

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held by ZOOM video link at 7.30pm on Tuesday 1 SEPTEMBER 2020.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) Chairman, Christopher Broadbent (CB), Roderick Chapman (RC), Stephen Thorneycroft (ST)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs V Ades (Clerk), County Councillor Ms. Angharad Davies. *District Cllr Martin Mooney (MM) joined the meeting at 8.18pm.*

1. **Public Questions – (10 minutes)** to allow questions from members of the public following which they may leave the meeting if they wish but must remain silent if they stay. A further period of public question time is allowed at the end of the meeting. Names of those speaking may be recorded and may be reported in the minutes. None.
 2. **Apologies for absence:** District Cllrs Tony Ganly was unable to access the video link and Martin Mooney was having difficulty – he joined at 8.18pm.
 3. **Declarations of interest** whether personal or personal/pecuniary in accordance with the current Code of Conduct regarding matters on the agenda. None.
 4. **Reports from County, District and Parish Councillors.** County and District Councillors reports had been circulated. **CB** - had received a telephone call from a resident at Clay Hill saying a layby opposite her house she used for parking on had been claimed by a new resident. He had advised her to check with ES Highways to ascertain if ES owned the land.
AD added to her report the recent cumulative rate of Covid-19 cases reported in East Sussex was 1681 confirmed (301.7 rate per 100,000 of population) and 100 deaths in total.
TL – Police report states diesel thefts are occurring.
 5. **To consider and approve** the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the PC meeting of 4 August 2020. The date of the meeting in the heading was changed from 7 July to 4 August. The minutes were then accepted – *to be signed when live meetings recommence.*
 6. **Planning Applications** – none.
 7. **Covid-19** - update on matters or any concerns within the village. Nothing to report.
 8. **MUGA** – seating has been ordered from Sovereign Sports - £1850 and delivery is awaited. The tennis net wire has been broken. Phil Maynard to be asked to check who was the last user. **Clerk.**
 9. **Telephone box** – repairs have been carried out by Mike Rowe and he suggests the boxes be repainted in 2021. **Agreed.**
 10. **Request from the Village Centre** for a PC noticeboard for wall outside of the Centre. Residents report they are unable to read the agendas as the centre has been closed. Members said there are three noticeboards in the village and for health reasons no notices will be posted until the pandemic subsides, so there would be no point in putting one up outside of the centre. Currently, only the website is being updated. TL will contact the Village Centre Committee. **TL.**
 11. **Speeding vehicles through Beckley.** Report from a resident and consider subscribing to hiring a radar camera. With the assistance of RALC, many villages are campaigning with the police and ESCC to have speeding motorists prosecuted as currently few, if any, motorists caught speeding are prosecuted. At present Beckley hires a camera from Rye Police to carry out speed checks. A Black Cat radar camera costs in excess of £2K. Members concluded until figures could be produced to prove prosecutions were being made there was no point in purchasing a camera.
 12. **ES Highways - grass verge cuts 2021.** CB will arrange to meet with IdVerde to obtain costs for the 2021 verge/grass cutting season. **CB.**
- 8.18pm** – *after difficulty in logging in (video link) MM joined the meeting.*
13. **Tree Warden Vacancy and PC responsibilities on tree safety.** MM will supply the Clerk with details of a person who may be interested in the position. He asked councillors to put together their requirements. **MM/Clerk.**
 14. **Data Protection policy 2018 & GDPR Risk Assessment** - Should the PC appoint a Data Protection Officer? As the Clerk advised she holds little, if any, personal data and members felt they held nothing on their computers they agreed not to appoint an officer. MM suggested the Clerk contact RDC's officer and ask if they would act. **Clerk.**
 15. **RDC Local Plan update** – discussion and any response to submit on the 'Early Engagement' Form. Form has been returned.

16. **Local Government – Changes to the Current Planning System** – discussion and any response. ST said he would like RDC to be asked if they were considering plans from a Community Land Trust that wishes to build 100 houses at Horseshoe Lane. He expressed concerns over the above document which appeared to give precedence to developers to build houses in quantity and only build affordable homes if the number they propose exceeds 50. This would stop affordable homes being built in many villages making renting the only option to many. PC will ask what RDC is doing about the new proposals and MM was asked to investigate. **Clerk/MM.**
17. **Private email addresses - Clerk** to report on use by Parish Councillors. The Clerk explained the possible consequences of councillors using their private email addresses for PC work. CB and EE said they could not receive emails on their PC addresses and they were asked to contact Netwise for details of how to fix any problems. As a number of past and present councillors have had problems setting up the PC emails, or have experienced failures in the system, it was suggested that the PC looks into considering a different provider. **Clerk.**
18. **Bank reconciliation** – approve first quarter’s figures. Proposed by TL and seconded by CB.
19. **Accounts** for approval (*Reclaimable VAT shown for items exceeding £100*).

