

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Zoom meeting held on Tuesday 2nd February 2021 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) Chairman, Christopher Broadbent (CB), Roderick Chapman (RC), Ed Erith (EE) Vice Chairman, Ms Zoe Gleisner (ZG) and Stephen Thorneycroft (ST).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs V Ades (Clerk), District Cllrs Tony Ganly (TG) and Martin Mooney (MM), *ESCC Cllr Ms Davies (AD) will arrive after attending Peasmarsh PC meeting.*

- 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.
- Councillor vacancy to consider appointment of Natasha Vadorin.** Members voted unanimously to co-opt onto the council Mrs Natasha Vadorin, who accepted the post and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- 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. None.
- Reports from County, District and Parish Councillors.** (CC and DC's reports are attached).
TG added RDC would like to know of any businesses, organisations etc who cannot access grants they need to survive the lockdown. This will help them develop targeted criteria to ensure the limited funds go to the places most in need. Only the type of business and reasons why they cannot access the mandatory grants that are also available are required. No personal details are required at this stage.
RC reported the field is almost water-logged.
ST reported the recent repairs to Horseshoe Lane are coming apart. **Report to AD when she arrives.**
EE has arranged to meet Brian Doggett to inspect the village owned trees once the leaves start to appear.
 - The flooding from the ditch in Kitchenour Lane does not appear to have been looked at by Highways. **Report to AD when she arrives.****TL** reported problems with parking at Hobbs Lane junction by the roundabout. Residents park their vehicles here and if a lorry is waiting to exit and a vehicle is turning into Hobbs Lane neither can move. **CB** said this will always be a problem where you have industrial units along a narrow lane and large or HGV's using it to access businesses. •Sheep worrying by dogs is being reported, especially around Tilebarn Farm and Glasseye Farm. Sheep are dying with some found drowned. Dog owners are asked to keep their animals on leads at all times to help to stop these needless deaths.
- To consider and approve** the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the PC meeting of 5 January 2021. Approved and will be signed when live meetings recommence.
- Planning Applications** – to consider those received from RDC and any other planning matters.
RR/2020/2490/P DEL 2 Bartletts Cottages - Land adj. Main Street. Proposed construction of a detached dwelling house with new vehicular access. Members felt the size of the proposed property was too large for the site and was out of keeping with the listed cottages on either side. Additionally, parking would add further congestion on Main Street and add to the potential dangers for the primary school children using the area when on their way to and from school. If the planners were mindful to approve the application members **asked the DC to request the application be called in (6:0).**
RR/2020/2528/P DEL Fortune Cottage, Horseshoe Lane. Proposed dormer to existing annexe. Members **unanimously 6:0 supported** the application.

8pm – AD joined the meeting.

TL welcomed **AD** and said there were a couple of matters to report to her. **EE** said the problems in Kitchenour Lane continued and it didn't look as if the lane had been looked at. **ST** reported the recent poor repair work to potholes in Horseshoe Lane as the repairs were already coming apart. **AD** will report

to Highways. **AD**, adding to her report, said Covid-19 cases in East Sussex continue to fall. She gave an update on how hospitals throughout ESCC were coping and various increased bed capacities introduced. A new testing machine for hospital staff and social health car staff is working well. A new 'help the aged' forum has been set up to access what elderly people in rural areas need and want. She will email more details. **AD**

