

# BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held via Zoom video link at 7.30pm on TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2020

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs V Ades (Clerk), District Cllrs Tony Ganly (TG) and Martin Mooney (MM) and one member of the public. *ESCC Cllr Ms Davies (AD) will arrive after attending 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. A resident questioned why had the PC not been informed about the proposal for a new gate on Footpath 7E before giving authorisation. TL informed her the gate was necessary to keep livestock contained on the field and a PC's approval was not necessary. The landowners have been asked to change the gate latch to one approved by ES and the ground around the gate will recover when the weather improves.
  - Apologies for absence.** None.
  - Declarations of interest** whether personal or personal/pecuniary in accordance with the current Code of Conduct regarding matters on the agenda.
  - Reports from County and District Cllrs (reports had been circulated) and Parish Councillors.**

ST drew attention to Sherbourne Bridge Field in Northiam where he said it was believed the new owner intended putting caravans on it. TG said he had spoken with head of planning who was looking into the matter and at ways to try to stop the process. Unfortunately, you cannot monitor sites 24/7. It is believed the new owner lives in Essex and has a history of putting caravans on sites he owns. TL said she will join Northiam's PC meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December when the matter will be discussed in more detail.

TL had received complaints from some residents about the muddy school field. Comments had been received about the mailing shot for the bin stickers, sent through the post. There was concern over how much this exercise had cost the taxpayer, bearing in mind RDC's report last month that their reserves would be completely depleted by 2024/25. TG said he would ask the Joint Waste Committee if they were involved. **TG.**
  - To consider and approve** the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the PC meeting of 6 October 2020. The minutes were approved and will be signed when live meetings recommence.
  - Planning Applications** – to consider those received from RDC and any other planning matters. RC declared an interest in RR/2020/1914/L & 1915/P - Gate House, Horseshoe Lane.
- 7.55pm - AD arrived.**
- RR/2020/1914/L DEL Gate House, Horseshoe Lane.** Proposed single storey extensions with associated internal and landscaping alterations. With one declared interest, the application was **supported 4:0.**
- RR/2020/1915/P DEL Gate House, Horseshoe Lane.** Proposed single storey extensions with associated internal and landscaping alterations. With one declared interest, the application was **supported 4:0.**
- RR/2020/1924/P DEL Lodge Field Barn, Great Knelle Farm, Whitebread Lane.** Change of Use of a redundant agricultural building to holiday accommodation. Members discussed the size of the original residence, which was now a holiday home. CB said he was broadly supportive of viable contributions to the increase in the economic value of tourism locally, and given its priority in local plans. Also, where there was no net increase in building footprint. He noted the significant increase in holiday accommodation in the area through the conversion of redundant agricultural or other buildings, and saw no reason why this application should be excepted. The application was **supported 5:0.**
- Permissions granted:**
- RR/2020/1246/P - The Granary Main Street.** Description: Installation of domestic (3.6 kW) Solar PV panels at the bottom of the garden. (Retrospective).
- Information only:**
- RR/2020/1910/TN D Bixley Lane.** Erect 5 X 10M Medium Poles This notification is for information only.
- Covid-19** - update on matters or any concerns within the village. TL reported there have been some Covid-19 cases in the village and residents must abide by the rules. The volunteering system is back. Masks made by residents are being sold at The Rose and Crown and £60 raised has been donated to Rye Food Bank.

8. **2021 season grass cuts/verges and cost:** Private contractors-v- ES Highways. The Clerk had circulated a letter from Highways inviting Beckley to take part in a trial programme on rural grass verge cutting. However, the information was unclear as it stated '*one visibility cut undertaken around May/June and one 1 metre Swathe with Visibility cuts in the Autumn*'. The Clerk was asked to contact Highways for precise information and CB would draft a letter. **CB**
9. **Tree Warden** – EE's meeting with Brian Doggett. Deferred to January. **EE January**
10. **Dangerous looking tree on Main Street** in the vicinity of Coombe Lodge Cottage. The owners had instructed a tree company to survey the area in January. This is not a PC matter.
11. **Complaint from Mrs Andrew re brambles** causing damage to her fence abutting the Jubilee Field. A fencing specialist had inspected the fence and stated in his opinion the posts had rotted at the base causing the fence to lean, it was not the brambles. IdVerde has offered to cut the brambles at ground level, but Mrs Andrew had already stated she wanted some of the brambles to remain. The Clerk was asked to inform Mrs Andrew we will have the brambles cut, but the fence is her responsibility and report back to members. **Clerk.**
12. **VAS sign.** ES Highways agreed the sign belongs to them and they have repaired it.
13. **Footpaths –:**
  - a. 7E Authorisation for a pedestrian gate.
  - b. 5 – proposed diversion
  - c. 13 – proposed diversion
  - d. 22b – proposed diversion
  - e. 31 – proposed diversion

