



BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in THE VILLAGE CENTRE on TUESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2024 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors, Mrs Natasha Vadorin (NV), Mr Steve Bunn (SB), Mrs Catherine Penny (CP), Mr Joel Mitchell (JM) and Mr Stephen Thorneycroft (ST).

IN ATTENDANCE: County Cllr Paul Redstone (PR), District Councillor Tony Biggs (TB), the Clerk M Philo and eight members of the public.

1. Public Questions at 7.30pm

Field at Buddens Green

A resident highlighted that the bird nesting season would soon be starting.

Road Resurfacing and Flooding

A resident close to the Garage shop had almost been flooded inside his property. A highways officer had attended and advised that as a result of the new road surface being laid straight on top of the old surface the height of the curbs had been lowered and the volume of rain had exceeded this height leading to water running off the road down into the front garden. The setts outside the property would be raised to prevent this. It was queried if the contractors should have been laying the surface on the road between Beckley and Northiam where the road surface had been cleared away.

Another resident raised the protruding sets following the surfacing works around Four Oaks. The contractors had reset these but they still remained high. They also mentioned the contractors had not allowed people to access their homes and vehicles had been abandoned on the road.

There had also been other flooding along Main Street as a result of the water backing up side pipes as the main sewers were full. The main drains may be blocked. Water from the main road drain had backed up the pipe and filled the council field which then overflowed and flooded the adjacent downhill property.

Councillor Redstone advised that there was a new Highways Steward and that he had hoped to speak with the officer but they were away. He was trying to organise a meeting with highways officers to discuss the various drainage issues. He gave a report on the number of drainage issues dealt with in Beckley in the last month and urged residents to continue reporting any highways issues.

The meeting convened at 7.49pm

2. Apologies

District Councillor Tony Ganly.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. The meeting adjourned for Reports from County and District Councillors 7.50pm

i. County Councillor Report

The current deficit of 14million for the current financial year would be met from reserves. However, it was not sustainable to continually draw on reserves. The government settlement

to East Sussex was £5 million which would be allocated to highways repairs.
The county council was seeking foster carers.

ii. **District Councillors Reports**

Councillor Biggs reported that garden ornaments in Main Street had been taken and tools stolen from two farm sheds in Moore Lane.

5. The meeting reconvened at 7.54 pm

6. It was unanimously resolved to approve the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the meeting of 9 January 2024.

7. Planning

- i. Applications considered:
 - a. **RR/2024/86/P Kingsbank House, Kings Bank Lane: Single storey sitting room extension to single family dwelling house. It was unanimously resolved to support.**
- ii. Planning Permission Approved:
 - a. RR/2023/2494/P Taihoa Land adjacent, Kings Bank Lane: Demolition of existing former workshop and replacement building to provide 1 x unit holiday accommodation. Approved.
- iii. Planning Applications Refused
 - a. RR/2023/2322/P Gooseley Farm Oast, Main Street: Outline planning application for up to 4 dwellings and associated infrastructure, with all matters reserved except for access.
 - b. Appeal APP/U1430/W/23/3321733 The Cottage in the Wood: Land adjacent to, Hobbs Lane: Agricultural Building - Dismissed
- iv. Enforcement – None.
- v. For notification only – None
- vi. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Survey
It was resolved to submit the proposed responses which supported the idea that those councils that had not received any or little funds from CIL might benefit from being able to apply to CIL Strategic funds.

8. Finances

i. Monthly balance and sign off

a. NatWest

	Current Account	Reserve Account
Bank statement 31 st December 2023	£ 35,220.56	£ 612.30
Receipts	£ 17.76	Interest £ 0.80
Payments	<u>£ 1,254.73</u>	<u>£ 0.00</u>
Running balance	<u>£ 33,983.59</u>	<u>£ 613.10</u>
Bank statement 31 st January 2023	£ 34,842.04	
Unpresented cheques	<u>£ 858.45</u>	
Running balance	<u>£ 33,983.59</u>	

b. Lloyds Bank which currently holds no funds

9. Highways

i. Rural Verge Cutting

In response to public requests and trials, Highways were offering to change the where and when these cuts will be made. **It was unanimously resolved to agree option 2 Environmental**

Enhancement Service: Excluding single track lanes, the first cut at start of season to be only visibility cuts for safety at junctions and on the inside of bends where sight lines between road users may be obscured by vegetation. The second cut later in the season will be visibility plus a 1-metre-wide swathe along the verge.

ii. Surveillance at Four Oaks

It was confirmed that there was no legally requirement to consult with residents on this matter.

