

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held by Zoom video link at 7.30pm on Tuesday 6 October 2020.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs V Ades (Clerk), District Councillors Tony Ganley (TG) & Martin Mooney (MM) and County Councillor Ms. Angharad Davies (AD) joined at 8.00 pm.

- 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 noted and recorded in the Minutes. None.
- Apologies for absence.** County Cllr Ms Davies would join us after attending Peasmarsh PC meeting.
- Declarations of interest** whether personal or personal/pecuniary in accordance with the current Code of Conduct regarding matters on the agenda. TL stated a personal interest in item 6, planning application RR/2020/1246/P (D) The Granary, Main Street.
- Reports from County, District and Parish Councillors.**

EE reported a pothole in Horseshoe Lane. Clerk said to be reported it must meet the Highways size criteria.

CB had agreed to meet with representatives from RDC to discuss any recommendations we would like to make to see changes in the village to help towards reaching a zero commitment on climate change.

TL had received reports that two children had fallen from the monkey frame at the play park and each had broken an arm. Whilst parents are responsible for their children's safety in the play area, she would have signs put up to remind parents their children must be supervised. She asked for more bark for the play area as she felt this may help in softening any falls. ST said he would collect. **Clerk – order signs and 3 bags of bark.**
- To consider and approve** the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the PC meeting of 1 September 2020. MM requested it be noted in the heading he had arrived late due to technical problems. The minutes were then accepted – *to be signed when live meetings recommence.*
- Planning Applications** – to consider those received from RDC and any other planning matters.

RR/2020/1246/P (D) The Granary, Main Street. Installation of domestic (3.6 kW) Solar PV panels at the bottom of the garden. **(Retrospective).** With a declared interest from TL the **application was approved (4.0).**

RR/2020/1489/P (D) Knelle Hill Lodge, Whitebread Lane. Proposed alternative vehicular access (adjacent to existing access proposed to be stopped up). **The application was supported (5.0).**

Information notification - RR/2020/1576/TN (D) Knelle Gate Cottage - Near, Whitebread Lane. Installation of fixed line broadband electronic communications apparatus - 3 x 9m poles. **The application was supported (5.0).**

Refusal: RR/2020/554/P – Lodge Field Barn, Great Knelle Farm, Whitebread Lane. Change of use of a redundant agricultural building to one residential dwelling.
- Northlands Farm – burial ground** - latest events- **CB.** The owner had posted a note on Facebook about the successful interment of ashes at the farm. It appeared it was legal to bury someone's ashes on private land if the owner agreed, but it was not allowed on commercial/business land without planning consent. **TG will check with Dan Bevan.**
- Covid-19** - update on matters or any concerns within the village. RVA is asking people back to help with shopping etc should the number of infections rise in the area. Villagers have made and sold masks and the proceeds have been divided and donated to Rye Food Bank and the Air Ambulance.
- MUGA –**
 - The shelter has arrived and has been installed.
 - Disturbance to new surface. Weeds are appearing through the new surface. Sovereign has been informed and a meeting will be arranged for them to inspect the area. **TL.**

8pm – AD arrived.

 - Payment arrangements for bookings. The booking app is running, but currently residents do not have to pay when making a booking.

Grass and other vegetation are growing wild along the sides of the MUGA. The Clerk will ask Idverde to cut this back, but to request they do not cut the side where the new shelter is as anything flying from the strimmer could shatter the Perspex covering. ST said to let them know when strimming they should not go too close to the MUGA surface otherwise the edge could be cut into and destroyed. He also requested they be asked to have somebody with a blower machine blowing the cuttings away from the court otherwise seeds from the vegetation will become embedded in the court surface resulting in vegetation growing on the court. **Clerk.**

TL asked AD if she wished to add to her report. AD said ESCC will be funding food banks.

