

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in THE VILLAGE CENTRE on TUESDAY 4 APRIL 2023 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) 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 (MM) 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 said he would object to a horse being allowed on the grassed area at the front of Buddens Green which was a play area for Buddens Green children. He also felt the agreement on the field to the rear was it should be kept tidy; and it required cutting. Road condition at Cherry Garden hill is worsening. PR said it had been inspected and County said there were roads in a far worse condition which would receive be priority for repairs. A resident had seen Mr Harper, Highways RoW inspector, in Beckley and they had discussed various footpaths and rights of way. In particular, Footpath 13 on the Jubilee Field where there is a proposal to open up the original route. When the Jubilee Field changed from agricultural to a sports field it required planning permission and there was agreement the original footpath should be stopped up – on-going.

2. **Apologies for absence.** Cllr Erith - family business – accepted.

3. **Declarations of interest.** None.

4. **Reports from County, District and Parish Councillors.**

TL called for reports from Parish Councillors to enable any questions to be put to PR, who would leave after item 4 to attend Peasmarsh PC meeting.

ST said potholes remained an on-going problem.

SB reported the dog waste bin had been delivered minus the fixing post.

Clerk has followed up.

PR responding to ST said poor repairs to potholes are of concern to all parishes and ESCC has set up a Pothole committee who will look at reports sent to them and advise how to make a claim. 2.36M has been earmarked for road repairs in ESCC. Regarding the latest damage to Carmen Bridge PR said the last repair cost £18K and PR has asked County looks into installing flashing lights at £20K. In the long run this would be financially beneficial. RC suggested an Armco barrier would also help.

TL reported a blocked drain by the school causing people to walk in the road. She asked if the oak tree standing adjacent to the A268 on Oakhill had been looked at. The Clerk had received a resident's letter about the tree and she would send a copy to **PR who would chase it up**. ESCC had advised the school they had money to replace the railings and the school had asked TL if there was a preservation order on them. She had investigated and other than their historical interest and being extremely ornate there didn't appear to be a listing or preservation order on them.

PR.

SB said with the introduction of electric vehicles he found it extraordinary that charging points could not be made available in Rye. PR said the electrical system at Rye could not currently support charging points.

8.00pm PR left the meeting.

5. **To consider and approve** the minutes of the meeting on Tuesday 7 March 2023. TL said item 4 should read 'ST said potholes on **Furnace Lane**'. With amendment made the minutes were approved and signed by TL.

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/2023/425/P DEL Goldspur, Clayhill. Creation of a new vehicular access at the front of the property, directly onto B216J/Clayhill. **Members supported the application 6:0.**

RR/2023/360/P DEL The Lanterns, Main Street. Replacement of side garage and raising of rear sun room roof. **Members supported the application 6:0.**

8.05pm ST left the room

RR/2023/471/P DEL Lime Court - Land at, Church Lane. Removal of 2 spans of Low Voltage Overhead Line between points A to B and points B to C. The removed sections of line to be replaced with underground cable. **Members supported the application 5:0.**

RR/2023/337/P DEL Little Heron House, Hobbs Lane. Two storey side extension and creation of sunken plunge pool. **Members supported the application 5:0.**

8.10 – ST returned to the room.

Information notification only –

RR/2023/560/FN DEL The Cottage in The Wood - Land adjacent to, Hobbs Lane. Agricultural Building to be used for storage of machinery, tools, feed and general farming materials. The building will also have space for a farm office and workshop.

RR/2023/674/FN DEL Trotters Wood - Land at. Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed log cabin. This notification is for information only

PLANNING CONSENT

RR/2022/3005/L - Tillingham Lodge, Furnace Lane - Extend mezzanine and oak balustrading. New openings in rear wall of cottage element to access eaves storage area. Internal window between extended link and passage to ground floor bedrooms. Move door to bedroom 2 into passage. Replace existing window to north elevation of bedroom 1 to incorporate a flying mullion for means of escape.