Members discussed items **b** to **e** and agreed all the diversions. It was felt that many footpaths were ancient and improvements / diversions to them had to move with the times.
14. **Public consultation on the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)** Response requested by 11 Dec. No comments.
15. **Response to Planning Application RR/2020/1672/P** for a gypsy site in Bexhill. A Ms Nicola Woods, a member of 'Residents Against Unauthorised Development in Netherfield', had contacted the Clerk requesting the PC's support over a planning application for a travellers' site in Bexhill, stating she had written to a number of PC's who had given their support. Members agreed they were not familiar with the area in Bexhill and deemed it inappropriate to comment.
16. **2021/22 Budget** – Ideas and suggestions. Members of the public are invited to submit suggestions. None voiced.
17. **Asset Depreciation Policy** – discuss details to set up a policy. CB suggested a 10% decrease across the board. **January.**
18. **Banking arrangements** – The clerk had spent a long time on the phone getting the latest fraudulent DD credited back to the PC's account. She had asked NatWest for an additional account to where all funds would be transferred, a credit card and facilities for on-line banking all of which she would have to do on-line. Members supported her actions.
19. **Accounts for approval** (*Reclaimable VAT shown for items exceeding £100*).

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs		939.12	Cameron Garden Services FrogField		560.00
IdVerde - Oct	26.08	156.49	PJ Nolan Frog Field		575.00
Care Signs		78.60	Matthew Haughian Lamp tel box		25.00
RDC-printing		37.50	Phil Maynard-concrete in bin/slabs		£20.00
			on Jubilee Field		

The accounts were proposed for payment by RC and seconded by ST – carried.

**Members asked to have recorded their thanks and appreciation to Phil Maynard for all the hard work he did concreting in the post for the new bin and concreting in slabs at the new shelter both at the MUGA.**

20. **Date of next meeting – Tuesday 5 January 2021**
21. **Matters** for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting.
22. **Public questions** - not to exceed 10 minutes.

***The meeting closed at 9.03pm***

## ESCC Report for Parish Councils - December 2020

Our Coronavirus cases have increased somewhat since October. Rother 339 cases, 352.8 per 100,000 population (+21 since 19<sup>th</sup> October), Hastings 336 (+20 since 19<sup>th</sup> October) 362.6 per 100,000 population, East Sussex 2,750 cases (+147 since 19<sup>th</sup> October), England 687,327 (+58,116 since 19<sup>th</sup> October) 1221.1 per 100,000 population.

**There is confusion over the NHS App:** - App users are anonymous and the app cannot force people to self isolate or identify them if they are not self isolating, -the app cannot be used to track your location, for law enforcement, or to monitor self isolation and social distancing, -but it is hoped that App users will follow advice to self isolate, to protect other people, and stop the spread of the virus.

**Please do not forget the help and advice web page: [Coronavirus-help and support](#)**

Keith Hinkley, our present Director of Social Care and Health has been promoted to Executive Director of ASCH across East and West Sussex. 80% of his work will focus on West Sussex County Council in order to continue their improvement in relation to joint learning, more effective working, a stronger voice to influence the DHSC and others in government on national policy, with improved management of care markets. East Sussex has been helping West Sussex CC by sharing our Chief executive, and our Leader has been providing advice.

Mark Stainton has been appointed as the new Director of Adult Social Care to lead the East Sussex department.

There has been a decrease nationally in patients accessing Primary Care Services. Urgent suspected cancer referrals, and urgent cases of all types should contact their GP surgery. If they cannot see their GP they can attend the urgent treatment centres at the Conquest and at Eastbourne DGH. Parents are being urged to take their children for routine vaccinations. Contact your East Sussex website: “where to get medical help” or ring NHS 111.

Our two new PCSOs are Daryl Holter and Emma Phillips. They have both worked with Sussex Police for years but have recently been allocated to our parishes: [emmalouise.Phillips@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:emmalouise.Phillips@sussex.pnn.police.uk)  
[Daryl.holter@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Daryl.holter@sussex.pnn.police.uk)

Clair Eastes has been head of Customer Service at East Sussex Highways for 6 months. A decision has been taken to split the county into 3 again and we now have three Customer Service Managers, and for the east of the county our CSM is Anthony Rayfield who is best contacted at:  
[customerservicemanager@eastsussexhighways.com](mailto:customerservicemanager@eastsussexhighways.com) or call 03450712715

Our Highways Steward is still James Kelly. Thank you, James, for all your good work.

