

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Village Centre at 7.30pm on TUESDAY 5 JULY 2021.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) Chairman, Steve Bunn (SB), Roderick Chapman (RC), Ms Zoe Gleisner (ZG), Stephen Thorneycroft (ST).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs V Ades (Clerk), *County Cllr Paul Redstone (PR) (arr. 7.50pm)*, District Cllr Tony Ganly (TG) and two members of the public.

- 1. Public Questions – to allow questions (10 minutes) 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 reported in the minutes.**
- 2. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr E.Erith (prevented by Covid rules), Mrs N Vadorin-illness and District Cllr M Mooney-business – all apologies accepted.
- 3. Declarations of interest** whether personal or personal/pecuniary in accordance with the current Code of Conduct regarding matters on the agenda. None received.
- 4. Reports from County, District and Parish Councillors.**
Reports attached from County and District Councils.
ST reported continuing problems with fly tipping.

7.50pm – PR arrived.

TL – ♦Potholes remain in Hobbs Lane and Moores Lane. PR said Highways was aware, but they are not high priority. ♦A water leak or blocked drain had been reported at the Manroy site. PR said this had been inspected and it was considered it was water running off the land. ♦Rubbish at Bentley & Hall's site had been moved, but not removed – **TG would report.** ♦Pedestrian refuge at the mini roundabout is overgrown and unusable. – **PR will report.** ♦Vandalism is being caused around the village, paint spraying etc. Vegetation has grown extensively during the wet weather. ♦C. Broadbent has hay for spreading in the Jubilee Field in August/September and a trailer and volunteers will be needed. ♦Net on the cargo frame requires repair (**Wil looking**) or replacement at £986. ♦Signs require fixing to climbing frames – **SB will attend.** ♦Bus shelter at the Four Oaks requires repair-**clerk to ask Wil.**

EE had sent a written report. He had met with Matthew Harper, RoW Officer at ESCC to discuss the re-routing of foot path 13e on the Jubilee Field from the approved entrance/exit at the east side of the field onto Main Street be re-directed along the tree line along Main Street to the existing entrance/exit as the original gate led people to the pavement and crossing Main Street by a blind bend. **A new self-closing gate is recommended** at the existing entrance/exit at Main Street. He asked the clerk to find out what the lighting system was in the newly installed lights at the Four Oaks. **PR will investigate.**

- 5. To consider and approve** the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the PC meeting of 1/6/21. The minutes were agreed and signed.
- 6. PLANNING – to consider any planning applications received from RDC and any other planning matters.**

RR/2021/593/P DEL Hayes Farmhouse, Hayes Lane. Proposed new rear door and enlarged window.

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Applications 593 and 594 were discussed and members **unanimously supported both 5:0.**

RR/2021/744/P DEL Flatopers, Bixley Lane. Change of use of garage attic studio to holiday accommodation. Members considered the application and previous use of the accommodation. They had no objections to the change of use and voted **5:0 in support provided the accommodation be/or remained tied to the main property.**

RR/2021/1499/T DEL 4 Royal Oak Close -Oak: Crown raise to 3m from ground level and prune back from property allowing a 3m clearance. Members were against this drastic pruning of this oak tree as well as it being the wrong time of year for pruning. This tree is of significance importance to Beckley as it was

bequeathed to the village from Her Majesty the Queen's own nursery to replace the original oak tree which was lost during the 1987 storm. Developers who bought the private land for housing were made aware of this and that there was a TPO on the tree and house purchasers should have been advised through their solicitors. Members are against the drastic pruning of this tree and they ask planners to consider calling for a professional survey to be carried out as well as considering the significant importance of this tree. Should planners be mindful to approve the application members request it be called in to a full planning committee. Members voted **unanimously against this application 5:0**.

RR/2021/789/L DEL Combe House, Main Street. Erection of a fence 3.5 meters long and 1.8 meters high adjoining the eastern side of Combe House and incorporating a gate 0.8 meters in width. Members had no objections and voted **unanimously 5:0 in support**.