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs		910.00	V Ades - reimbursement Unicorn		24.48
			Restorations - tel box glass - repairs		

The accounts were accepted for payment.

20. **Date of next meeting – Tuesday 6 October 2020.**
21. **Matters** for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting.
22. **Public questions** - not to exceed 10 minutes. None.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

ESCC Report for Parish Councils - September 2020 - Angharad Davies, ES County Councillor Northern Rother

East Sussex continues to see a low rate of infection for Covid/19. The recent cumulative rate is 298.8 cases per 100,000 of population. Total cases in East Sussex= 1665, total number of deaths has reached 100. Our local hospitals have few cases of Coronavirus now. However, residents can help control spread of the virus by getting tested if they develop symptoms, by sharing information about recent contacts if they test positive, and by self-isolating if advised to do so.

On the East Sussex web page: Coronavirus-help and support

The **Emergency Active Travel Fund** intends to provide local authorities with help to restart local transport, to promote more walking and cycling, alongside safe social distancing in our high streets and town centres. ESCC has been allocated £535k in Phase 1 and potentially £1.916m in Phase 2. Phase 1 includes road closures, footway widening, improved signage, and enhanced cycling routes across a number of areas. The campaign encourages families to walk or cycle to school.

ESCC is running a campaign to encourage East Sussex parents to **send their children back to school**. This commenced on 17th August. There are adverts on local radio, on the sides of buses, at bus stops, on social media, and on banners outside schools. The campaign aims to reassure parents that everything possible has been done to make schools safe and ready for children to return. Children are at very low risk of becoming ill with Covid/19. A redesigned curriculum, revised timetables, hand sanitiser stations, reorganisation of school furniture, increased cleaning, and safety markings inside and outside school buildings are measures being adopted by Primary and Secondary schools. Our local Consultant Community Paediatrician said "research shows that children are less affected by the Covid/19 virus, they are very unlikely to become seriously unwell if they do carry the virus, and even those with complex health needs are not affected to a greater extent than they are with other common viruses. Children are not super-spreaders. The role children play in passing on the virus is very limited".

Projects to help the East Sussex economy has been boosted by £11m from government funding. All eight schemes put forward by ESCC to deliver jobs and aid economic recovery have been supported by the **"Getting Building Fund"**. Projects include the conversion of a building in Newhaven to create commercial space for marine sector businesses, the restoration of a Victorian pavilion in Eastbourne's Winter Gardens, and the creation of retail, leisure, office, and community space in the Observer Building in Hastings. Also being developed is the world's first large-scale solar farm to directly power electrified railways in East Sussex. This funding is part of £85m secured by the Local Enterprise Partnership, SELEP, for a total of 34 projects across East Sussex, Kent and Essex.

A consultation on the effects of **alcoholism** opened on 13th August. The public are being asked about the effects of drinking on everyday life, and whether these have increased due to lock down and the pandemic. Drinking alcohol is a complex issue, on the one hand being a part of many peoples' social lives, and on the other hand being a healthy industry which sustains jobs and livelihoods. Alcohol also causes harm and serious health complications, and consumes millions of pounds of taxpayers' money. Often the harm is greatest for the poorest. For more information: Alcohol consultation

Cash boosts of between £1000 and £15,000 are being made available for projects to help prevent **suicide and self-harm** in people at high risk. Groups and organisations have till September 7th to apply for a share of the **Suicide Prevention Fund**, launched by Sussex Health and Care Partnership. Funding can only be given to constituted groups. Voluntary Action in East Sussex can provide details of how to set up a constituted group. Contact libby.hill@eastsussex.gov.uk

The pandemic has had a huge effect on many peoples' lives. People finding it difficult to cope are being encouraged to ask for help **from Community Connectors**. This is a service set up to improve mental health and well being. Between April and June, the service-commissioned by ESCC and the CCGs, and delivered by Southdown---received only 147 referrals, compared to nearly 400 between January and March. People can self refer, or refer through their GP. The team at Community Connectors works in partnership with GPs in Hastings, Rother, Eastbourne, Seaford and Hailsham and can connect face-to-face or virtually or by phone. More information from: www.southdown.org/CommunityConnectors

As part of the continued recruitment drive to bring more Police Officers to Sussex, the Force is now recruiting over 90 new PCs to join the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship Scheme. Women, particularly, are being encouraged to join.

The PCC has a community safety fund, with grants of up to £5000 available for groups providing crime diversion and prevention activities that deliver positive and lasting impact for residents. Please check the PCC website for more information.

ESCC has secured £500,000 which it is hoped will support up to 250 businesses to grow, and create more than 100 new jobs. The project, part of **SE Business Boost**, and funded by the European Regional Development Fund, will also offer assistance to new enterprises and support local women and BAME entrepreneurs.

