on WEDNESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2017 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors Christopher Broadbent (CB) Chairman, Mrs Deborah Ongley (DEO) Vice Chairman, Mrs Sue Evans (SE), Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) and Mike Rowe (MRO), County Cllr Ms Angharad Davies (AD) and District Cllr Martin Mooney (MM).

IN ATTENDANCE: Clerk Mrs V Ades and approximately 90 members of the public.

Public Questions – to allow questions from the public for a period not exceeding 15 minutes. Members of the public are welcome to remain during the meeting, or may leave at any point, but they must remain silent unless invited to speak by the Chairman. There will be another opportunity for public speaking at the end of the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed everyone and asked members of the public to be aware that planning application RR/2016/3286/P land to the west of Buddens Green, Main Street (known locally as Bushy Field) for the erection of 16 dwellings with associated access road and parking spaces did not form part of the DASA which is the 20 houses to be built in the village between now and 2028. RDC's preferred sites for the 20 homes in Beckley are 8 properties to the south and rear of Buddens Green and 12 properties at the Manroy site in Hobbs Lane, but those proposals can change. CB said this subject will be discussed by the PC under agenda item 4. MRO said the proposed 16 houses would not form part of the DASA allocation and MM said if RDC had a shortfall in the number of homes it has to build throughout the district those 16 homes, if approved, could count towards a shortfall. CB said the PC owns the land to the rear of Buddens Green and if that land is developed the village would receive money from the developers. The owners of the Manroy site would have to agree to any development there and CB said he understood there was also a small amount of a field which would form part of the development that was owned by somebody else from whom permission would be needed. The private application for 16 homes to the west of Buddens Green did not form part of the PC owned land at the rear of Buddens Green nor would those houses form part of the 20 homes which must be built. Mr Horton said 10 years ago PINS had turned down an appeal to build on Bushy Field saying the gap should not be filled as it would adversely change the view from Main Street across the field in an AONB. It also said building to the rear of Buddens Green should not be extended, but RDC now proposes to build there. MM said RDC is obliged to provide homes for those on the housing register which is why it must build. Concerns were raised over local people not being offered homes in the village. A resident felt homes at Buddens Green had not gone to local people, but DEO confirmed this was incorrect. CB said the PC is committed to ensuring affordable homes in the village are offered to people with local connections. To a suggestion that the playing field be used for housing CB said the field has a covenant protecting it for amenities and it would take years to have this lifted. 15 sites had been put forward by landowners and RDC selected the two current sites. Questions were raised about RDC selling its council houses for £1. MM said the purchasers had to raise funds in the region of £30M to carry out repairs to those houses, which Rother could not afford. Referring to an earlier question of affordable homes not going to local people Mr Baverstock said he was on the PC when the homes were built on the old allotment site at Hobbs Lane and the PC lobbied RDC to put a 106 section agreement (Town and Country Planning Act) on those homes so they were restricted to people from Beckley; RDC did not do this, he believed it was slipped through one Christmas and felt that is why most people in those houses do not come from Beckley. MM said Beckley, Northiam and Peasmarsch are linked together and people from those areas on the housing register would be given first choice except if there was somebody outside of those areas and on the register with higher points or if there were insufficient local applicants for the houses.

8.02. The Chairman said the PC meeting must commence and drew a close to public questions. He proposed Planning Application RR/2016/3286/P Buddens Green be brought forward and heard after Item 3, which would mean any members of the public could leave, should they wish, after they had heard the PC's discussion and opinion. Members supported the move.

- 1 **Apologies** received from Cllrs Lauren Dobson (away on business) and Rebecca Parsons, (family).
- 2 **Declarations of interest.** To receive any disclosures under the Council's Code of Conduct. DEO declared a personal interest in Item 5, RR/2016/3286/P.
- 3 **Minutes** of the PC Planning meeting held on 11 January 2017. TL said her name was missing from those in attendance. With the alteration made the minutes were agreed as accurate and signed by CB.

- 5 **Brought forward - Planning** – to consider any planning applications received from RDC and other planning matters

RR/2016/3286/P - Buddens Green - land west of, Main Street. Erection of 16 dwellings with associated access road and parking spaces. MRO gave a brief summary of past failed or withdrawn applications and pointed out the drawbacks of development of the site. He said in an appeal resulting from an earlier refused application, and also reflected in the DASA, there was reference to the area to the west of the Buddens Green site as inappropriate for development and the gap should not be filled.