RR/2021/859/P DEL Tillingham Lodge, Furnace Lane, Broad Oak, Beckley TN31 6ET Replacement link between converted barn structure and house; PLWKLIST (ODB 395) Page 4 of 11 replacement lean-to roof and extension of utility; new/altered external openings; internal alterations to mezzanine to form a bedroom and wc.

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Applications 859 and 860 - It was felt this property was not in the parish of Beckley. The clerk had emailed RDC for confirmation, but had not heard back. Members decided they should not consider the application until the parish was verified.

Permissions granted:

RR/2021/ 325/P Chestnut Garden Cottage, Main Street. Erection of detached garage with studio/home office/guest accommodation above (alternative to garage approved under extant planning permission RR/2020/419/P).

RR/2021/351/T Coomb House, Main Street. Works to two oak trees with tree preservations.

7. **Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** – consider any comments the PC may wish to make. No comments were raised.
8. **Letter of apology** from one of the children who caused damage to the new shelter on the Jubilee Field.
9. **Northlands Farm/burial ground** – update. RDC has sent a Planning Contravention Notice giving 28 days for response. That date is about to expire and so far, nothing has been heard.
10. **Donation request from Peasmarsh & Beckley PCC** towards grounds upkeep at Beckley church. Members considered the church held a healthy balance of money and considered it inappropriate to donate money towards the groundwork at the church. **Clerk to advise.**
11. **Verti-drainage system on the Jubilee Field** – discuss condition of the field and consider if work should be carried out on the drainage system. Cllr Erith had reported he felt the field was riddled with underground springs and the best solution may be to plant water-loving trees ie Poplars, Willows and Swamp Cypresses. The clerk to contact Judges to seek advice on how best to drain the field. **Clerk.**
12. **Discuss all quotes for work on the Frog Field** - Ian Broad and L W Construction - further quote awaited.
13. **Boundary Review Changes** - any comments. There appeared to be no changes for Beckley.
14. **PC reserves** – breakdown and explanation. ZG said the internal auditor had recommended we list how much of our reserves are earmarked for projects and this be updated quarterly. **Clerk.**
15. **Assets Register – agree updated register at June 2021.** Figures show a decrease in value of 10 fingerposts from £10K to £6K each and an increase in the value of the MUGA from £15K to £31K = overall asset total of £97,300. Agreed and signed.
16. **AGAR 2020-21** – Obtain council's approval to amend the AGAR figures 2020/21 (Accounting Statements page 5 and Explanation of Variances) to include increase in assets from £85,908 to £97,300. Chairman and Clerk/RFO to sign off the amendments. Amended and signed. **Clerk.**
17. **Accounts for approval (VAT, if applicable, shown for items exceeding £100).**

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs		391.32	ldVerde	34.77	208.64
HMRC tax £547.80 NI £72.90		620.70	ICO-GDPR annual fee		40.00
Beckley Village Hall-June		16.40			

ZG proposed and RC seconded the accounts for payment – carried.

18. Matters for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting.

19. Public questions - not to exceed 10 minutes.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Date of next meeting – 7 September 2021 commencing 7.30pm.

Reports from ESCC & RDC councillors are attached below.

ESCC - Report to Parish Councils – July 2021 – Cllr Paul Redstone

COVID update As of 25th June, East Sussex has a continued low rate of 152 new cases in the previous 7 days, slightly up from 14. In terms of cases per 100,000 population, East Sussex is 27, the South East 58 and England 101. I understand that hospital cases from COVID in East Sussex are very low - in about mid-June there were only two cases and I am told these were discovered only by testing of patients admitted for other reasons. This aligns with national figures which suggest that vaccinations are reducing the proportion of COVID patients admitted to hospital. However, the national trend is upwards due to the Delta variant. Government funding has been provided to local authorities including county councils, unitary authorities and district councils. At ESCC government funding for COVID-specific costs of just eastsussex.gov.uk under £100m has been received up to April 2021 (the end of the financial year), £63m for specific departments and £37m for general funding. Of this £46m was spent on adult social care, mostly on infection control; £13m on children's services, for example helping schools to manage outbreaks; and smaller amounts in other areas, with the balance carried over for COVID costs this year.

