

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in THE VILLAGE CENTRE on TUESDAY 7 MARCH 2023 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) Chairman, Ed Erith (EE) Vice Chairman, Steve Bunn (SB), Ms Zoe Gleisner (ZG) and Stephen Thorneycroft (ST) and Mrs Natasha Vadorin (NV).

IN ATTENDANCE: County Cllr Paul Redstone (PR) (arrived 7.45pm), District Cllrs Martin Mooney and Tony Ganly (TG), Mrs V Ades, Clerk and four members of the public.

- 1. Public Questions** – 10 minutes. Allow questions (**maximum 2 minutes per person**) 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. A resident reported another accident at Carmen Bridge when the bridge had been badly damaged and the police arrived. (PR). A very large oak tree near The Old Gallery on the road from the Four Oaks to Rye has fungus growing and is rotting. It belongs to ESCC and has been reported before and nothing appears to have been done. It looks dangerous and could fall at any time. Report to PR when he arrives
- 2. Apologies for absence** accepted from Cllr R Chapman (holiday). PR will arrive after attending Peasmarsh meeting.
- 3. Declarations of interest** – none.
- 4. Reports from County, District and Parish Councillors – County and District Cllrs reports attached.**

ST said potholes on Furnace Lane still causing problem as repairs come out as soon as they are filled.

ZG reported problems at Footpath 18a. HGV's are delivering aggregates to the field and many vehicles are using the footpath to gain access to the field and the footpath is being damaged. Photos are available of vehicles on the footpath. It is believed the field is being used as a livery business. TG will report to Enforcement and PR will be informed when he arrives. **TG.**

TL – at 2pm on Saturday, 11 March, at the Frog Field, Ralph Hobbs, Ecologist, and Brian Banks of Northiam will give a talk about the work which has taken place and the progress at the Frog Field and the pond. She thanked Bernard Baverstock for supplying wood to repair the bus shelter at the Four Oaks and Will Morris for carrying out the repairs.
- 5. To consider and approve** the minutes of the meeting on Tuesday 7 February 2023. Amendment made under Public Questions – 'A resident reported a *fallen* Chevron ~~missing~~ by Cherry Garden Hill'. The minutes were then signed as a true account of the meeting.
- 6. PLANNING** – to consider any planning applications received from RDC and any other planning matters. Full details of all applications and refusals can be viewed on the RDC planning website.

RR/2022/2884/P DEL Ross Farm, Furnace Lane. Retention of caravan for continued use as agricultural workers dwelling. Members stated that as long as the use did not exceed any statutory term before it could be deemed permanent, the application was **supported 5:0 with 1 abstention.**

RR/2023/269/P D - Kings View, Kings Bank Lane. Demolition of existing single storey dwelling to be replaced with new contemporary single storey dwelling. Existing attached outbuilding to be retained and reduced in size with new cladding to match proposed dwelling. Members unanimously **supported the application 6:0.**

PR arrived at 7.45pm and added to his report. He said the special measures to fix potholes were being reduced as the work was almost up to date. TL reported the crash at Carmen Hill when serious damaged was caused to the bridge. PR asked if the fallen chevron was the cause. Members were unaware which way the vehicle involved was travelling so could not say. **PR will report to Highways.** The oak tree near The Old Gallery, which was considered to be in a dangerous condition and had already been reported to Highways, was reported and also Footpath 18a, which was being damaged by vehicle use. **PR will inform Highways.** **PR.**

PLANNING CONSENT

RR/2022/2237/P - Kingsbank Farm, Kings Bank Lane. Formation of a new agricultural track/hardstanding associated with the erection of an Agricultural Barn under Prior Approval (Ref: RR/2019/2396/FN).

RR/2022/2529/P & RR/2022/2670/L - Watcombe House, Horseshoe Lane. Erection of single storey west elevation extension.

RR/2022/1581/P Great Bellhurst Bungalow, Hobbs Lane. Conversion of former fruit storage barn into a single residential dwelling. Planning Permission granted subject to conditions.

RR/2022/2529/P Watcombe House, Horseshoe Lane. Erection of single storey west elevation extension. Planning Permission granted subject to conditions

RR/2022/2670/L Watcombe House, Horseshoe Lane. Erection of single storey west elevation extension. Listed Building Consent granted subject to conditions

PLANNING REFUSALS

RE/2022/1355/P – Kings Bank Barn at Kings Bank Farmhouse, Kings Bank Lane. Conversion of the Barn at King's Bank Farmhouse to ancillary accommodation for Kings Bank Farmhouse.