7. **Flooding from the Jubilee Field into Dunedin (garden).** Arrangements for the ditch to be dug out. SB had met with the owner and it had been decided the work was too much to be dug out by hand. Day rate quote for a digger and driver and to cut back overhead foliage is £675. SB will obtain another quote. **SB.**
8. **King Charles III Coronation** – Coronation tea and discuss any further plans. TL thanked TG, MM and RDC for their help and kind donation of £475 towards the costs of the celebrations which will consist of a quiz, ploughman's supper and a raffle. TL has asked Jempson's if they will donate a cake. The school will arrange a tea on 5 May at 2.30pm for the children and Beckley residents and the PC are welcome to attend.
9. **Sovereign Sports** – water supply required on field to carry out maintenance work. **Clerk is attending.**
10. **Frog Field**
 - a. **Report on talk presentation 11 March, at the Frog Field.** Ralph Hobbs and Brian Banks, ecologists gave talks and dipping into the pond where they found many new things and wild-life flourishing and growing. Set up annual month to carry out tidying up. One day a year, October, will be required to keep the place tidy. SB will put up the remaining bird and bat boxes. **SB.**
 - b. **Approval for sign - £50 - £200.** The clerk had obtained various quotes and was asked to order an aluminium sign of at least A2 or larger, up to around £200. **Approved 6:0.**
11. **School railings** – advise ESCC if they can be replaced. Discussed at 4 above.
12. **Consider request to allow a horse to graze on land at front of Buddens Green.** After discussion, members agreed this would not be advisable.
13. **Agree 2023/24 dog waste bin collections** - app contract with RDC for £1029.60p. **Approved 6:0.**
14. **Donation request from ~~British Legion~~ Mike Hancock** for £150 towards flowers/plants for the War Memorial = (£100 - 2022/3 and £50 - 2023/4). ZG said it was a resident's private request, not the British Legion. The resident attends the War Memorial and keeps it tidy and supplied flowers or plants. It was requested if a planter was required nothing metal should be placed on the hard base because it stains. **Donation request approved.**
15. **Elections 4 May and set date for the AGM** – provisionally Tuesday 9 May at 7.00pm. (if uncontested election). Awaiting results and the **Clerk will inform members and confirm the date.**
16. **Arrangements for Annual Village Gathering – 7.00pm on Wednesday 31 May 2023.** Grumpy chef! NV had been unable to contact the Grumpy Chef, the Clerk will contact clubs and the school's Chair of Governors should be invited. **Clerk.**
17. **Discuss the Contract of Employment for acceptance and approval of the policies:-** The Contract, which is a confidential matter, had been discussed and amended at a private meeting. The Clerk said our Grievance and Disciplinary policies did not require change or amending.
 - a. **Sickness and Health Policy statement** **Approved 6.0.**

- b. Grievance Procedures Policy statement **Reviewed and unchanged 4 April 2023**
- c. Health & Safety Policy Statement **Approved 6.0.**
- d. Equal Opportunities Policy **Approved 6.0.**
- e. Discipline Policy Statement **Reviewed and unchanged 4 April 2023**

18. Accounts for approval (*VAT, if applicable, shown for items exceeding £100*). The Clerk said the figure for Admin costs should be £1588.80.

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs		1588.80	Beckley Village Hall – Mar		12.60
Viking office mats £84.79 reimbursemt		168.19	John O’Conner – Mar	30.75	184.50
Heyn dog bin £83.40 reimbursement			ESALC £269.14 NALC 71.78 subs.		340.92
HMRC – Tax £630.60. NI £121.26		751.86			

The accounts were proposed by ZG and seconded by NV – carried.

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

20. Public questions - not to exceed 10 minutes.

Date of the Annual General Meeting – provisionally Tuesday 9 May 7.00pm – see 15 above.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Reports attached from ESCC and RDC

ESCC Report to Parish Councils – April 2023

Potholes

This is an ongoing concern for residents and all 50 county councillors. Some recent developments:

- In the national budget an extra £2.36 million was awarded to East Sussex for potholes. We are waiting to hear details of this. As finances limit what we can do on road maintenance in East Sussex this is very welcome.
- The new contractor (Balfour Beatty Living Places) takes over at the end of April. Most or all existing staff are expected transfer over.
- Place Scrutiny Committee, of which I am a member, has created a specific pothole panel. You can see the terms of reference for this at [Agenda for Place Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 28th March, 2023, 10.30 am | East Sussex County Council](#). Look at the Agenda reports pack and the appendix starting at page 67. I am not a member of this (I chair two other panels) but I will report back.
- There is a lot of feeling from residents and councillors that pothole repairs, even temporary ones, are not lasting long. This is one of the items which will be investigated, I hope urgently.

Drains and Flooding

There are currently four areas where flooding has been an issue in Northern Rother, mostly but not exclusively linked to Highways. Although this has always been an issue it is possible that climate change will lead to higher localised rainfall which in return could lead to more flooding.

One cause is, of course, tarmac/concrete in housing developments leading to more rapid runoff. New housing developments above particular numbers are required to have Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs), typically large ponds to slow and smooth the effect of downpours. This helps with new developments, but with existing houses and highways this is rarely a solution.

For existing properties, these can hopefully be resolved with relatively small changes to drains, kerbs and ditches but we need to ensure these actions happen. My county phone has many pictures of potholes but also now many of drains and ditches! I am liaising with Highways and others if appropriate on any drawn to my attention.

At Place Scrutiny this week I asked if we have estimates of the number of similar issues that could arise due to the changed patterns of rainfall. I expect to get an answer soon.

All changes to reduce run-off will also help reduce the discharges of sewage into our rivers and sea, as in so many cases combined drainage systems carry both foul and rainwater. In the longer term separating foul and rainwater will need to be part of the solution, albeit very expensive, as will additional capacity in treatment works.

Cases – concerning Beckley area

Bus Services

There are problems such as delays and cancellations with several bus services, particularly those serving Robertsbridge Community Collage from Hastings and those going to Bexhill 6th Form College from this area. In some cases, these are run commercially with no subsidy, in other cases ESCC provides subsidies. This can have various causes including driver shortage and road works. I am liaising with ESCC and others to see if and how this can be improved.