10. **Social Housing land in Beckley** – TL said there is nothing new to report.
11. **Defibrillators** – are pads and batteries in date? Rother Responders look after both defibrillators.
12. **Request from the Village Centre** for a PC noticeboard for wall outside of the Centre. TL said she had agreed to let the Village Centre have a large noticeboard, which Wil has refurbished, to erect on the outside wall. A new one would be purchased for erection close to the MUGA, but the supplier is out of stock at present. **Clerk.**
13. **IdVerde** – 2021 season grass cuts to verges and cost -v- ES Highways. Idverde have submitted a quote in excess to the Highways charge, but there is confusion over how large the verge areas are. Ongoing. **Clerk.**
14. **Website** – problems in setting up email accounts. Consider Netwise's offer to upgrade website foc and suggestions of other providers. Both EE and CB continued to have problems with their email accounts (both have the Apple Mac system). EE's account appeared to working again. CB said he is unable to continue trying to sort out the recurring problems he has in receiving emails on his PC account. In future the PC should use his personal account and he would accept any outcome in the unlikely event that GDPA may become involved. Members confirmed to continue using Netwise, for the time being, and accepted their upgrade offer.
15. **Tree Warden** – invite letter to Brian Doggett and any response. Brian has expressed his interest, but wants more information on what we require. The Clerk will gather this information and send it to him. Members were happy with Brian's suggestion of covering his costs. **Clerk.**
16. **Speed signs not working** – the sign is situated between the Rose and Crown and Chestnut Cottage. Highways is investigating.
17. **Wreath for Remembrance Sunday** – agreement to buy this year's wreath from the British Legion, approximately £20. **Agreed.** TL will find out what the arrangements will be and she will lay the wreath. **TL.**
18. **2021/22 Budget** – Initial ideas and suggestions. Members of the public are invited to submit suggestions. TL asked for the following to be included: a bridge in the Frog Field, benches for the Jubilee Field, repair/replacement of fingerposts. The budget would be discussed again in November. **Clerk.**
19. **Banking** – Clerk's update on any possible new arrangements with accounts, on-line banking, debit card. The Clerk reported her visit to NatWest had resulted in them giving her telephone numbers to call to make the arrangements required. She had had unacceptable service to her telephone calls when, after speaking with officers at some length, she had twice been cut off. On her 3rd call she waited 45 minutes listening to a recorded message that they were busy, before she ended the call and there was a recorded message on the fraud department number saying they were not taking any calls at present. It was agreed she approach Nationwide with a view to transferring the PC's accounts. She would report back at November's meeting. **Clerk.**
20. **Accounts** for approval (*Reclaimable VAT shown for items exceeding £100*). The Clerk apologised for not including an amount of £530.40 for income tax to the £62.94 NI charge to HMRC and asked for this payment to be included. **Agreed.**

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs		379.60	RALC M'ship + Geophere online		75.00
HMRC – Tax £530.40. NI £62.94		593.34	mapping		
Care Signs Ltd		52.80	IdVerde Aug+Sept	42.16	312.89

The accounts were proposed for payment by TL and seconded by RC. Carried.

21. **Date of next meeting – Tuesday 3 November 2020.**
22. **Matters** for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting.
23. **Public questions** - not to exceed 10 minutes. None.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Questions may be emailed to the Clerk at:- clerk@beckleyparishcouncil.org.uk.

Closed Meeting

CLERK'S ANNUAL APPRAISAL

ESCC Report for Parish Councils - October 2020

We are lucky that East Sussex has lower rates of Covid/19 than many parts of the country. As I write this we have one case of coronavirus in the Conquest Hospital. However, numbers of cases are slowly rising and ESHT has been told to prepare more beds for a surge. We all need to reduce infection in our community;

- no more than 6 people inside and outdoors
- keep 2 metres apart
- regularly wash hands
- immediately self-isolate and organise a test if you have symptoms
- wear a mask in shops, on public transport and enclosed public places

Figures on September 11th indicated that the total number of cases in East Sussex is 1776 with a rate per 100,000 population of 325.5

Testing sites are facing increasing demand, and laboratory capability has been prioritised to the areas of high prevalence. For people in the south east this means there will be delays in accessing a test locally, or testing may be offered a considerable distance away. Councils and Resilience Forums across the south east region are lobbying Government hard to do more to meet the increase in demand. To request a test <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or call 119.