RR/2022/1356/L Kings Bank Barn at Kings Bank Farmhouse, Kings Bank Lane. Conversion of the Barn at King's Bank Farmhouse to ancillary accommodation for Kings Bank Farmhouse. Listed Building Consent refused Date Issued: 07-Feb-2023.

Application Withdrawn - RR/2020/1915/P Gate House, Horseshoe Lane. Proposed single storey extensions with associated internal and landscaping alterations.

This notification is for information only. RR/2023/283/FN - The Granary - Land to the South, Main Street. Application to determine if prior approval is required for the erection of a metal shed for storage equipment used at the vineyard.

ENFORCEMENT NOTICES

ENF/97/22/BEC Land at Whitebread Lane. Change of use of land for commercial use. Current Status. Awaiting determination of current PA before proceeding.

ENF/144/22/BEC - Church Farm Bungalow Main Street. Large log cabin type building has been constructed in the rear of the property behind the stable block, family of 5 living in it. Application undetermined.

Following the granting of planning permission by RDC for RR/2022/3016/P-Del - Broadlawns - Land adjacent to, Whitebread Lane, when members voted in February against support because the land lay outside of the development boundary, TG had asked Planning for an answer which read:-

'The Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 Year Supply of Housing and so policy restrictions relating to development boundaries must be viewed at the present time as being 'out-of-date'. As a consequence, planning applications fall to be considered in the context of paragraph 11d) of the NPPF, which states, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development where policies are out of date planning permission should be granted unless: (i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or (ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole. This situation does not mean that housing schemes which are unacceptable on other sound planning grounds must now be allowed; however, it does add weight to the benefits that a potential additional source of housing supply would bring when determining the "planning balance". In line with Paragraph 11d harm to the AONB or unsustainable location would be a clear reason for refusal. In the case of Broadlawns it was considered that the development would have an acceptable Impact on the High Weald AONB and whilst just outside the development boundary would be in a sustainable location close to services and public transport links. In terms of other issues (neighbouring amenity, highways, ecology etc) it was considered to be acceptable'.

- 7. Flooding from the Jubilee Field –Dunedin.** Discuss best way forward. PR had inspected the site and discussed it with our area steward. Water was flowing from the field into the garden of Dunedin and from there it went to the culvert beneath Main Street. As there didn't appear to be a blockage there, and the culvert appeared to be able to cope with the water flow, it was felt this was the responsibility of the PC and the ditch in the Jubilee Field should be dug out. SB will liaise with the property owner who said he can provide the name of a person who will dig out the ditch, and will report on prices and arrangements at the next meeting. **SB.**
- 8. King Charles III Coronation** - discuss celebration plans. Everything planned and nothing more to report.
- 9. Sovereign Sports** – water supply required on field to carry out maintenance work. Members were asked for suggestions. (See 17 – Public Questions).

10. **Consider response to letter received from Hadlow Down PC** re state of our roads. Members agreed in principle to support their work. **Clerk**
11. **Clayhill 900m of water main** – acknowledgement from ESCC following meeting in Beckley. TL said the road was closed, but little work appeared to be happening. She said a contractor had parked a vehicle in a resident’s driveway and refused to move it and the resident was unable to keep her dental appointment. There hasn’t been a re-occurrence, but PR will contact South East n Water to investigate. **PR.**
12. **Elections Thursday 4 May 2023** - how to apply to become/remain a councillor. The Clerk had circulated the papers received from RDC and explained other details. She emphasised the importance of those wishing to stand to complete their forms and make an appointment to deliver them to RDC.
13. **Set date for the AGM and the Village Assembly.** A date for the AGM could not be set until the election results for Beckley was known on 4 or 5 April. The **Village Assembly** was set for **7pm on Wednesday, 31 May at 7pm in the village hall.**
14. **Mulberry & Co** – letter of appointment. Agreement to appoint them as our internal auditors. Agreed.
15. **Accounts** for approval (*VAT, if applicable, shown for items exceeding £100*). The Clerk said a cheque for £28 to RDC for printing had not been received. She had cancelled the cheque and re-issued a new one.

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs – Feb + reimbursement Dog signs-Amazon		1139.39	John O’Conner – Feb	30.75	184.50
Beckley Village Hall – Feb + interview		18.90	Mrs N Vadorin-re-issue-printing re Queen’s Platinum Jubilee 2022		16.36
Village Hall donation-flooring 2022/23		500.00			
Beckley Pre-school-donation		500.00	Netwise Ltd	70.00	420.00
			<i>ADDED - RDC – newsletter printing</i>		<i>28.00</i>

The accounts were proposed by ZG, seconded by TL and carried.

16. **Matters for consideration** as an agenda item for the next meeting.
17. **Public questions** - not to exceed 10 minutes.