Carmen Bridge

This bridge on a bend near Beckley has seen many accidents though fortunately as far as I am aware none causing death or serious injury. Signage has been improved and may have helped but accidents still occur. I am making a case for some active radar activated signs giving warning of the bend. Normally these are justified using injury/death statistics but I am trying to use arguments of saving repair costs to the bridge – the last one costed about £18k. This is unusual but makes financial sense apart from the risks to drivers.

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

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report April 2023.

Recommendations of the Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group

It is recommended that:

- 1) the Council has regard to the socio-economic duty when making decisions and that relevant policies and procedures be rewritten to reflect this;

- 2) the socio-economic duty be reflected in any new Corporate Plan; and
- 3) progression of the delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan and the effectiveness of the Cost of Living page on the website be noted.

Changing Places: Toilets for Pebsham Community Centre and Camber Central Toilets:

Recommendations to COUNCIL: That:

- 1) the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding of £943,301 be added to the Capital Programme towards funding for the Camber Sands Visitor Facilities project;
- 2) the £68,500 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities funding for the new Changing Places Toilet facility at Camber Sands be added to the Capital Programme; and 3) Pebsham Community Centre Changing Places Toilet facility be added to the Capital Programme with £53,432 funding from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and a funding agreement be entered into subject to appropriate due diligence. AND It be RESOLVED: That:
 - 1) total funding of £121,932 for the above two new Changing Places Toilet facilities in the district of Rother awarded from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities be accepted;
 - 2) following the Camber Sands Visitor Facilities Community Infrastructure Levy bid being approved on 14 March 2023, subject to Full Council approval of the Capital Programme on 24 May 2023, funding from the Repairs and Renewals reserve of up to £100,000 be approved to enable works to commence as soon as possible - Toilets as possible to deliver the facilities by the deadline prescribed by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities;
 - 3) the Head of Neighbourhood Services be granted delegated authority to commence RIBA Stage 2 and 3 design work and submit for planning approval; and
 - 4) following Full Council approval, delegated authority be granted to the Director – Place and Climate Change to procure and enter into contracts and complete all necessary works to deliver the facilities.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS IN COUNCIL OWNED CAR PARKS:

The Council had appointed EB Charging to assess EVCP viability within Council car parks, subject to individual car park restrictions including legal and UK Power network capability, and costs. EB Charging would be responsible for the installation and all further operational aspects including ongoing management, maintenance of EVCP infrastructure and pricing.

EB Charging would provide the required EVCP infrastructure and management, subject to partial funding by the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) administered by the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV). Funding would cover up to 60% of eligible capital costs with the remaining funding sourced separately by EB Charging. Subject to funding being awarded, a 10 year contract would be agreed with EB Charging to allow for a return on capital investment and supported the business case for the funding.

After an internal review of suitable Council operated car parks the provider was instructed to assess viability within the following nine car parks:

- i. Wainwright Road, Bexhill
- ii. De La Warr, Bexhill
- iii. Manor Barn and Gardens, Bexhill
- iv. Sidley, Bexhill
- v. Upper Market, Battle
- vi. Mount Street, Battle
- vii. Bedford Place, Rye
- viii. Lucknow Place, Rye
- ix. Camber Sands Central car park

Unfortunately, following the appropriate engagement with UK Power Networks Bedford Place and Lucknow Place car parks, both in Rye, were deemed unsuitable for chargepoints at this time, as the local power network would need substantial upgrading, costing in excess of £250,000, although the situation would be kept under review. The remaining seven viable car parks had been included in the ORCS funding application being submitted imminently, with a decision within 12 weeks and installations starting as early as June; the total EVCP installation costs were circa £309,589.20 (excluding VAT).

The project proposed the installation of three double headed fast chargers within each car park, allowing for up to six electric vehicles to charge simultaneously at each site. It was noted that high level viability for EVCP installation at various Village and Community Halls across Rother was also being considered via the Council's Village Halls Energy Project (VHEP) as these are not Council owned assets.

The report highlighted the key considerations and necessary works to install the chargers including temporary footpath, road and car park closures and planning permission for those car parks near Grade II listed buildings (De La Warr and Manor Barn).

It was noted that in accordance with the Council's Parking Places Order 2020 non-electric vehicles or electric vehicles not actively charging when parked within an EVCP bay would be in breach of the PPO and therefore subject to the full car park standard charge of £80. Parking charges (where applicable) were also payable in addition to the charges applied by EB Charging for the use of an EVCP. Additional signage relating to the payment and use of EVCP parking bays would be erected close to the relevant bays. A condition of ORCS funding was parking charges for EVCP bays were limited to between 0800 and 1800 hours and not 1900 as currently for the Council's car parks; parking charges for EVCP bays (where applicable) would therefore end at 1800 hours.

Councillors Tony Ganly and Martin Mooney