

BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in THE VILLAGE CENTRE on THURSDAY 11 MAY 2023 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Tina Langmead (TL) Chairman, Steve Bunn (SB), Joel Mitchell (JM), Mrs Catherine Penney (CP) and Mrs Natasha Vadorin (NV).

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

1. **Election of a Chairman for the ensuing year and to receive his/her declaration of acceptance of office.**
Cllr Mrs Vadorin was proposed by SB and seconded by JM. Cllr Vadorin confirmed her willingness to serve and signed her Acceptance of Office.
2. **Election of a Vice-chairman for the ensuing year and to receive his/her declaration of acceptance of office.**
Cllr Bunn was proposed by NV and seconded by JM. Cllr Bunn confirmed his willingness to serve and signed his Acceptance of Office.
3. **To receive the declaration of acceptance of office and undertaking in relation to the Code of Conduct from all Councillors.** Papers were signed by councillors and witnessed by the Clerk.
4. **To receive consent to receive summons and documents electronically from all Council members.** Papers were signed by councillors and witnessed by the Clerk.
5. **Apologies for absence.** None.
6. **Co-option – having considered applications, vote by a show of hands for acceptance of applicants.**
Mr E Erith, former serving councillor, had requested to be co-opted onto the Council. Members voted their acceptance 4:0.
Mr S Thorneycroft, former serving councillor, had requested to be co-opted onto the Council. Members voted their acceptance 4:0.
7. **Consent to receive declarations of acceptance and undertaking in relation to the Code of Conduct from co-opted councillors.** Cllrs Erith and Thorneycroft signed their Acceptance of Office which were witnessed by the Clerk.
8. **To receive consent to receive summons and documents electronically from co-opted members.** Cllrs Erith and Thorneycroft signed their papers.
9. **To receive any declarations of interest** whether personal or personal/pecuniary in accordance with the current Code of Conduct regarding matters on the agenda.
10. **Appointment of Council Representatives** and any other Executive or Advisory Committee that the Council agrees should be constituted for the coming year. Nominations from councillors and voting by a show of hands: The following representatives were agreed.
 - a. Planning Committee All members
 - b. Parish Hall representative NV
 - c. Social secretary CP
 - d. Playground & tennis court inspections JM
 - e. MUGA – bookings secretary SB
 - f. Tree Warden/advisor EE
11. **Membership of External Bodies and Council Representatives** by inviting nominations from councillors and voting by a show of hands. The following representatives were agreed
 - a. National Association of Local councils (NALC) – subs £70.11 pa. currently. CP & SB
 - b. Sussex Association of Local Councils (SALC) - subs £270.58 pa. currently. CP & SB
 - c. Rother Association of Local Councils (RALC) subs £30.00 pa. currently. NV & JM

12. **Agree a schedule for meeting dates in the forthcoming year.** With the exception of August, when the monthly meeting will not be held, meetings will be held the 2nd Tuesday monthly. Agreed.
13. **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. Names of those speaking may be recorded and reported in the minutes.
- A resident asked why the wide 5-bar gate to the field at the rear of Buddens Green had been replaced with a single gate which prevented vehicle access. The former Chairman, Mrs Langmead, was asked to explain. She said it was to restrict access to unwanted vehicles and people and if required the gate could be opened up. The resident said the field had not been cut and this gave way to wild-life. In particular, he was concerned building on the land could be prevented if protected species were breeding. The new Clerk will look into this. He asked where it was advertised that the Parish Council was seeking to co-opt councillors and questioned whether members with specific interests were appropriate. The Clerk indicated that within 35 days of the election there isn't a legal requirement to advertise for members. Both co-opted members, who had previously served on the Council, had written to the PC requesting co-option. **Clerk.**
14. **Declarations of interest** whether personal or personal/pecuniary in accordance with the current Code of Conduct regarding matters on the agenda. None.
15. **Reports from County, District and Parish Councillors.**
- TB** He said he had served on Northiam PC and had maintained strong links with the PCSO. He asked if Beckley would have a representative. Beckley's previous representative had been Cllr Ms Gleisner. **JM volunteered to become the police representative. Agreed.**
- PR** said there are on-going matters in Beckley being chased up. Balfour Beatty have been appointed the new ESCC contractors for 2023-24, but not all current cases have been passed over. **CP** said the main road conditions at Clay Hill are extremely bad with huge potholes. **PR** has reported these several times and he will report them again. **ST** asked if Highways kept a record of how much pothole repairs cost. **PR** said it would cost County approx. £400M to bring its road up to standard.
- TG** said due to the elections things were quiet at RDC.
- Councillor Tony Biggs (TB) was introduced as the new District Councillor.** He said he had served for some years on Northiam PC and he looked forward to serving time with RDC.
16. **To consider and approve** the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the PC meeting of 5/4/23. The minutes were agreed and signed by the chairman.
17. **PLANNING** – to consider any planning applications received from RDC and any other planning matters.
- RR/2023/626/P DEL SOUTHFIELD, KINGS BANK LANE.** Single storey west extension, two storey north extension, and remodelling works. **Members unanimously supported the application 6:0.**
- RR/2023/713/P DEL LITTLE HERON HOUSE, HOBBS LANE.** Demolition of disused stable block and replacement with an ancillary building for use as a guest annexe. Change of use of the site from equestrian to domestic (garden). **Members unanimously supported the application 6:0.**
- RR/2023/766/P DEL FRESHFIELDS, HORSESHOE LANE.** Two storey front & side extension and single storey rear extension with internal alterations and improvements. **Members unanimously supported the application 6:0.**
- RR/2023/641/P DEL 2 GLOUCESTER FARM COTTAGE - Land adjacent to, Whitebread Lane.** Erection of agricultural building for the purposes of storage, land maintenance and animal husbandry (retrospective.) **Members unanimously supported the application 6:0.**
- RR/2023/845/P DEL EASTLANDS COTTAGE, STODDARDS LANE.** Conversion of garage to provide ancillary living accommodation. **Members unanimously supported the application 6:0.**
- PLANNING PERMISSIONS GRANTED**
- RR.2023/269/P - 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.
- RR/2023/360/P - THE LANTERNS, Main Street.** Replacement of side garage and raising of rear sun room roof.