A resident suggested the council approach South East Water to ask if they can supply water for the maintenance work on the MUGA. **Clerk.**

Date of next meeting –Tuesday 4 April 2023 commencing 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm then went into private discussion until 9.15pm.

Reports attached from ESCC and RDC

ESCC Report to Parish Councils – March 2023

Some of the items here are from information circulated by ESCC but which may not have drawn the attention of parish councillors and others. It has been a quiet month, so this report is shorter than usual.

Potholes

Potholes and general road conditions continue to be top of my list. As well as responding to messages from residents I have inspected many of the known problem areas. The latest update from ESCC is that as of 16th February 7299 potholes have been repaired this calendar year with 1619 outstanding. There are still 21 gangs working on this, compared to the normal 11.

I am pushing for more general patching or resurfacing to be carried out once the weather improves.

There has been much discussion in parish councils as well as at East Sussex about whether the overall strategy for pothole and road repairs is the most effective. I believe that given limited funds this is the case, but all councillors are monitoring this closely.

County Services and Budget

As forecast last month the budget for 23/24 was approved at Full Council on 7 February. The key headlines are:

- No cuts in services
 - Increase of 3% in council tax and 2% in social care precept, the maximum permitted by government without a referendum
- There was an opposition motion for a very slightly revised budget for increased spending of about £5M on a range of items, but this used funding already allocated elsewhere and was defeated. This seems to confirm that there is little scope for variations in budget.

Councillor Paul Redstone - Email: Cllr.Paul.Redstone@eastsussex.gov.uk

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report March 2023.

Village Halls Project

The Village Halls Energy Project will identify and address areas of energy inefficiency and high carbon emissions in local village and community halls. The project is a key initiative for the authority and links directly to council's objective to reduce carbon emissions Rother wide and move towards a low carbon future. A total of 37 halls across the district will benefit from a share of a £500,000 funding pot to finance energy assessments, decarbonisation and energy efficiency improvements. The money was awarded to the project from the council's Community Infrastructure Levy Climate Emergency Bonus Fund last June. Energy assessments will be undertaken at each site over the coming weeks by LASER Energy with bespoke carbon Net Zero plans provided to halls by April this year. Funds will then be distributed from the scheme to address the highest areas of concern. It is planned to carry out as many improvements as possible by May 2024. Hall committees will also be offered assistance to apply for additional funding and grants from local and national schemes.

Our village halls provide extensive economic, social and cultural benefits to our communities and we are committed to protecting and supporting them. This project will identify and address energy inefficiencies found in many of our local halls, helping hall committees save money on energy bills and reduce their carbon footprints as well as securing their future in our communities." More information on the project can be found on the council's website at www.rother.gov.uk/strategies-policies-and-plans/climate-emergency/village-halls-energy-project/

Community Led Housing The housing service was very pleased to see the completion of the first Community Land Trust led scheme in East Sussex in 2022. The 15-unit scheme at Orchard Close, Ickelsham is now fully occupied. The scheme provided 12 homes for social rent, together with a further three homes for affordable home ownership for local people. The scheme came to fruition thanks to the Ickelsham Parish Community Land Trust (IPCLT) supported by the work of the Sussex Community Housing Hub (SCHH) which the Council funds in part. Having delivered this scheme, IPCLT are again working with the SCHH to identify a second site in the parish to bring forward for community led housing. The SCHH are also supporting Bexhill Community Land Trust (BCLT) with the acquisition and redevelopment of Cemetery Lodge, Turkey Road to provide affordable housing for local people. Alongside this, the SCHH are engaged in early stage activities in Burwash; Beckley; Rye; Pett, Guestling and Fairlight (Marsham CLT). These activities are supported by the housing team and early stage funding for housing needs surveys and other initial works provided through the Council's Community Housing Fund (CHF). The CHF is now almost spent. To complement this work, the Housing service recently sought and obtained Member approval to use s106 obligation funds to pay for community led housing related costs, namely at Cemetery Lodge. It is the intention of the housing service to continue to use this pot to support revenue bids for CLH schemes across the district.

Improving the quality of housing in the private rented sector

In 2021/22, 94 inspections were completed (including 32 temporary accommodation dwellings). From 1 April 2022 to December 2022, there were 13 further inspections. These inspections have included three temporary accommodation dwellings. The Warm Home Check service provides energy efficiency advice and financial advice around heating. The scheme is run by East Sussex County Council and households are encouraged to self-refer to the scheme. This scheme is promoted and discussed during the HHSRS inspections. Numbers of households that self-refer are difficult to be certain of but are believed to be around 99 for 2020/21. 21.

Cllrs. Tony Ganly & Martin Mooney.