8. **Covid-19** - update on any matters or concerns within the village. TL said everything was continuing as before with volunteers shopping and collecting prescriptions for residents. Residents are getting to Etchingham for vaccinations and help with transport is there for those who need it. Housebound residents will be vaccinated at home and will be contacted with their appointment.
9. **2021 season grass cuts** – appointment of a contractor. IdVerde agreed to carry out the same work as in 2020 for 2021 with no price increase. Due to restrictions on movement and contact with others members agreed it would not be advisable to meet with contractors to show them the areas requiring attention and they voted unanimously 6:0 to accept IdVerde's quote of £1564.87+VAT.
10. **Police** - virtual meeting 21 January 2021. ZG attended the meeting and reported:-
Rother Neighbourhood Policing Team-rural Rother villages – attended by Police Community Support Officer, Emma Phillips (PCSO) and representatives from surrounding parish councils.
 - There are three PCSO's in Rother that look after 19 villages
 - Their monthly report will now include suspicious vehicles
 - Please share their data on social media – Facebook @rotherpolice, Twitter @rother_police
 - Non Covid-19 – compliance – they will always visit businesses but not necessarily houses
 - Speeding – can only come to each village periodically, we need to speak to the Highways Agency if we want any changes made eg speed bumps.
 - Please log all suspicious activity either by calling 101 or through their website <https://www.sussex.police.uk/report-online>
 - Police Property Act fund – up to £500 grants for village amenities
 - Next meeting Friday 28th February 7.00pm.
11. **Approval of bank reconciliation 1 Oct–31 Dec 2020**. ZG proposed and CB seconded acceptance. **Agreed.**
12. **Accounts** for approval (*Reclaimable VAT shown for items exceeding £100*). The Clerk asked for approval to include payment to PKF Littlejohn, internal auditor, £240.00 (includes £40 VAT). **Agreed.**

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs		939.12	Ewen Cameron hedge-Frog Field		560.00
Wil Morris – repairs in village		149.59			

CB proposed and TL seconded payment. **Agreed.**

13. **Date of next meeting – Tuesday 2 March 2021**
14. **Matters** for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting.
15. **Public questions** - not to exceed 10 minutes.

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

Reports, as written, from ESCC and RDC councillors are attached.

ESCC Report for Parish Councils - February 2021

We are all wondering when residents in our area will get the jab! It seems so quiet around Battle and Rye and all our rural villages! We just aren't hearing anything!!

The Vaccination Programme in Sussex started on 8th December, being led by West Sussex. More than 300 Care Home settings have now been vaccinated (as from January 22nd). This includes 6,368 residents and 8,075 staff. It is expected that all care homes with residents over 65 will receive vaccine by 24th January, and all Care Homes in Sussex by mid-February.

Various sites are being used: Hospital hubs at EDGH and the Conquest, plus 6 other hospital hubs across Sussex, concentrating on health and care staff. GP led centres in East Sussex set up so far include Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Seaford, Bexhill, Crowborough, Uckfield, and Etchingham- for rural Rother. Further centres will start soon in Hailsham, and there is to be a walk in centre in Brighton I understand.

Staff in Mind is a confidential NHS service for staff experiencing emotional or psychological difficulties due to the pandemic. It has been developed by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust on behalf of Sussex health and care partnership-an alliance that brings together all NHS organisations and councils across the county. This service offers priority access to treatment.

Nationally and locally the number of **new cases of Covid19**: 7/day rolling rates per 100,000 population are: England 520, East Sussex 594, Rother 432, Hastings(583), Eastbourne (892) and Wealden(564) are still above the national figure. The 7 day rolling rate for the 65+ year group per 100,000 population: England 827, East Sussex 1024, Rother 690, Hastings 1083, Eastbourne 1454, Lewes 930. This reflects the county's demographics in that East Sussex has 25% of its population over 65 years.

There has been a steep rise in **death rates** from 25/12/20 to 8/1/21.

The Sussex Resilience Forum declared a Major Incident on 6th January. This brings all agencies in Sussex together in a rehearsed escalation to tackle the virus. This response makes more use of volunteer help, prepares for extra capacity and considers extra support from national government.

