

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Beckley Village Centre on WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2017 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors Christopher Broadbent (CB) Chairman, Mrs Deborah Ongley (DEO) Vice Chair, Mrs Lauren Dobson (LD), Mrs Sue Evans (SE), Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) and Mike Rowe (MRO), County Councillor Ms Angharad Davies (AD) and District Councillors Ian Jenkins (IJ) and Martin Mooney (MM).

IN ATTENDANCE: (Minutes recorded by Cllr Mrs Dobson). Nine 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.

- **Remembering Ron Juden** – Mr Keith Hunt spoke on behalf of the Beckley Players and the Horticultural Society. The two groups are raising money for a village sign in memory of Ron Juden. It is envisaged that the sign will depict aspects of Beckley village and its history and be in a similar style to those in Staplecross and Cripps Corner, of painted aluminum. Estimated cost is £4-5k of which £2k has been collected already. Could the council consider three things i) support in principle for the scheme, ii) whether a donation from the PC would be possible and iii) ideas on possible siting. Sites being considered include the green space beside the school and the triangle of grass near the church. The site needs to avoid hedges and narrow verges. Designs will be circulated for consultation in the village and the necessary planning consents obtained. Council supportive of idea and donation to be considered at next meeting. MM asked why not iron to reflect the history of iron works in the locality, rather than aluminium. IJ suggested wood might be more favourable than metal. Most felt the triangle near the church was a good site, but AD mentioned there had been previous discussions about who owned that piece of land and ownership would have to be clarified.
- **Potential farm shop** – Charley from Charley and Nick's real food based at Ross Farm, Furnace Lane, said the successful 15 acre pig farm is looking to set up a local farm shop in Beckley. Previously identified sites have fallen through and they would like suggestions for possible sites. Location is key and Main Street versus the farm presents pros and cons. A pop up shop in a trailer is an option but introduces issues with stocking and power. All produce would be local and no competition with Jempsons or the Spar. A detailed paper was provided for councillors to consider. Estimated that the shop would need 7 customers a day, each spending £15-£20, to be viable. General support and any comments and suggestions from the PC would be welcomed.
- **Speed watch update:** Mr Andrew Seymour said the Beckley speed watch group is managing three sessions a month but more volunteers are needed. Drivers seem to be starting to slow down, but not enough. Fastest speed recorded recently is 57mph. The signs previously requested are still not available. There are two cameras usually kept at Battle and Rye for local speed watch groups and would the PC consider getting a camera for Beckley? **Councillors would discuss at a later meeting.**
- **RNLI appeal.** As Chairman of Rye Harbour RNLI Andrew outlined the current fundraising appeal. The Rye Harbour RNLI lost its boat in a crash three years ago and is raising funds to replace. The boat is well used with 17shouts in 2015, 39 in 2016 and four so far in 2017. Total needed is £215k. £150k raised already. Would the PC consider a donation? **Councillors agreed to discuss at May meeting.**
- **Beckley Motors application** – Mr Trevor Ovenden addressed the council with regards to the planning application for new buildings on the old Beckley Motors site (agenda item 4). He outlined the changes that have taken place since the application in 2016. A financial viability study has been carried out. ESCC has published its draft DASA plan which includes a site with the same criteria as the Beckley Motors site (i.e. a former business site that has been empty for sometime). The site is in the development boundary and it can't be sold as a going concern and houses are needed in the village.

Reports from County and District Councillors:-

County Cllr AD - report is attached. Today was the last day to register to vote in the local elections. The Battle library is undergoing a significant revamp which should yield excellent renewed facilities. **District Councillors – IJ** reported enforcement officers visited the Northlands Farm site last week. Metal furniture is on site but

nothing has been erected, a planning application is in process and will be on the next Northiam planning meeting agenda. Following positive research Peasmarsh PC has discussed continuing the extra bus service when the agreement expires end of May. For the service to continue all three parishes must support it. Northiam will discuss the agreement at their May meeting **May agenda.**

Councillors agreed a postcard advertising an over 55's active/health initiative be put on PC noticeboard.

MM – last audit meeting County auditors noted benefits payments of £20m. RDC continues looking for ways of raising revenue and is considering developing some sites. There is discussion with CC about a new leisure centre.

AD said councillors find written reports time consuming and suggested verbal reports in future. General discussion around reports followed and members said County and District Cllr attendance was important and appreciated.

Reports from Parish Councillors:-

TL – the school fete is on 1st July and the school would like to use the field please. **Agreed.** Suggestion was made for a possible 'village in bloom' competition for future years. Cllrs agreed it was a positive initiative and suggested the Horticultural Society could lead. **CB discuss with Horticultural Society Chair Phil Maynard.**

MRO had recently attended a RALC meeting. Police said they are sometimes able to accompany village speedwatch teams. Police also happy to visit village assemblies. **MRO inform Speedwatch coordinator.**

DEO – villagers are still ignoring the signs and allowing dogs to run off leads on the Jubilee field, it is frustrating but not sure what else can be done.

