

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held by ZOOM video link at 7.30pm on TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2020.

- PRESENT:** Councillors Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) Chairman, *Christopher Broadbent (CB) see 3 below*, Rod Chapman (RC), Ed Erith (EE) Vice Chair and Stephen Thorneycroft (ST).
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs V Ades (Clerk), District Cllrs Tony Ganly (TG) & Martin Mooney (MM) and *County Cllr Ms. Angharad Davies joined the meeting at 7.50pm after Peasmarsh PC meeting.*
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- 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.
 - Consider any applications for councillor vacancies.** None received. Following incorrect information given regarding councillors relocating, Cllr R Chapman had resigned, but withdrew this when it was established he could serve out his 4-year term. This had been accepted by the Chairman and members agreed to his reinstatement. As some paperwork had been destroyed, he signed an applicable document.
 - Apologies for absence.** Due to a business video conference during the course of the PC meeting CB had to switch between the two meetings.
 - Declarations of interest** whether personal or personal/pecuniary in accordance with the current Code of Conduct regarding matters on the agenda. None.
 - Reports from County, District (see attached) and Parish Councillors.** MM added council tax will increase by 2% for 2021-22.
The Clerk asked the district councillors what happens to the residue of monies after CPE costs have been taken. TG said any money goes to ESCC for their use.
TL said the bin for the Jubilee field had arrived and asked for a volunteer to stake it into the ground. She reported the hedges and paths on Main Street, which have been complained about as overgrown, appear to be on private land which has recently changed hands. New owners not yet known.
EE reported the bollard on the mini roundabout has been flattened and more potholes were appearing on our roads. Clerk will circulate the measurements which potholes must exceed in order to be reported/repared. **Clerk.**
 - To consider and approve** the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the PC meeting of 6 October 2020. **Agreed.**
 - Planning Applications –** to consider those received from RDC and any other planning matters.
RR/2020/589/P Myrobalan, Main Street. Insertion of rooflights and balcony rooflight in rear roof slope as part of conversion of roof space to bedroom, ensuite and study. **Approved before this meeting.**
- 7.50pm Cllr Angharad Davies joined the meeting.**
- RR/2020/1786/P DEL Little Knelle Cottage, Whitebread Lane.** New swimming pool. The plans were sketchy, but members **supported the application 5:0.**
- Permissions granted:**
- RR/2020/509/P - 2 Green View Main Street.** New vehicular crossover for new parking and turning space to allow off road parking by utilising a section of front garden.
- RR/2020/1489 - Knelle Hill Lodge, Whitebread Lane.** Proposed alternative vehicular access (adjacent to existing access proposed to be stopped up).
- Covid-19** - update on matters or any concerns within the village. Rye Mutual Aid has been re-activated and errands are being run by Beckley's volunteers. The MUGA will be closed from Thursday with notices posted.
- AD** was asked about the Covid-19 case in Beckley. She said councils would not normally be advised of individual cases. Adding to her report she said after Cornwall, ES has the 2nd lowest cases of Covid-19 - 57 cases per 100,000. Care homes will receive more PPE and more money for infection control. She said CPE was a non-profit-making and there would be no money pouring into ESCC. Money is available for improvements to Wainright Road car park in Bexhill.- MUGA –**
 - Disturbance to new surface – Sovereign Sports Ltd have attended to the areas where weeds were growing through. EE said the weed will return as the MUGA does not have a membrane. This was not included in the quote. The work was a repair job with a new surface laid over the existing one.
 - Discuss payment of £2220 for shelter to Sovereign Sports. The shelter is installed and invoice can be paid.
- Picnic benches for Jubilee Field.** TL said benches from an unused venue were on sale at knock-down prices and she had secured two for the Jubilee field. Members approved the purchase and thanked her for her quick action.

Chris Makin has chained and bolted these to the ground at a cost for only materials used. Members expressed their thanks to him.