ESCC are working hard with partners to prepare against a local outbreak and to support residents and businesses. The local outbreak plan (Public Health) has been updated .

The East Sussex Economy Recovery Plan involves £45m to be injected into our local economy to aid recovery. Among the projects to be funded are:

- Development of the historic Observer Building in Hastings
- A new commercial and medical centre in Bexhill
- A business and skills centre in Lewes
- A new fishing quay in Eastbourne
- The world's first solar farm to power railways in Eastbourne

The plan, published by Team East Sussex-a partnership of business, ESCC, social enterprise, and education representatives, seeks to maximise this funding from central government and the SELEP.

By 11th September children were back in every one of the county's 187 schools and they were catching up on learning after months of disruption. There has been 100% attendance in some schools but overall attendance is around 65%. School transport is running well and still has space available. The positive attitude in children, young people and their parents is making this work. Teachers have worked hard to design new curricula, revise timetables, create hand sanitiser stations, reorganise school furniture, increase cleaning, and make safety markings inside and outside school buildings, plus arranging children into "bubbles". These measures apply to primary, secondary and special schools. Support is available for children who are anxious about returning to school via the Educational Psychology Service, and for children with SEND and their families via the Education Support Behaviour and Attendance Service.

There is a special page on the ESCC website for more information about schools www.eastsussex.gov.uk/backtoschool

Families are being encouraged to travel by foot, bike, or scooter. Parents are being asked to help cut congestion and reduce carbon emissions so as to improve children's' health. There are some revised arrangements for bus timetables and parents are urged to check updates.

Residents struggling to afford food and essentials due to the economic impact of Covid -19 will continue to be given help. Working with voluntary, community groups and food banks, ESCC has developed a range of support for those worse affected. With just under £600,000 from the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural affairs, the county council will offer financial support to the county's food banks, and organisations working with food bank users. Funding will also be made available for Fuel Vouchers via Citizen's Advice. The council plans to support new and emerging food partnerships to address longer term needs, with additional funding from Public Health Covid-19 recovery projects. During lock down ESCC delivered more than 9000 food boxes to vulnerable residents. If any money is unspent it will be redistributed to food banks. www.eastsussex.gov.uk/communityhub

A public consultation was launched on 14th September on reducing the opening hours at The Keep, home to our archive services. The Keep is run in partnership with Brighton & Hove City Council and the University of Sussex. Our MTFP for 2019/20 to 21/22 identified a savings target of £210,000 from the CC's contribution to The Keep budget over this 3 year period. The partnership is considering ways to further reduce the annual running costs of The Keep, including a reduction in public opening hours. The proposals are based on customer usage of the building, opening later in the morning and closing earlier in the afternoon, with 2 additional half day closures. The

Keep would continue to open 5 days per week. Based on an analysis, the impact on visitors would be limited. The consultation closes on 25th October 2020. <https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/>

A new national campaign to find families for children waiting for adoption is being backed by the Regional Adoption Agency for the South East. **#YouCanAdopt** has been launched to tackle misconceptions around eligibility, and to encourage more people to consider adoption, particularly from Black, Asian, and minority backgrounds. Up to 120 children in the south east are in need of an adoptive family at any one time, some are older, some have complex needs or a disability. All want a home. Adoption SE brings together services for East Sussex, Brighton & Hove, West Sussex and Surrey councils. There are systems and support in place to ensure that assessments and preparations can be conducted safely and easily. **#YouCanAdopt** encourages people to take the first steps towards becoming an adoptive parent: www.adoptionsoutheast.org.uk

Businesses and residents in rural areas can be helped by the government's **Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme**. ESCC has invested £500,000 to support the scheme. Currently, those people who are eligible can apply for government funding towards the installation of gigabit capable technology (up to 1000Mbps) with businesses receiving up to £3,500 and residents £1500. Those receiving the government subsidy will automatically receive an additional top-up subsidy of up to £1000 per eligible applicant from ESCC towards the cost of installing fast broadband. Funding is available on a first come first served basis till March 2021. <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/>

The order necessary for **Civil Parking Enforcement** will come into force on 29th September 2020.

