

# BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held via Zoom video link at 7.30pm on Tuesday 5 January 2021

- PRESENT:** Councillors Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) Chairman, Christopher Broadbent (CB), Roderick Chapman (RC), Ed Erith (EE) and Stephen Thorneycroft (ST).
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs V Ades (Clerk), District Cllrs Tony Ganly (TG) and one member of the public. *ESCC Cllr Ms Davies (AD) will arrive after attending Peasmarsh PC meeting.*
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### The meeting commenced at 7.36pm.

- 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.
  - Councillor vacancy application - Ms Zoe Gleisner.** Members had read Ms Gleisner's application and the notes on her telephone interview with TL and **voted unanimously** to co-opt her as a member. Ms Gleisner accepted and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
  - Apologies for absence** were received from Martin Mooney
  - Declarations of interest** whether personal or personal/pecuniary in accordance with the current Code of Conduct regarding matters on the agenda. None declared.
  - Reports from County, District and Parish Councillors.** TL asked TG to explain the CT rise. He said the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been recommended to set an increase in CT of £4.94 a month, based on a band D property. TL asked TG to explain the meaning of the loss of Dr. Tony Leonard from the Joint Waste Partnership and RDC's role being taken over by Wealden DC. He said without Dr Leonard's expertise RDC was unable to fulfil its role in this area. See DC's report attached.  
**ST** asked what was happening about the rumours that travellers were likely to settle on land in Northiam. TG said there was no evidence that this would happen so nothing could be done at present. The Clerk reported Northiam's chairman had informed her the land was empty and it was unlikely travellers would try to enter the land as the entrance was water-logged, possibly caused due to a nearby stream being high in water.  
**CB** asked if it would be illegal to block a stream or prevent its natural flow. TG said that was a matter for the Environment Agency.  
**EE** reported the bad state of Kitchenour Lane with pot holes, a blocked ditch and flooding which could be from a nearby pond. He was advised to report it to AG when she arrived.
  - 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.  
**Permissions granted:**  
**RR/2020/1786/P DEL Little Knelle Cottage, Whitebread Lane.** New swimming pool.
  - Covid-19** - update on any matters or concerns within the village. With the new and more stringent lockdown rules the support system is operating in the village. **TL** asked everyone to look out for anybody who may need help, especially those alone, the elderly and/or those without technology, and get messages to them that help was available in the village. **TG** said Etchingham Village Hall had been rented for the next few months and would be used as a vaccination station, serving the surrounding villages to include Beckley. TL said it would be impossible for Beckley's elderly residents, especially those without transport, to travel to Etchingham. Northiam Surgery had announced it would be running a vaccination service and TL said she would ask if a nurse would do home visits to vaccinate the most vulnerable people and/or those in isolation. **TL.**
- 8pm – AD joined the meeting.*
- The Clerk was asked to check with Northiam next week about their vaccination arrangements. **Clerk.**
- TL asked AD** if she wished to add to her report. AD said Corona virus cases were rising alarmingly. Currently Rother's figure is 634 new cases per 100,000 population. **TL** informed AD about the Kitchenour Lane problems and asked if she would arrange for somebody to inspect it. **AD.**
- 2021 season ESCC grass verge cuts** - arrangements for 2021. We have signed up to 6 urban verge cuts and have been placed on the trial for 2 rural verge cuts.
  - Tree Warden** – EE's meeting with Brian Doggett. This has been deferred until later in the year.
  - Mrs Andrew re brambles** on the Jubilee Field causing damage to her fence. No news from Mrs Andrew. **TL**

continued to say the play area on the Jubilee Field remains open. Clerk was asked to check if the MUGA should be closed. **Clerk.**

12. **2021/22 Budget** – Finalise the PC figures to enable submission of precept figure of £23k to RDC. The figures were unanimously agreed and the Clerk will send the return to RDC with a precept figure of £23k for 2021-22.
13. **RDC Budget 2021 Consultation** – any comments. None.
14. **Asset Depreciation Policy** – discuss and set depreciation percentages on the village assets. The Clerk will liaise with Cllr Ms Gleisner. **Clerk/Ms Gleisner.**
15. **Request from the RNLI for a donation.** With so much help required in the village due to Covid-19 members agreed not to make a donation this year.
16. **Accounts** for approval (*Reclaimable VAT shown for items exceeding £100*).