The PC meeting commenced at 8.05pm.

- 1 **Apologies** for absence had been received and were accepted from Clerk Valerie Ades (bereavement) and Cllr Parsons (no childcare).
- 2 **Declarations of interest.** To receive any disclosures under the Council's Code of Conduct. LD, SE, TL and DEO declared an interest in Beckley pre-school, item 10.
- 3 **Minutes of the PC meeting held on 8th March 2017.** Agreed as correct and signed by CB.
- 4 **Planning** – to consider any planning applications received from RDC and any other planning matters. MRO explained that the last item on the agenda, **RR/2017/608/P**, would not be discussed as it falls within the parish of Northiam.

RR/2017/510/P – Beckley Motors, Main Street. Demolition of petrol service station and all associated buildings. Erection of one detached dwelling with garage and one pair of semi-detached dwellings with associated parking and landscaping. This application is a resubmission from last January. Previously supported 5:0 by PC but refused by RDC on basis of EC3, whereby business premises have to demonstrate efforts to sell as a going concern and no possible buyer before an application for development or change of use can be made. A financial viability assessment has now been completed and it was felt that a mixed development was unlikely to be a success. Councillors noted a slight change to the previous application with the proposed semi-detached properties losing the integral garage to make space for an additional living room. Councillors recalled a number of comments in relation to flooding had been made previously and noted and felt contamination of the land due to use as a petrol station would need consideration. One councillor stated it was ironic that one villager was looking for shop premises and here was a shop being developed. The ESCC Cllr agreed the site might be perfect for such a venture; other councillors disagreed because of the size of the site. With one comment about the need for the view to fields to be maintained councillors voted **in support of the application 5:1.**

RR/2017/681/P - Watcombe Cottage, Bixley Lane. Demolition of existing dwelling to be replaced with new 3 bedroom detached house. Councillors discussed and there were views for and against the proposal. Comments included that the proposed new building was interesting and made better use of the plot, was not in keeping with the rural landscape and the second elevation was a concern. **Members voted 3:2 against with one abstention.**

RR/2017/561/O – Stoddards Depot – Opposite Stoddards Lane, Whitebread Lane. Certificate for existing lawful use of open storage yard for building and road building materials, temporary shelters, plant and machinery. Assuming the information provided about previous and current usage is correct councillors saw no reason to oppose the application. A comment was made that the site is on a tight bend for trucks going in and out. Councillors did not feel they had sufficient information on the site's usage or the certification process. **No votes were cast.**

RR/2017/608/P, The Oak House, Beckley Road, Northiam. Variation of condition 2 imposed on RR/2014/1448/P to relocate sand school 20m away from the southern boundary. **Not discussed as outside of parish boundary.**

Planning Approvals:-

RR/2017/1636P & 1637L Forge House, Main Street. Flat roofed rear extension. Replacement of roof lights on rear extension. New window to front. Alterations to existing first floor side windows.

RR/2017/132/L – Methersham Manor, Hobbs Lane. Installation of steel canopy in fireplace and lining system in chimney and works flue.

5 Matters arising:-

a **Playground equipment team report.** LD outlined progress so far. Four quotes have been received ranging from 40k to 80k. Two companies were discounted, one on cost and one didn't provide full quote requested. The companies left, Streetscape and Wicksteed, both have good offers, but Wicksteed is currently the front runner based on more choice and initiative such as willingness to incorporate some of old equipment in design. More information required to finalise the design. Current funds are £15k from the PC plus an additional £1789.70 raised by the Better Beckley project that is being held by the Beckley fund. The Beckley fund may also have some money available if approached. Before the team starts to approach various avenues for match and additional funding it is keen to boost the starting pot as much as possible so it is planning a fundraiser and suggested a car boot sale and dog show on the Jubilee field. Sellers to drive on to the field, buyers to park outside. Refreshments for sale in village hall. Suggested date 28th May. £10 a car plus take from refreshments. Dog show £2 an entry. There will be some costs for rosettes and catering. General support given.

Review progress at next meeting. SE raised an idea that the new play park be built on land next to the school. Much further thought needed, especially around inhibitions of the deed, noise levels to neighbours, the effect on the school and its use of the field. Councillors asked to consider the suggestion and bring views to next meeting for a vote.

b **BPC website update.** Site now up and running though teething issues remain and are likely to for the next few weeks. Issue of incorrect images being dealt with. Cllrs asked to send photos to SE for inclusion and review the new site for omissions or inaccuracies. CB thanked SE for all her efforts in getting the site up and running.

c **Speedwatch** - March results and signs were discussed in public session at start of meeting. The last month saw 75 vehicles travelling over 30mph. Signs to be chased up. **Clerk.**

d **Report following meeting with Mr Thurston, Beckley School regarding field security.** MRO reported the meeting hasn't yet taken place. **CB and MRO to arrange in coming weeks.**

e **Parish Assembly** – Cllrs discussed whether an assembly was mandatory and concluded that, as the timing was mandatory (before end of May) the event itself must be and actually it was a good opportunity to show people what's happening in the village. Date agreed Thursday 25th May at 7.30pm. CB cannot attend. LD said her workload may interfere with her attendance. Cllrs agreed to provide wine and sausages, which had been well received last year. Agenda item suggestions included village sign and location, farm shop, playground update, local clubs and societies, speedwatch, police presence, carboot. Agenda to be finalised at May meeting. It is important residents are aware it is not a PC meeting but a village meeting, attended by the PC and others.