10. Jubilee Fields, Play Area and MUGA Repairs and Improvements

i. Report on regular checks of Jubilee Field - The field was a quagmire.

ii. Jubilee Field – Gap in Hedge

Councillor Penny was thanked for planting mixed saplings to fill two gaps in the hedge. A further gap was appearing and Councillor Penny offered to fill it.

iii. Frog Field Information Board

Attachment bands for the sign had been ordered by the printer.

iv. Shelter

Councillor Bunn and his son were thanked for replacing the broken perspex – a nearly total replacement.

v. Junior and Toddler Climbing Frame

Councillor Bunn had surveyed the site and felt able to remove the fireman’s pole and close off the entrance to make it safe.

vi. Flooding of entrance area to the field used by the school.

The contractor was delayed visiting the site due to Covid but attended on Tuesday 6th February. Some initial investigation was made and a small trench dug to the drainage pipe. Following rains shortly afterwards, the contractor had returned to rod the drain. In the process the removal of some of the blockage in the pipe meant that water from the overwhelmed road drain back flowed, filling the small field ditch up to 1.5 ft. As soon as the road drain had cleared the field ditch had cleared. Councillor Penny had made another gully to drain the puddle in the centre of the drive. The ditch area needed remoulding and a means to prevent back flow. Clerk requested to obtain a quote.

The heavy rains back flow had resulted in water spouting out of a Openreach pipe opposite the former Methodist Chapel.

vii. Beckley Preschool

The preschool could make itself more sustainable if it could run 5 days a week. Currently Thursdays in the village hall was given over to table tennis. The preschool was looking at alternatives. **Subject to the land ownership title allowing, it was unanimously resolved, in principle, to allow for a facility for the preschool on the council field from which to operate from, alongside the junior school.** The council requested to be involved with any plans.

viii. Jubilee field Drainage

Councillor Bunn would be meeting with Bournes with regard to the drainage system installed 10 years ago.

11. Land at Buddens Green

- i. Councillors met with Action in Rural Sussex to learn about the various community led options that the affordable homes site might be progressed.
- ii. The contractor is assessing the field ground conditions to be able to carry out the field clearance.
- iii. **It was resolved to fund a housing need survey to ascertain whether there is any requirement for housing in the parish.** Estimated cost is £5,495.72 plus vat. A grant of 50% is available from Rother District Council towards the survey. There is a 50% upfront payment.

12. Bus Shelters, Defibrillators and Noticeboards

The defib pads for the defibrillator in the prior Phone Kiosk have been replaced. The pads had reached their expiry date. Councillor Bunn had updated the national website The Circuit. The village hall had agreed to some signs indicating that a defibrillator was available at the hall.

13. Fingerpost Maintenance

Opposite King's Bank Lane: The post was now ready and awaiting delivery. Some of the letters had been replaced, part of a finger pointer replaced and the cap refurbished as part of the work.

14. Parish Council Email

Councillors and the clerk are experiencing difficulties with the full email inboxes preventing emails being received. **It was resolved to move all councillors and clerk's email addresses to be hosted by Microsoft 365 business basics which provides 1TB of storage, teams, share point and basic office software.** A full council cost £470 plus vat.

15. Accounts

- i. Donation to Village Hall
It was resolved to donate paint and Perspex to the village hall committee. Est £400.
- ii. Payments
It was unanimously agreed to draw the following cheques
£ 782.17 Clerk's Salary – no paye due to previous overpayment
£ 80.15 Refund M Philo: Share of Clerks subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerk
£ 300.00 John O'Connor: meadow cut and clear (vat £50)
£ 213.95 John O'Connor: Missing November bill (vat £35.66)
£ 180.00 John O'Connor: Remaining bills including hedge cutting (£30)
£ 32.82 Pett PC: Share of Clerk's mobile phone September 23 to March 2024 inclusive
£ 26.00 M Philo: Office cost
£ 18.00 Village Hall: January Hall booking
£ 71.35 Neighbourhood watch Stickers
- iii. Lloyd's bank resolution confirmation
To agree to the resolution, with regard to amending authorised signatories:
 - if we add or remove Authorised Signatories in the "Add or Remove Authorised Signatories" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section
 - if we change the Signing Rules in the "Change the Signing Rules on the Mandate" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section

- and the current mandate will continue as amended.

16. Information for Councillors

- i. The date for Parish Meeting was provisionally confirmed as being Thursday 16th May at 6pm.
- ii. Councillor Vadorin was in conversation with other groups regarding D-Day commemoration.
- iii. Neighbourhood Stickers were ordered

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

Allocation of funds above the reserve.

18. Date of next meeting – 12 March 2024 commencing 7.30pm.

19. Public Questions 9.01pm

A resident suggested deer awareness signs to remind drivers. Others highlighted that there are some highways deer signs installed in the village.

A resident offered to forward the council a copy of their complaint to Rother District Council about procedure of the planning committee regarding Church Farm Bungalow.

A resident advised that as a result of a block drain by Carmel Bridge, during the cold weather at the beginning of January, the sheet ice had caused two cars to crash.

A resident advised of areas where hogweed grew that needed attention this year. Sap from the weed burns the skin of people and animals.

Meeting closed at 9.13 pm.