A correction to my previous report: the new Sussex Police Rother District Inspector is Christopher Varrall , Battle Police Station, North Trade Road, Battle, Christopher.varrall@sussex.pnn.police.uk

In the first week of this third lockdown more than 400 vulnerable people asked for help from victim support agencies across Sussex. **Domestic abuse referrals** have begun to decrease recently which is worrying. The government has made it clear that people can leave their homes if escaping from domestic abuse or violence. **Safe Space Sussex** is an online directory of local services which has a new search tool so that victims of any crime can find immediate help. Sussex Police have a method for a call handler to identify a victim in danger. The "55" technology is for those too scared to speak. They dial 999, followed by 55. **Ask for ANI** is a scheme in pharmacies whereby someone can discretely ask for help. Pharmacists are being asked to sign up to this scheme so they can provide another safe space.

ESCC budget is being discussed at Cabinet on January 26th and, if agreed, at Full Council on February 9th. There are no new savings proposed beyond those agreed last year, an increase in council tax of 1.99% is recommended, and a further 3% increase for social care will occur over 2 years. This will be a balanced budget. Council tax rises are needed to protect vital services including ever increasing demand, but taking into account the Core Offer.

Small and medium sized enterprises across the county will be able to access support for apprenticeship training using a £600,000 fund from the European Social Fund with match funding of £300,000 from ESCC. The **Transform project** aims to increase apprenticeships, traineeships, and skills training .Working with Sussex Council of Training providers (SCTP) the council will engage with 150 SMEs from priority sectors where there is employment growth and skill shortages. Please contact transform@sctp.org.uk

More than 700 Covid-related calls have been made to the county's **trading standards team** since March 2020. The team's Covid-19 work follows a year of success in which residents were prevented from losing an estimated quarter of a million pounds, 300 scam victims were helped, around 10,000 counterfeit products with a street value of £100,000 were removed from the market, 144 businesses were found in breach of animal welfare legislation, 99 businesses were found selling food that was mislabelled, contaminated, illegal or fraudulent, £20,000 worth of tobacco was seized, and fraudulent traders were ordered to pay back £114,000 through the Proceeds of Crime Act.

The **Covid Winter Grant Scheme** has provided £1.5m to help people struggling with food, energy and water bills, and other costs, due to the pandemic. At least 80% of the funding is ring fenced to help households with children. The scheme runs till 31st March 2021. Around £900,000 will be used directly to fund food vouchers during the Christmas holidays and February half term, for vulnerable children in Early Years settings and pupils eligible for Free school meals. Small grants will be available within the Troubled Families and Rethinking Families programmes and support can be provided for vulnerable families known to Children's Services.

For support

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/emergencyplanningandcommunitysafety/coronavirus/coronaviruscommunity-support/>

For Free School Meals

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/school-life/meals/free/>

Angharad Davies East Sussex County Councillor Northern Rother

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report February 2021.

The establishment of a **Rother Community Lottery** will be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 8 February. This would enable voluntary and community groups to access funding by contributing to the success of the Lottery. Funds raised could support the Community Grants Scheme instead of using "earmarked reserves" for that purpose.

Cabinet will also consider installing the necessary technology in the Council Chamber to enable a **highbred meeting system** so that all Council meetings can continue to be webcast and hybrid meeting be enabled should legislation permit. A three-year contract with an external provider is proposed in the first instance and will require a budget of £70,000 to meet equipment and licensing costs for this period. This cost would be met through earmarked reserves. This would ensure residents of Rother could continue to access Council meetings without having to travel to the Town Hall once meetings in the Council Chamber resume.

We have become aware that a **review of the Planning Department and Service** is being undertaken by an external provider. We do not know how much this review will cost nor under whose authority it is being undertaken. Invitations will shortly be issued to Town and Parish Councils to nominate/send Councillors to a focus group to express their views on the current service and to advise their views on changes they would like to see.

Cabinet will also consider proposals to **redevelop the Town Hall** site in Bexhill. It is proposed to include this scheme in the Council's Capital Programme and to agree a budget of £460,000 to progress detailed designs for the future of the site. The main aim is to support the Council's carbon neutral pledge, among others.

Rother District Councillors Tony Ganley and Martin Mooney