11. **IdVerde** – 2021 season grass cuts to verges and cost -v- ES Highways. The Clerk reported she had received extremely high figures for this work, mainly due to IdVerde's rules that traffic management has to be in place on any road with a speed limit exceeding 40mph. She was asked to obtain a breakdown of traffic management costs and verge cutting costs. If we have to resort to cuts from ESCC she was asked to check with them we wanted only one cut in late summer. **Clerk.**
12. **Tree Warden** – EE's meeting with Brian Doggett. Not yet met, but arrangements are in hand. TL said our trees are at Buddens Green, the Jubilee Field/Frog Field and the land beside the school. **EE.**
13. **Dangerous looking tree on Main Street** in the vicinity of Coombe Lodge Cottage. The residents at Coombe Lodge Cottage and the next door property have been written to asking them to confirm to whom the tree belongs. **Dec.**
14. **Complaint from Mrs Andrew re brambles** causing damage to her fence on the Jubilee Field. Mrs Andrews had spoken with the Clerk and said her fence was damaged due to the weight of the brambles against it. She didn't want all of the brambles removed because she liked them for their fruit and they acted as a barrier against balls kicked from the field hitting her fence, but she would like some removed and recompense from the PC to replace her fence. TL had looked at the fence and felt it required replacing due to its age and the supports were possibly rotten. It was suggested we ask somebody else to give an opinion. The Clerk was asked to get a quote from IdVerde to cut the brambles at ground level and up to the fence and suggest to Mrs Andrew we donate that money to her for her to have the work done. **Clerk/TL.**
15. **Complaint about the hedgerow along Main Street** near Garage Door shop, plus grass overgrowing the footway. TL reported on this in here report – see item 5.
16. **Feedback following distribution of Parish Newsletter requesting helpers for the Frog Field project.** It was very pleasing that several people had registered their interest in helping with the work on the Frog Field, although this would not be until spring time next year.
17. **RALC Conference 21.10.20** – EE reported a matter of concern was because Rother was 79% AONB the formula for housing distribution would mean that those villages outside of the AONB are terrified of becoming housing dumping grounds, Catsfield for example. Therefore, they were hoping for a review on how this would be calculated to better reflect the unique dynamic of the Council area.
18. **Speed sign (VAS) not working** – Highways is investigating. ES had advised the VAS was the PC's responsibility. Clerk will follow up. **Clerk.**
19. **Donation Appeal from the RNLI** (Royal National Lifeboat Institution). Deferred to December. **December.**
20. **2021/22 Budget** – Ideas and suggestions. Members of the public are invited to submit suggestions. The Clerk had circulated a draft budget for members to use when deciding on the 2021/22 precept. TL said she wished to keep the precept at the current £23k. **December.**
21. **Bank reconciliation** – 1 July- 30 September 2020. **Agreed.**
22. **Banking arrangements** – Clerk has deferred the subject to December's meeting due to banks she has approached being unable to arrange meetings during the CV-19 outbreak. She will report back in December. **December.**
23. **Accounts** for approval (*Reclaimable VAT shown for items exceeding £100*). TL said the money for the wreath had not been included. The Clerk said she was waiting for the invoice for approximately £20.

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs		1113.84	IdVerde - Oct	26.08	156.49
V.Ades-reimbursement-Viking ink	16.20	97.18	Makin Fencing Ltd (benches play area)		50.00
Kingfisher Direct (bin Jubilee Field)	27.49	164.96	Care Signs 2xA3 re MUGA		76.20
Total to V Ades		1375.98	Sovereign Sports-shelter Jubilee Field	370.00	2220.00
T. Langmead-re Grafton Projects, stationery £6.99 & TG Property-2 benches for park - £190.00		196.99			

24. **Date of next meeting – Tuesday 1 December 2020.**
25. **Matters** for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting.
26. **Public questions** - not to exceed 10 minutes.

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

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

ESCC - Report for Parish Councils - November 2020

Cases of Sars-Covid-2 causing Covid-19 continue to rise in East Sussex but we are still the second lowest area in the country. Rother has the lowest infection rate at 331.0 per 100,000 population compared with England 1117.9 per 100,000. We are placed in Tier 1.

Stay Well This Winter is this year's flu campaign, launched on October 19th. The campaign aims to vaccinate 3m children aged 2-6 in years 1 and 2, this is a nasal spray vaccine, making this the largest school-based vaccination programme ever in England. Groups being offered adult flu vaccine are: pregnant women, people aged 65 or over, under 65s with long term conditions, and carers. Other people wanting the flu vaccine can obtain this in pharmacies and supermarkets at a cost of £12. Everyone should have the flu vaccine, particularly this winter when we need to cut admissions to hospital for influenza.

ESCC and other local authorities and the NHS in Sussex have joined to ask residents their views in the **Big Health and Care Conversation**. Please join and engage with the Big Debate platform which will be live till November 15th. This is to find out how residents have fared during the pandemic, and to improve the way services are provided in the future. This link is in the Wellbeing section of ESCC web page.