Members agreed on the following points:-

- the site lies outside the development boundary of the village and in an AONB
- it is in an area considered inappropriate for development
- the Environment Agency states it is in a flood risk area
- there are concerns about water from the site pouring into the culvert which runs beneath Main Street as the condition and capacity of this are unknown and if the culvert could not cope it could make the purpose of the proposed pond ineffective
- the site comes down to the road, in contravention of the long held policy of continuing to let the countryside come into the village
- no pre application advice was sought
- it was felt it was a poor balance of homes

With one declared interest members **voted 4:0 against support.** If officers are mindful to approve MM will ask for the application to be called in to a full planning meeting. SE asked if the land could be considered for allotments and CB asked MM to put this suggestion forward. **MM.**

8.15 – CB halted the meeting. *Mr Horton said he felt nothing should be put on that land as it came down to the street and it should be left clear to offer uninterrupted views across the countryside.*

8.16 meeting reconvened.

- 4 **DASA** – general discussion. CB said there are two preferred sites submitted by RDC. Eight homes are proposed at the rear of Buddens Green and 12 homes on the brownfield site of Manroy's with a small amount of a field which lies to the right. The PC had held a consultation process in the village hall as well as RDC's online consultation and he hoped residents had responded with their views and preferences to RDC. The PC had put forward two preferences to RDC ¹⁾ Brownfield sites, not green field sites should be used and no sites which came onto Main Street. ²⁾ The PC did not want a large cluster development. We got ^{1 1/2} – one brownfield and Buddens Green. If Buddens Green is developed the village will receive money from the developers. 15 sites were originally put forward. Following the public consultation RDC will decide the sites and that will then go through the planning process and then the PC will be informed.

8.50 – CB halted the meeting to invite public questions. *Mr Baverstock said of part of the field (Bushy Field) for the proposed 16 houses, in the scheme by RDC it is designated as residential land with the rest being amenity land. If the application goes through and it is tested by an inspector and if the development boundary expands there will be a rush of developers wanting to build on that piece of land. Mr Horton said it should be sufficient to say this is green field in an AONB. CB asked for only comments applicable to the DASA. Mr Bowler said he was against development at Hobbs Lane. He reiterated his reasons given and recorded in the January minutes. Mr Horton said we should ask for the Inspector's report of 10 years ago to be implemented ie building should not take place to the rear of Buddens Green and the area should be kept open.*

8.56 – the meeting recommenced.

Reports from County and District Councillors.

County Cllr AD:- ESCC's budget for 2017/18 involves making savings of £17m. Council has agreed proposals which include raising the 3% ASC levy allowed by central government to meet some of the rising costs of social care and raising council tax by 1.99%. Services in East Sussex will receive £365m of the budget. Funding from central government did not fall as far as expected, although the trend is down to 27m now

from £124m six years ago. At the same time, there has been an increased need for services, particularly with the ageing population and a rise in the over 65's and a very significant rise in children with SEND. An amendment was added to the budget allocating more funding for road and pavement improvements, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and Youth Cabinet. Additional funding for the Community Match Scheme (up to £250,000 pa now) which is very useful to Parish Councils has also been allocated. *A £1.2m funding boost from central government is available to help people walk and cycle more especially to work with money focused on schemes from Newhaven to Hastings, Rother and South Wealden. There will be money to create 'cycling hubs' and grants to community groups to promote walking and cycling and cycling 'challenges'. *A plaque has been unveiled marking ESCC's commitment to tackling domestic and sexual violence and abuse. ESCC has been reaccredited as a White Ribbon authority two years after it became only the second county council in the country to receive the designation in 2014. White Ribbon status is awarded by the White Ribbon Campaign, the UK branch of a global effort to stop violence against women. The authority is part of **Safe in East Sussex**, the county's **Safer Communities Partnership**, which aims to reduce acceptance of violence and abuse so women can have safe violence-free relationships. AED asked for the PC to consider replacing the fencing round the field used by the children at the school.

District Cllr MM:- Council tax will increase by approximately 6p per week to a band 'D' property.

Reports from Parish Councillors.

SE said the new dog bin was in situ. Members joined CB in sending thanks to Robin Evans for erecting the bin.

MRO reported many mole hills on the recreation ground. The 'phone box on Main Street had been vandalised and he had found a parts supplier. Members agreed he should purchase parts in the name of the PC. **MRO.**

DEO – the litter bin at the Rose and Crown has been replaced by ESCC.

TL asked if the village award could be made in the name of the late Ron Juden. Members agreed this would be a nice gesture in his memory.