RR/2023/471/P 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. No Objection

ENFORCEMENTS:

ENF/332/22/BEC LAND TO THE SOUTH OF WHITBREAD LANE. Change of use of land for the processing of timber, also container has been delivered and a structure is being erected. Latest action: Owner advised of planning situation. Agent preparing a pre-app for submission.

- 18. **King's Coronation** – report on events. NV read out the report on the successful event.
- 19. **Residents' Annual Meeting - Wednesday 31 May 7pm in the Village Hall.** Draft agenda and programme. Ongoing.
- 20. **Annual Insurance – BHIB.** Discuss cover and confirm renewal cost £660.30. **Agreed 6:0.**
- 21. **Accounts** for approval (*VAT, if applicable, shown for items exceeding £100*). The Clerk asked members to approve payment of £150 to Mr Harris who had attended the Coronation celebrations as King Henry VIII and £213.95 to John O’Conner for April’s groundwork. Agreed 6:0.

Recipient	VAT £	Total £	Recipient	VAT £	Total £
Admin costs April		1120.08	RDC-empty 6 dog waste bins	171.60	1029.50
Beckley Village Hall - April		12.60	ESCC – verges grass cutting	78.13	390.64
T Langmead-reimbursement ink/folders		11.22	RALC subscription		30.00
Mike Hancock-flowers War Memorial £100 2022-3 + £50 2023-24		150.00	BHIB insurance		660.30
Mr Harris (Henry VIII)		150.00	John O’Conner	35.66	213.95

The accounts were approved for payment 6:0.

On-line banking was discussed and the incoming Clerk would be asked to look into the best bank for this system. **Clerk**

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

- 22. **Public questions** - not to exceed 10 minutes. **None.**

NV said on behalf of the Council and its previous members she would like to express everyone’s heartfelt thanks for the tremendous work undertaken by the former chairman, Mrs Tina Langmead. She also thanked the retiring Clerk, Mrs Valerie Ades, for her 13 years of work for the Council and she thanked the retiring councillors for their work. The Council and members of the public gave a round of applause.

Date of next meeting – 13 June 2023 commencing 7.30pm.

Reports attached from ESCC and RDC

ESCC Report to Parish Councils – May 2023

Potholes and Roads

The new contractor (Balfour Beatty) took over on 1st May. There will be a few teething problems but we expect a much better service, particularly in the quality of repairs. I and all other county councillors are being invited to meet with them, to hear how they will be different and to discuss concerns. Early signs are that they really want to make a difference.

Perhaps the worst area due to the severity of potholes and the heavy traffic is Station Road in Robertsbridge. Having had multiple meetings with highways I sent a video of the issues and had an on-site meeting with a senior county official on 4th May, His comment was that he was ‘shocked’ and immediately arranged a survey, done that evening, then jetting and spray repairs (done on the evening of the 9th May) which looks good. Patching (partial proper resurfacing over the main pothole areas) will be done later this year.

There is still one area where there is a group of smaller potholes, but these were agreed to be repaired so I am chasing. The road also needs to be swept to remove hazardous loose stone.

Overall we know we need to do more at county though funding is a challenge. I expect to have more news in the next few months.

Cases –

Update on significant cases in or close to Beckley. Please see previous reports for the full background.

Carmen Bridge

This bridge on a bend near Beckley has seen many accidents though fortunately none 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 cost 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 May 2023.

Councillor Tony Ganly said there was nothing of significance to report from RDC due to the elections.