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs less tax		380.25	IdVerde - Dec	26.08	156.49
HMRC Tax £576.80 Oct-Dec		671.87			
NI - BPC £95.07 Oct-Dec					

The accounts were proposed for payment by CB and seconded by TL.

17. **Date of next meeting – Tuesday 2 February 2021**
18. **Matters** for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting.
19. **Public questions** - not to exceed 10 minutes. ST asked if there was an archaeologist in the area. AD said there was one at ESCC and she would send him the contact details.

**The meeting closed at 8.32pm.**

**County and District councillors' reports (as submitted) are attached below.**

## ESCC Report for Parish Councils - January 2021

I want to wish everyone the best possible 2021. Let us hope that times will be better for all, and that at some future time, we will be on top of this pandemic. It has been a horrifying experience but I give congratulations and thanks to all our local people who have rallied to help others. The village "help support" teams have been amazing. The Hub established in Bexhill will continue to support the community.

We are now in tier 4 and the local NHS Trust (ESHT) is busy. The number of cases per week in East Sussex is now over 1000 (1019 in week leading up to 10<sup>th</sup> December). Hastings has rocketed to 397 per 100,000 population, while Lewes has dropped to 75 per 100,000 population.

### ESCC Help and Advice webpage **Coronavirus-help and support**

**The Covid-19 vaccination roll-out** has started in Sussex, being led by West Sussex. Hospital sites include Conquest, Brighton and Worthing. Each vaccination service is being supported by one, or several GP practices. Centres working so far include, Crawley, Horsham (Christ's Hospital), and Horsham, Eastbourne, Angmering, Storrington, Uckfield, Haywards Heath, Pulborough, Brighton, Lewes, and one in Bexhill, nothing for Battle and Rye and villages, although I have asked the question of our Director of Public Health (apparently something is starting at Etchingham village hall). These initial vaccinations are for hospital staff, key workers, care home staff and clients, and over 80 year olds. When you are contacted please respond immediately.

**School arrangements** : primary schools in Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden are due to reopen as normal., Hastings and Rother will not open apart from children of key workers, and vulnerable children. Secondary: years 11 and 13 to return on January 4<sup>th</sup>, years 7-10 and 12 to return on 18<sup>th</sup> January. All special school children to return to school.

**Our Chief Inspector of Police** is Sarah Godley. She is the policing commander for East Sussex and is responsible for local policing in Hastings and Rother districts. She leads the local Neighbourhood Policing Team, consisting of police officers and PCSOs. Sarah is also an accredited Tactical Firearms Commander and the force lead for Suicide Prevention. Inspector Jonathan Hartley has been replaced by Inspector Jay Mendis, our Neighbourhood Sergeants are Simon Barden and Brett Whitewith. PCs Paul Fielder, Jason Kemp, Dan Turk, Nadia Foy, and Ed Booth are our police constables, PC Charlotte Williams is our Neighbourhood Youth Officer, and our PCSOs are Emma Phillips and Daryl Holter.

Residents can benefit from the **Warm Home Check Service**. This is a free service, providing telephone advice on keeping homes warm and reducing energy costs. There is financial support available for heating and help with minor improvements to insulation and boiler repairs.

[www.eastsussex.gov.uk/keepwarm](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/keepwarm) - text WARM to 81400 or call 03444 111 444

ESCC has been given the go-ahead by DEFRA and the MHCLG to transfer the Seven Sisters Country Park site to the South Downs National Park Authority.