Council Monitoring At this time of year, the council reviews performance for the previous financial year. This report is 77 pages long and is being reviewed by cabinet in the next few days and then by full council in July. It is publicly viewable, for example in the agenda papers for Cabinet on 29th June. It follows a programme called Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR). For those not wishing to read 77 pages there are some useful graphical summaries, in particular showing which targets have been met, which not, and which have been carried over as they are expected to be met, the latter particularly due to the pandemic which has caused some delays. Of 52 targets, 36 were met, 9 not met and 7 carried over. Targets are also 'RAG rated' which uses a traffic light system of Red, Amber or Green which makes it easy to see areas of concern and the details for that.

• **Grass Cutting.** There is some dissatisfaction with grass cutting in several parishes. Most parishes pay for an additional 4 cuts by county making 6 in all. Typically, this has included cuts in April, May, July and August. June seems to be omitted, perhaps because in a typical year June is drier and has less growth. This seems not to be the case this year. I have meetings with Highways to discuss this and other areas and will report back. If there are urgent grass or hedge issues, in particular causing visibility or other safety issues, please let me know but also report them at <https://www.eastsussexhighways.com/report-a-problem>.

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Northern Rother District Councillors' Report JULY 2021. Cllrs Tony Ganly & Martin Mooney

Caravan sites - Fit and Proper Persons policy.

It is proposed to adopt a policy that managers of caravan sites must be fit and proper persons to be running such sites and that a register of such persons be established. The Council believes a fit and proper person assessment and/or checks will take between 120 and 150 minutes to complete. On that basis the initial application fee would be set at £70. To cover the additional cost of monitoring the scheme, an additional annual fee for registration would be set at £0.50 per unit, to a maximum of £50. No fee would be charged for smaller sites. Charges would commence on 1 April 2022.

Potential Planning Appeals costs.

It is proposed to set aside £300,000 from earmarked reserves to cover potential appeal costs in respect of applications:

- 1/ RR/2020/1822/P Strand Meadow, Burwash and
- 2/ RR/2020/151/P Pett Level Road, Fairlight Cove.

Both applications were refused by the Planning Committee against officer recommendations.

These costs do not include our legal services costs. If the appellants win their appeals no New Homes Bonus will be received. It is estimated that grants of £200,520 (Burwash) and £287,412 (Fairlight) would be lost.

Protecting Discretionary Services.

These are:

Parks and Open Spaces, Public Conveniences, Museum Buildings, Bus Shelters, Christmas Special Lighting, off-street public parking spaces, currently free to use.

The first objective is to protect these Services. The second objective is to reduce the Council's net spend on discretionary services which account for about £1.4m yearly, mainly in maintaining the asset in a reasonable and usable condition.

A small team has been established to look into transferring some/all of these assets to organisations that can raise sufficient funding to ensure continued public access to these services such as:
Parish & Town Councils and Charitable Organisations.

Disposal of land at Pages Gap, South Cliff, Bexhill.

Pages Gap consists of a sloped pathway leading down to the splash deck fronting the beach. The owners of the adjoining property, 43 South Cliff, have offered to buy the verge to the west of the path, about 7 metres in width, which has no special ecological significance. The offer is subject to no objections being made to the Public Notice advertisement which is a requirement under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

This sale would give a capital receipt and a small saving on maintenance.

By-election 6 May 2021.

The Returning Officer reports that Ms. Lizzie Hacking (Conservative) won the Rother District Council - Eastern Rother - seat vacated by Councillor Mrs. S. Hart who was elected MP for Hastings and Rye.

Private Sector Leasing Scheme.

RDC has over 100 households in temporary accommodation for an average of 66 days at a cost of £2,500 each.

This scheme would provide the Council access to properties for a fixed period and property owners would be guaranteed a fixed monthly payment. Properties would need to meet or exceed defined national standards and the property owner would retain full responsibility for the management, maintenance and repair of the external fabric of the building. At the end of the lease period, the property would be returned to the owner in the same condition as at commencement of the lease (except for an allowance on reasonable wear and tear).

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