

## BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in THE VILLAGE CENTRE on TUESDAY 13 JUNE 2023 at 7.30pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mr S Bunn (TL) Vice Chairman, Joel Mitchell (JM),) and Mr Stephen Thorneycroft (ST).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** County Cllr Paul Redstone (PR), District Cllrs Tony Biggs (TB) and Tony Ganly (TG), Mrs M Philo, Clerk and five members of the public.

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#### 1. Public Questions

Mr Baverstock, in response to an earlier query from the parish council, advised that the iron railings along the front of the school dated from 1882 along with the porch. The three gates were originally dedicated as follows: far right for the girls, far left for the boys and the central gate was for visitors and staff as it opened close to the porch.

Mr Baverstock also expressed his preference for the parish council to have advertised councillor vacancies following the notice of uncontested election to Beckley Parish Council, though it is not a legal requirement for the first 35 days following the date of an ordinary election.

Mr Shearing introduced himself as a tennis coach booking the Beckley Courts and requested permission to put a banner on the court netting advertising summer coaching sessions. He also asked if the booking system might allow for booking 60 minutes on the half hour. Councillor Bunn would look into the booking system. Councillors would not be averse to a banner so long as it kept tidy.

Mr Louis of Knell Hill Lodge advised that the land adjacent was being used a logging yard and that the noise was excessive. Planning enforcement officers have advised those logging that planning permission needs to be applied for. Mr Louis asked the parish council to consider the noise levels when it addressed the application. No application has been received as yet.

#### 2. Apologies

Councillors Vadorin, Penny and Erith.

#### 3. Declarations of interest

Councillor Thorneycroft advised of a prejudicial interest in the Fortune Cottage planning application.

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

##### County Councillor Report

PR had sent his report ahead. The District Council was keen to have feedback on the Flexibus scheme that had just started up. Posters would be provided for local noticeboards. He would be meeting with South East Water about the recent Bank Holiday water shortage and would be highlighting the company's failure to provide water stations within the expected time limit of 6 hours.

##### District Councillors Reports

TB had been in contact with the area PCSO Rebekah Unicombe, a part time officer and organised for her to attend various clubs and the school. He also highlighted the district council consultation on dog control.

##### Parish Councillor Reports

JM advised that a swing seat was cracked and that the bench tipped up when someone sat down alone on one side. Equipment to be taped off to prevent use until repaired. Clerk to order a new seat and SB to secure the seat.

Bench to be inspected for repair.

**ACTION: JM**

**ACTION: SB**

New swing seat to be ordered.

**ACTION: The Clerk**

ST queried whether councils could legally compulsorily purchase land for solar panels as mentioned in a national broadsheet. It appeared that if the solar panel field is large enough then it would be considered of national interest and compulsory purchase permitted.

SB advised he had a new pole for the dog bin and would be organising a plate to be welded on so that the bin could be reinstalled.

## 5. Approval of the minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed.

## 6. Planning

### a) Planning Applications Considered

**RR/2023/60/P Great Knelle Farm**, The Old Dairy building, Whitebread Lane. Information /amended plans and/or description - Conversion of a redundant agricultural building (The Old Dairy building) to a residential dwelling. **Members unanimously supported the application.**

**RR/2023/61/L Great Knelle Farm**, The Old Dairy building, Whitebread Lane. Additional information /amended plans and/or description - Conversion of a redundant agricultural building (The Old Dairy building) to a residential dwelling. **Members unanimously supported the application.**

Councillor Thorneycroft left the room.

**RR/2023/779/P Fortune Cottage, Horseshoe Lane**. Proposed woodland access and associated parking/working area for forestry activity. **Members deferred commenting till further information provided.**

**RR/2023/717/P Boormans Cottage, Whitebread Lane**, Single storey rear extension & Installation of Sewage Treatment Plant. **Members unanimously supported the application.**

**RR/2023/742/P Kitchenour, Kitchenour Lane**. Traditional oak framed building including six stables, parking bay, feed store, and storage space (revision to approved application RR/2019/2823/P). **Members unanimously supported the application.**

**RR/2023/716/P Meadow Cottage, The Stream, Beckley TN31 6SJ** Erection of three-bay garage building. **Members unanimously agreed to make no comment.**

**RR/2023/788/P Ilex Cottage, Main Street**, A ground floor extension and alterations to create a granny annexe. **Members unanimously supported the application.**

**RR/2023/1128/P Little Knelle Cottage, Whitebread Lane**. Conversion and extension of existing tool shed to ancillary accommodation. **Members unanimously supported the application.**

**RR/2023/809/P Speedwell Vineyard, Main Street**. Erection of metal shed for agricultural storage (retrospective.). **Members unanimously supported the application.**

### b) Planning Application Decisions Advised

RR/2022/2884/P - Ross Farm, Furnace Lane. Retention of caravan for continued use as agricultural workers dwelling. Granted subject to conditions.