Call the Business East Sussex Growth Hub on 01273 335878 - or email: info@businessseastsussex.org.uk

District Councillors' report – September 2020

Introduction to charges in some car parks to protect spaces

With Civil Parking Enforcement introducing on-street parking charges in Bexhill, Rye and Battle from 29 September 2020 it is anticipated that the knock-on impact will be increased use of some of our car parks.

To help cover the additional maintenance costs of increased use, and protect spaces for fair use by residents, businesses and visitors, we are proposing to introduce parking charges into a small number of car parks, and changing the charges in others to bring them more in-line across the district. This will affect a small number of parking areas close to streets that are affected by the on street charges and residents parking permits. The changes will help ensure fair availability of parking spaces and deter anti-social parking. The charges will contribute towards the increased maintenance cost without extra cost to the taxpayer.

This will be the first time that car park charges have changed since 2014; only one car park will see an increase, and Eversley Road car park will see a reduction. The De La Warr car park will remain the same.

A communication strategy is in place and businesses that may be directly affected will be contacted . The changes will be timed to coincide as near as possible with the start of on-street parking charges from 29 September.

The following car parks will have charges introduced:

- Egerton Park
- Front of Town hall -weekend & Bank holidays only
- Galley Hill –foot
- Galley Hill –top
- Manor Gardens
- Polegrove - Richmond Rd
- War Memorial
- Rye Salts

Funding to reimburse council's loss of income

The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have announced they will partially reimburse councils for the loss of income from sales, fees and charges. An early estimate is that a grant of about £341,000 may be achieved. This is based on the first 5% loss being met by the Council and 75% being met by the grant. Not all income is covered, in particular, commercial rental income. In addition, the Government is not expected to cover losses caused by local decisions rather than the national restrictions.

Online advice and support for food businesses

The Food Standards Agency has developed a new online campaign to provide advice for food businesses. [Here to Help](#) provides access to practical information, guidance, case studies, industry insight and webinars to help food businesses get back and stay on their feet following the challenges of COVID-19 and remain compliant with food hygiene and safety requirements. The campaign will be updated over the summer in response to the changing needs of food businesses.

Defra grant and food partnerships

East Sussex County Council has received nearly £600,000 in grant funding from the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) to support those who are struggling to afford food due to the virus. Plans for spending the grant have now been finalised and will address the immediate food security needs of our communities whilst also forming part of a broader programme of investment and strategic actions to address the impact of COVID-19 and support recovery from the pandemic. This will be done through:

- providing funding to East Sussex's 15 food banks based on need
- offering small grants to organisations that can either work with food bank users to address the cause of their food poverty or provide routes out of food bank usage
- reserving some funds that could be used for food box delivery in future
- supporting the development of local and emerging Food Partnerships to help them focus on building food security and sustainability in the longer term
- funding fuel vouchers to people in food poverty via Citizens Advice, and;
- supporting the promotion and communication of the grant programme.

Developing Food Partnerships in East Sussex will be valuable for outbreak planning and to help build security and sustainability in our food system in the longer term. This should help ensure that people have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and preferences, while promoting a healthy life and reducing the needs for foodbanks.

Emma Phillips - PCSO's Report for Beckley. September 2020

Diesel theft is a problem for many farms and rural properties. Fuel tanks stored in rural and isolated locations are very attractive to thieves looking for an easy target.

- Keep tanks stored close to the property where you can see them. If this isn't possible, you should consider installing CCTV to watch over isolated tanks and restrict access with walls, fences and hedges. Security lighting such as 'dusk till dawn' or motion detection lighting can also be an effective deterrent to thieves.
- Remember to check the oil level in your tank regularly. Look for any spilt fuel, marks on the locks or anything else suspicious.
- Avoid installing a storage tank in an isolated area or outlying building.
- Consider using a mobile bowser (tanker) kept in a secure place when not in use.
- Use 'diesel dye', making your diesel traceable and less attractive to thieves.

Also - Not so much in your area at this moment in time, but it has been in recent months, we have been having quad bikes stolen from farms in the Rother area. In regards to these and those crimes that we consider to be cross border related, we have in the last 18 months been working closer with our Kent colleagues, we speak on a daily basis about what is occurring on our respective area, often join each other on patrols and have organised warrants together when appropriate. We also have also developed strong working relationship with farmers on our area. In the past 6 months Sussex Police have also established our own Rural Crime Team.

However, as always, our message to everyone is that we are not able to do this alone. We need local residents to be our eyes and ears, we would ask you to urge anyone who hears or sees anything unusual to report it to us, regardless of how small it is, if it has caught their eye and made them feel uneasy then it's worth us taking a look. We would much rather check something such as a number plate that comes back as genuine, than miss one that is not.