East Sussex Highways is currently conducting a long term **tree survey** on the rural roads ie roads not within 30mph speed limits. All trees within falling distance of the highway are being inspected. Works will be done by ES Highways, but private trees have to be dealt with by landowners and a request will be sent for them to organise the work. Any queries to our Customer Service Manager, Corinne Black.

Angharad Davies East Sussex County Councillor Northern Rother

District Councillor's Report - October 2020

ACRE – Action with Communities in Rural England

Over two thirds of rural communities in England may not be able to secure any new affordable houses in the future, a coalition of organisations, led by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) has warned.

We are deeply concerned that the government is looking to water down requirements to provide affordable housing – a change that will disproportionately disadvantage many living in the countryside.

For many years, affordable homes could be built in rural communities using two planning policies – as a requirement on open market developments and rural exception sites. However, these mechanisms could be lost because of changes proposed to the current planning system. Such a move would be catastrophic for smaller villages where property prices are already well beyond the reach of many households.

The change is in contradiction to the Prime Minister's pledge to "give the people of this country the homes we need in the places we want to live, at prices we can afford" as expressed in the Planning White Paper.

ACRE's Chair, David Emerson CBE said, "We are deeply concerned the government is looking to water down requirements to provide affordable housing – a change that will disproportionately disadvantage many living in the countryside. For communities already struggling to retain the employees and owners of local businesses this is a body blow, quite apart from its impact on the customers and providers of local services and the volunteers who provide the social support for vulnerable residents".

Rural communities in England already suffer a chronic and acute shortage of affordable homes to buy and rent. Someone living in the countryside on low earnings needs to spend nine times their income to buy a home in the lower end of the market. Only 8% of the housing stock in social housing, compared with 19% in urban areas. And last year, fewer than 6,000 new affordable homes were built in smaller rural communities – equivalent to less than one new affordable home in each village.

The government is proposing to quadruple the size of residential sites that will require affordable housing. If this change is made, no new affordable homes will be provided on sites of fewer than 40 dwellings. Most residential sites in smaller rural communities are for 10 houses or fewer. There is a limited rural exemption from this change, but it will not apply in almost 70% of smaller villages. Equally harmful is the introduction of First Homes Exception Sites which will cause confusion, inflate land values and destroy the emphasis on local engagement. No longer will communities benefit from the existing rural exception site policy. These provide a mix of affordable homes tailored to specific housing needs and design requirements of the local community.

ACRE, the Rural Housing Alliance, Rural Services Network (RSN) and Plunkett Foundation have written to the Secretary of State calling for rural communities with a population of 3,000 or fewer to be exempt from the new rules, with local councils able to set their own thresholds for affordable housing in these settlements.

The organisations claim that without these revisions – and just when the PM is pledging to make it easier for people to secure homes they can afford – the government will fail to deliver on its agenda to “Level Up” and secure a sustainable and vibrant future for the countryside.

Councillors Martin Mooney & Tony Ganly - Northern Levels Ward.

PCSO REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2020

- During the school holidays a shed within the grounds of Staplecross School has been broken into.
- Between 14/09 – 17/09 an outboard engine has been taken from one of the boats moored on the river - Northiam.
- Between 15/09 – 16/09 red diesel has been stolen from a tractor in the Peasmarsh area.
- A quad bike has been stolen from the Burwash area, between 17/09 – 18/09.
- Between 19/09 – 20/09 2 garages have been broken into along The Street Sedlescombe.
- Between 20/09 – 22/09 a container in Oakland Park Sedlescombe was broken into.
- Overnight from 22/09 – 23/09 a trailer has been stolen from the Burgh Hill, area.
- Between 27/09 – 28/09 a motorcycle has been stolen from Main Street Beckley.