5 **Planning ... continued ...**

RR/2011/1617/P - 2 Great Knelle Cottage, Whitebread Lane. - Domestic zero carbon renewable energy system incorporating solar panels and micro wind turbines for an off grid cottage. Members discussed the height of the turbine and the visual impact on the landscape and one member pointed out this is fast becoming the future way forward in energy. Members voted in **support of the application 5:0.**

RR/2017/132/L - Methersham Manor, Hobbs Lane. Installation of steel canopy in fireplace and lining system in chimney and works to flue. Members **supported the application 5:0.**

Withdrawn

RR/2016/2810/L – Hayes Farm, Hayes Lane. Repair of timbers to west elevation. Repair of timbers to basement. Replacement of ventilating windows to basement.

6 **Matters arising:**

a **Playground equipment** – report from the PC team for playground equipment. The team had selected equipment from the three plans presented and would bring its plan to the next meeting. TL said the plan totalled just over £40K and suggested if the PC increased its contribution to £15K match funding could be applied for from RDC. The balance of just over £10K could be obtained by approaching outside companies for funding or a piece of equipment. PC would consider the plan and request for extra funds at the March meeting. **March agenda.**

b **Tree inspections** for insurance purposes – on hold.

c **BPC website** – progress and the best way forward (SE). Two companies had been shortlisted and SE would ask one to produce a demo site for perusal. Members said they would like to see a host of information on the site including what's on in the village, clubs, weather etc. **SE/March.**

d **Village Award** – advertising arrangements. SE would design a poster and advertise it in the village and on the website. Clerk would print 50 copies of the supporting documents. **SE/Clerk.**

e **Groundworks** - consider quotes for the 2017 contract and appoint a contractor. Two of the three contractors to be asked to supply more details of how the contract would be carried out. DEO asked for the keys to be returned from Tim Jordan Ltd. MM would seek references on IdVerde. **MM/Clerk.**

7 **Dog bins** – new bin and emptying of bins by the contractors (Kier). ESCC have erected a new bin at the Rose and Crown. A new dog bin has been erected on Main Street, close to the church and members expressed their grateful thanks to Robin Evans for carrying out this work. MM questioned collection saying Kier had stated last year no more bins would be added to their contract. Clerk said last October, before she purchased bin No.5 for the top of the recreation ground, she had checked with RDC to ensure

a bin could be added to our contract. She was told to proceed and let RDC know when it was installed and they would contact Kier. MM asked the Clerk to give him details of her contact at RDC and he would chase up. **MM.**

- 8 **Footpath reports** from Jennifer Branson. Footpath 35A and 20a/Northiam 24b/Northiam 24c. Reports had been sent to ESCC about stiles, gates, way markers and undergrowth which require attention.

9.10 – meeting halted. Mr Horton said he had paid for work to be carried out on footpath 19 and more work was required, which he considered should be done by ESCC. Clerk advised ESCC had looked at the path and said due to underground springs work would not be financially viable. Mr Horton said he believed work should be done. It was suggested Beckley's footpath officers be asked to take a look. **Clerk advise J.Branson.**

9.11 – meeting reconvened.

- 9 **Speed watch** – January results – DEO reported 53 recorded speeding vehicles, five with excessive speeds and 42 letters sent.

- 10 **Funeral arrangements for Mr Ron Juden** - 16 February at All Saints Church, Beckley at 10.15 followed by the Committal at Hastings Crematorium at 11.45am.

- 11 **Consider donations to:-**

Beckley Pre School (requested by RP). Clerk to ask what in particular did they want money for. **Clerk.**

Beckley Village Centre. Members unanimously agreed to donate £500 towards running costs.

Ron Juden – in Ron's memory to The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. Members unanimously agreed to donate £100.

- 12 **Accounts** – to consider and approve accounts submitted for payment.

Amounts over £100 show reclaimable VAT where applicable.

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
BVH (room 14 Dec)		12.00	C Broadbent – Artwrite - printing		15.00
Mrs M Lenton bin emptying		35.00	Glasdon U.K. Ltd – dog bin	25.33	152.02
Admin costs		650.00	SALC LCR magazine		17.00

Proposed by DEO, seconded by SE and agreed.

- 13 **Matters** councillors would like to have considered as an agenda item for the next meeting. TL said Mr Thurston, from the school, would like to attend the meeting and report on school matters.

Public Questions:- Mr Horton asked about oak trees at the bottom of Buddens Green which he had asked RDC to put a TPO on. MM said he would look into it. Mr Horton said he felt the village lacked in a place where people could meet up for a coffee and chat and he had an idea of a plan and he was also concerned about vandalism in the village. **MM.**

- 14 **Date of the next Parish Council meeting** - Wednesday 8 March 2017.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.