RR/2023/227/P - Little Heron House, Hobbs Lane. Two storey side extension and creation of sunken plunge pool. Granted subject to conditions.

RR/2023/626/P - Southfield, Kings Bank Lane. Single storey west extension, two storey north extension, and remodelling works. Granted subject to conditions.

RR/2023/641/P 2 Gloucester Farm Cottage - Land adjacent to, Whitebread Lane. Erection of agricultural building for the purposes of storage, land maintenance and animal husbandry (retrospective.) Granted subject to conditions.

RR/2023/766/P Freshfields, Horseshoe Lane. Two storey front & side extension and single storey rear extension with internal alterations, improvements and addition of weatherboarding. Granted subject to conditions.

RR/2023/713/P - 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). Refused.

#### **7. Residents Annual Meeting**

The meeting had been a great success and well received with numerous speakers.

#### **8. Public Footpath 22b Diversion**

East Sussex County Council Public Rights of Way had confirmed the paths diversion.

#### **9. Asset Register as at 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023**

The circulated asset register was agreed.

#### **10. Bank Reconciliation**

Item was deferred.

#### **11. Internal Auditor's Report for 2022-2023**

The report which found no cause for concern was noted.

#### **12. Annual Governance and Accounting Report for 2022-2023 for External Audit**

a) Annual Governance Statement

Following review of the 9 assertions, it was resolved to agree and sign Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Report 2022-2023.

b) Accounting Statements

Following review of the figures and associated papers, it was resolved to agree and sign Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Reports 2022-2023. The Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer had signed this section the day before the meeting.

c) Setting the dates for the Public Right of Inspection of the Council's Accounts

It was resolved to set the dates as 15<sup>th</sup> July to 27<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

#### **13. Accounts**

<b>Recipient</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>Total £</b>	<b>Recipient</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
V Ades - Admin costs May		500.24	Mike Hancock (Memorial planter)		67.00
HMRC Apr/May Tax 940.40 NI 335.08		1275.48	John O'Conner groundwork May		213.95
Beckley Village Hall - PC 11.5.23 12.60			Beckley WI refreshments for King's Coronation celebrations		540.00
Coronation quiz 6.5.23 - 6hrs 69.00					
Residents' meeting hall & kitchen 23.00		104.60			
Mulberry & Co. internal audit		214.74	ICO data protection subscription		40.00
T Langmead reimbursement purchases for Coronation Celebrations		88.17			

The accounts were unanimously approved for payment.

#### **14. Matters for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting.**

None.

#### **15. Public Questions**

It was suggested that the Residents Annual Meeting Agenda should include an item for Public Questions.

It was highlighted that a public footpath is considered part of the highway and so should be considered when considering planning applications

Date of next meeting – 11 July 2023 commencing 7.30pm village hall. Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

## Reports from ESCC and RDC

### Northern Rother District Councillor's Report June 2023

Now that the elections have finished and everything finalized, the chief executive Malcom Johnson is retiring from his position. Lorna Ford will be taking up the position of interim chief executive at Rother District Council until a permanent chief executive is in place.

**Full Council Meetings and Committees** have now started to take place and if members of the public wish to view Council committee meetings they can as these are now online.

We have been in contact with a **police officer** Roger Tomlinson at Battle police station, to try and find out who is the PCSO officer for the Parishes of Northiam and Beckley. We now know that it is Becky Unicombe. We are waiting for her to contact us so we can arrange a meeting with her and the two Parish Councillors for Northiam and Beckley who are the PCSO representatives for the respective councils. Bodiam and Ewhurst Parish Councils used to have "Teams" meetings with the police but these will no longer be taking place; because of an increase in staff they now hope to go back to localised policing. The PCSO for these two parishes is Rachael Scott.

**Rother DC Housing Company** is having a drop- in session on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June at Battle memorial hall TN33 0AQ between 3.30-7pm. This is for people who are interested in the proposal of 200 new homes that are going to be built at the Blackfriars site in Battle.

The spine road, part of the development, was originally estimated at £4.1 million. The latest estimate is £15.8 million, four times the original projection.

House building was planned to begin in July 2023. This will now be October 2024 at the earliest.

Estimated completion date for the whole project was "from" Spring 2025 (whatever that means). It is now felt that completion will be now be "2026 onwards".

As at 5 June 2023 no external directors have been appointed to the ROTHER DC HOUSING COMPANY, the company set up by the ruling alliance to oversee the project.

A service Level Agreement between RDC and the housing company is essential to show that the housing company is independent of RDC. As at 5 June 2023 no SLA has been published or implemented.

**We have been asked** to investigate some issues residents in our Parishes have. These have been passed on to the relevant departments and hopefully they can be resolved for everyone concerned.