We now have a coronavirus testing site at Eastbourne. The walk-through site at Devonshire Park car park, 80 College Road, Eastbourne will be operated by Sodexo, commissioned by DHSC. This is in addition to the Plumpton racecourse site, also Wainwright Road in Bexhill, and Gatwick airport. A new walk-through testing centre opened on 16th October at the car park of the former Helenswood Academy upper school in the Ridge. All testing facilities collect swab samples which are sent to laboratories for analysis and results.

Book a test at GOV.UK or call 119

All our **Libraries** in East Sussex are now open. Please visit; www.eastsussex.gov.uk/libraries. Customers can order online or by phone any item from the lending stock of the entire county library catalogue free of charge, and have it delivered to their library of choice. Computers will be available during time-limited pre-booked sessions. Buddy sessions will resume and those needing help with virtual job interviews can be offered support at Eastbourne and Hastings libraries. Opening hours are reduced at present due to extra staff needed at each site for enhanced cleaning and Coronavirus rules.

Civil Parking Enforcement went live in Rother on 29th September. The enforcement contractor, NSL, issued 604 warning notices rather than penalty charges during the first couple of weeks. But PCNs are now being issued. All streets in all areas have been visited once so far by enforcement officers. Feedback from residents and passers-by have been positive and people are saying that there are now places to park. Nuisance parking is being dealt with. Yellow line parking has reduced considerably across the District. All resident parking permit applications applied for before 13th October have been issued. Daniel Clarke is the officer in charge of CPE at ESCC. Daniel.clarke@eastsussex.gov.uk

An 18 month scheme to improve **street lighting**, which will reduce council energy bills and lower carbon emissions, started in the middle of October. Additional funding has been secured enabling East Sussex Highways to upgrade 16,000 street light units to high efficiency LED lights and replace 3000 aging concrete street lighting columns as part of a countywide project between now and 2022. Since the wider programme began 6 years ago, 22,000 of the 38,000 street lights in the county have been upgraded to LED lights.

The gritting teams are on standby 24/7 from October 1st to keep our roads ice free. 42 gritter drivers cover 1,592 km of roads through the night and in the early hours of the morning. All 21 vehicles in the ES gritting fleet were recently checked out through Operation Snowdrop, doing a trial run to check vehicles are ready for wintery weather. ES Highways has 8000 tons of rock salt in stock at depots across the county, each gritting run uses approximately 100 tonnes of salt. Over the winter, gritters treat all A and B roads and some C roads--a total of 42% roads across the county, with over 1,252 km of roads treated on a primary route gritting run.

The Leader of ESCC issued a statement recently saying his intention is for ESCC to keep its core offer to residents unchanged in the next budget. If agreed in the February 2021 budget this would be the first time in more than a decade that we have avoided seeking new savings. We are still more hard pressed financially but we think this is not the time to further reduce the services we offer. We have absorbed drastic cuts in our funding from central government since 2010 and the demand for services keeps rising. We know and understand that our residents particularly need support at the present time because of the Covid-19 crisis and we will continue to lobby central government about the difficult situation we face.

Angharad Davies East Sussex County Councillor Northern Rother

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report November 2020.

RDC Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 -2025/26.

The latest financial monitoring for 2020/21 suggests there will be an overspend of £1.9m at outturn and if this happens then revenue reserves will fall to £12.7m after the use of reserves to fund capital expenditure.

By the end of the five year forecast revenue reserves and balances would be approximately £3.5m depending on the final outturn for 2020/21. Should the Council's share of Business Rates fall to the current baseline from 2021/22, then unless there is growth in business rates or additional savings in excess of £1m per annum are delivered, Reserves will be completely depleted by the end of 2024/25.

It should be noted that the net retained income from Business rates for 2020/21 shows a fall of £3.1 million in cash terms

The Plan assumes an increase of 2% on **Council tax** next year and also assumes a fall in the tax base of 750 Band D properties equivalent. Were this to be the case, the additional amount of income raised would be £70,000, or half the amount normally expected. Of particular concern is the rise in households claiming Council Tax Relief (CTR). With the ending of the furlough scheme it is expected that the number of CTR claimants will continue to rise as people are made redundant.

Homelessness demands have increased and a £648,000 overspend is expected in 2020/21. It is expected that such demands will continue to increase.

Staffing costs are expected to reduce by £288,000.

Leisure, Swimming Centres and Cultural Centres are expected to cost an additional £730,000 in 2020/21.

Garden waste charges will increase by £5 each year, reaching £50 per bin by 2024/25.

The current Administration inherited **reserves** of £18 millions in 2019. It is, therefore, of great concern that these reserves are expected to be completely depleted by 2024/25 despite central government funding to counter the impact on the local economy of Covid-19.

Cllrs Tony Ganly and Martin Mooney.