We are all aware of the increase in demands for help during lock down from victims of domestic violence. The office of the PCC has received funding of £401k to help change the behaviour of domestic violence perpetrators. This is the first county wide pilot perpetrator programme. The majority of the funding will be used to target the most active and dangerous DA perpetrators, uncovering and addressing the reasons why they commit these crimes, with the aim of changing behaviour and reducing offending through evidence-based interventions. £151k of emergency funding has also been obtained to bolster the help available to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence in Sussex. In July we benefitted from nearly £700,000 to combat the rise in DA during lock down and, as a result, victim support organisations helped 3436 people.

Communities in Hastings will benefit from a £5m funding boost to tackle harm caused by the supply and use of drugs.

An innovative Sussex-wide virtual careers event will give year 11 students an opportunity to learn about future study and career choices. As a result of the pandemic schools cannot run their traditional in-person options evenings therefore this virtual event has demonstrated options from universities, colleges, providers and businesses, including further and higher education, vocational routes, apprenticeships and traineeships.  
<https://www.getcareerconfident.co.uk/what-next-sussex-2/what-next-sussex-directory>

Online booking for registering births has now been launched. Parents should book an appointment online for a telephone registration interview, following this the registrar will arrange a time for parents to visit a

register office to check and sign the register. Birth certificates will be issued afterwards on request. Register offices are located in Hastings, Lewes, Crowborough and Eastbourne. Please visit: [eastsussex.gov.uk/register a birth](http://eastsussex.gov.uk/register-a-birth).

In these abnormal and unusual times can I wish you all a calm and happy Christmas.

With best wishes,

**Angharad Davies East Sussex County Councillor Northern Rother**

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## **Northern Rother District Councillors' Report December 2020.**

### **Additional Restriction Grant**

The Government recognises that some businesses that are required to close may not have rateable commercial premises and therefore won't be covered by the main Local Restrictions Grants Scheme (LRSG). Therefore the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) has been made available by Government to Local Authorities to use at its discretion to support local businesses affected by the national restrictions. The awarding of this grant is at the total discretion of the Council but in accordance with the [guidance issued by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy \(BEIS\) \(pdf\)](#)

Full details can be found at the following link: <https://www.rother.gov.uk/business/information-for-businesses/>

### **Community Grants Scheme open for applications**

**Local community groups and organisations are invited to apply for a share of nearly £80,000 from a district-wide grant scheme.**

Round two of Rother District Council's Community Grant Scheme is currently open for applications. Groups can apply for funding ranging from £500 to £30,000, up to a maximum of 50 per cent of the total cost of the project.

The scheme offers funding for community projects that enhance the lives of residents in Rother by helping them to provide community facilities, purchase equipment or host local events across the district.

The scheme has supported many varied and wide-reaching projects including new tables for Ewhurst and Staplecross Village Hall, the installation of a tea station in St James The Great Church, Ewhurst Green, and the planting of a new wood by Bexhill Environmental Group. Full details available at the following link:

<https://www.rother.gov.uk/news/community-grants-scheme-open-for-applications/>

### **Review of Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024)**

Three strategic priorities were set: Increasing the supply of Housing; Rough Sleeping, Homelessness and Meeting Housing Aspirations; and improving the quality and suitability of existing and new build housing. The outcome of the full review is in the Improving Delivery Plan.

Key highlights from the Improving Delivery Plan are:

#### **Priority 1: Increasing the supply of Housing**

In December 2019, the Council approved setting up a local authority owned housing company, Alliance Homes (Rother) Ltd, which has been legally incorporated and the Business Plan approved;

The main priority of the company is to accelerate delivery of all forms of housing in Rother, with an ambitious target of delivering 1,000 new homes over the following 15 years. The Business Plan set out an initial 3 year delivery plan focusing on sites already in Council ownership with planning permission/planning potential or that had been acquired as part of other Council-led projects. The delivery of the site at Blackfriars, Battle was of significant importance;

The Company would seek opportunities to acquire sites allocated for housing in the Rother District Local Plan and associated Neighbourhood Plans;

The strategy identified empty homes as a wasted resource in view of the chronic shortage of housing to meet need, to include affordable housing, a draft Empty Homes Action Plan has been developed to bring back empty properties into use.

**Priority 2: Rough Sleeping, Homelessness and Meeting Housing Aspirations**

Rother Tenant Finder was launched in October 2019 to improve access to accommodation in the private sector to reduce homelessness, by incentivising landlords to consider homelessness households and supporting tenants to access and sustain private sector tenancies:

Up to March 2020, 55 households have been helped through the service, resulting in private sector tenancies being agreed. However the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the numbers of tenancies secured in recent months; The Council commissioned the Homelessness Unity Group (HUG) to deliver a new 'Safe Place' service from March 2020 which delivered from St Barnabas Church in Bexhill which was designed to support the reduction of rough sleeping through the provision of a community meeting space available twice weekly.

**Councillors Martin Mooney and Tony Ganly.**