UK Youth Parliament's (UKYP) 2021 campaign has chosen plastic pollution as their major topic. "Make your mark" is the largest youth consultation in Europe, where young people aged 11-18 across the UK are able to vote on issues that matter to them. James Jenkins from Eastbourne put forward and spoke on "Stop plastic pollution" at their conference last August. This topic won on the ballot. Congratulations James!

An urgent Sussex operation on Christmas Eve at Newhaven port helped truckers get back to mainland Europe. Teams of volunteers from the NHS worked late into the night and early morning to help drivers

An urgent get Covid tested to allow them to board ferries to Dieppe. The urgent testing operation was scrambled by **the Sussex Resilience Forum**, a consortium of emergency services, NHS, local authorities and partners working with Newhaven port and ferry operator DFDS.

**ESCC Highways Emergency Team** are available to deal with emergency calls throughout the year. Three members of staff are on call 365 days of the year monitoring emergency calls from the public and police between 4pm and 8am. To report an emergency on the roads, call 0345 60 80 193 and ask for the emergency highways team.

A new kerbside collection service has been introduced in Hastings, Rother and Wealden. Unwanted **small electrical items** should be put in a plastic carrier bag and placed on top of the recycling bin on collection day. These or components of these will be reused or recycled (not batteries please!) Small electrical items are one of the fastest growing waste streams in the UK.

Improvements are being made to the way vulnerable women dealing with drug and alcohol dependency, homelessness, mental health issues, and domestic violence access support services. The changes follow an

independent review by the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board, after a Safeguarding Adults Review into a woman's death. The full report and SAB response can be viewed at;

<https://www.eastsussexab.org.uk/documents/adult-c-sar-published-december-2020-2/>

*Angharad Davies East Sussex County Councillor Northern Rother*

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## **Northern Rother District Councillors' Report January 2021**

**The parish of Bexhill-on-Sea** and a Parish (Town) Council will be created with effect from 1 April 2021. Set-up costs of the establishment of the Council will be paid by Rother District Council ie. Rother, not just Bexhill, taxpayers. An interim Parish (Town) Council administrator will be appointed for up to seven months with effect from 1 January 2021.

**The Joint Waste Partnership** has been run by Rother District Council as the Administering Authority since the inception of the Partnership in 2011. With the departure of Dr. Tony Leonard RDC no longer has the expertise required to perform this role which will now be carried out by Wealden District Council. As a result, RDC will lose £45,000 administration financial contribution towards accommodation, ICT and associated support costs as well as losing the prestige of being the Administering Authority of the Partnership.

### **Draft Revenue Budget 2021/2022**

The Revenue Budget is on the Cabinet Agenda on 11<sup>th</sup> of January with a recommendation to Overview & Scrutiny Committee setting the maximum increase without the requirement to hold a referendum of £4.94 to £189.04 with a potential yield for the year based on properties at Band D, of £7.109m.

The Council no longer receives any Revenue Support Grant and is wholly reliant on revenue from Business Rates, Council Tax Specific grants, charges for services and income generation in meeting its net budget.

The financial risks are great with additional increases arising in Homelessness which for 2020/21 was overspent by £430k with a further provision having to be made of £299k in 2021/22.

**Covid 19 Impact:** Support afforded to Commercial tenants and expected voids in the uncertain future, whilst not provided for in the Budget will have to be kept under constant review.

**Leisure, Swimming and Cultural Services:** Support already extended to these services already has had to be underpinned by a further commitment for 2021/22

The draft Budget for 2021/22 utilises £2.9m of reserves in order to support revenue expenditure. The total earmarked reserves by the end of March 2022 is estimated to be £7.1m including the General Fund balance. Over the 5-year financial forecast these are predicted to fall to a minimum of £3.2m.

**A radio-controlled car racing track** is proposed at St. Mary's Recreation Ground, Sidley for exclusive use by 1066 Racing, an off-road radio-controlled car racing club founded in 2013. The track would be developed on small, under-used part of the Recreation Ground and the club hopes to have the scheme up and running this Spring.

*District Councillors Tony Ganly and Martin Mooney.*