6 **Discuss ideas for a village sign.** This was covered under public questions at the start of the meeting. Request for a contribution from PC to be placed on next agenda. **May agenda.**

7 **Flight paths over Beckley** – IJ reported that concerns have been raised by a number of residents. Flight paths have been lowered to reduce impact of pollution around airports. **MM** understands a review and second consultation will be held in September that will be an opportunity to feedback following the initial consultation in 2015. CB asked for it to be stressed that we want planes to fly higher. Differing views expressed by IJ and MM with regards to the September review. **MM** undertook to double check situation with Lead member for transport at RDC and report back.

8 **Consider appointing a general handyman** – A member of the public, Mr Wil Morris, kindly volunteered to take on this role.

9 **Bark for play area** has been delivered – arrangements will be made to have it spread. **CB.**

10 **Consider request from Beckley pre-school** for donation towards cost of new equipment. Due to

declarations of interest only CB and MRO could vote. Three options identified, astro turf for outside play area (Ofsted requirement) £600, educational rugs £240 and playfood £160. **A donation of £400 was agreed** to cover the cost of the rugs and playfood.

- 11 **Agree dog waste bin collection contract 2017/18.** Six bins - £842.40p. MRO proposed, TL seconded - **agreed.**
- 12 **Consider setting up a PC direct debit payment card for restricted purchase use.** Briefly discussed and agreed.
- 13 **Assets register** – assets and values were considered and agreement made to finalise register as drafted. **Action Clerk.**
- 14 **Accounts** – to consider and approve accounts submitted for payment.
Amounts over £100 show reclaimable VAT where applicable.

Recipient	VAT £		Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
BVH - Hall 8.2.17			17.00	Reimbursement MRO. Glass for BT boxes. Unicorn Restorations		14.04
Mrs M Lenton			55.00			
Admin costs			650.00			
Reimbursement – V Ades for:-		Total £				
Stamps		6.60		SSALC – ESALC subs £259.03 NALC subs £58.95		317.98
Tesco HP Computer	81.83	488.00				
Currys /PC World Epsom printer	15.00	89.99				
Bexhill Comp. Repairs – computer setup		25.00	609.59	Kent Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance - donation		250.00

DEO proposed and TL seconded the accounts to be paid.

- 15 **Public Questions** – not to exceed 15 minutes. **Q.** Where does the PC stand in terms of developing the land at Bushy Field at the back of Buddens Green, will it be using a section 106 to impose conditions on the development and can a CIL be used as a means of raising money for improved amenities such as the play area? **A.** CB explained that going into discussions with Rother DC the PC had clear ‘red lines’ that the twenty houses should be split into smaller groups, that brown field sites should be used and that the rural character of the village, with the countryside coming into the village, be maintained. The preferred sites Rother has put forward (the old Manroy site, Hobbs lane and Buddens Green) meets two and a half of these objectives. On private applications the PC remains firm on the countryside continuing to come into the village and size of developments being in keeping with a small rural village. The PC is keen to preserve as much of the rural character of the village as it can.

Q. Would be too late to re-do the presentation / Q&A mornings the PC held during the consultation (at the Farmers Market and a week later at the village hall) at the parish assembly? **A.** MRO said there would be little gained at this stage but there would be a further consultation in the autumn and the PC would look to offer further opportunity for comment and discussion then. **MM** explained the report in the autumn will be more in depth with details on each site and definitely worth people reading.

Q. If the current application for 16-20 houses on Bushy Field by Buddens Green goes ahead would this count in favour of the 20 houses required by 2028. **A.** At a previous PC meeting MRO’s assertion that it would was contradicted by MM. However, IJ has since stated that the houses would count.

Further questions were asked in relation to the preferred sites in the consultation document. **Q.** Although the document meets most of the PC’s objectives presumably it is dependent on the Manroy land being available. **A.** No firm response as not yet known. **Q.** Is the Buddens Green site problematic due to covenant restrictions? **A.** It is understood the proviso when the original eight houses were built was that there would be further development behind at a later date. However, not all the land is owned by the PC which could be an issue. Any remuneration would be for the benefit of the village.

- 16 **Matters** councillors would like to be considered as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Date of the next Parish Council meeting Wednesday 10 May 2017.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

A private meeting continued to discuss the Clerk's annual review (due October 2016).