



BECKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in THE VILLAGE CENTRE on TUESDAY 12 MARCH 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 Councillors Tony Biggs (TB) and Tony Gnaly, the Clerk M Philo and seven members of the public.

1. Public Questions at 7.30pm

Road Resurfacing and Flooding

The resident close to the Garage Store was still awaiting the kerb sets to be raised to prevent heavy rains from running over the kerb and down the drive to flood his garden and house. They had chased highways contractor for a date but found the highways protocol unhelpful. It was difficult to have to move the sand bags away and then back again every time they went out in the car.

County Councillor Redstone's referred to his report that had been distributed to the public. The Highways contractor had commissioned more gangs and there was a focus on drainage issue. Another resident complained that road resurfacing like pothole repairs was not lasting any time. Councillor Redstone advised that temporary pothole repairs, because of bad weather, should be marked with a 'T' and that the contractor would be returning to complete a permanent repair.

The meeting convened at 7.40pm

2. Apologies

None.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. Co-option

Following a paper ballot, **it was resolved to co-opt Jo Morphy to join the council.** Councillor Morphy signed the Acceptance of Office and joined the other councillors.

5. The meeting adjourned for Reports from County and District Councillors 7.49pm

i. District Councillor Report

Both councillors had voted against the increase in the annual garden bin fee as the increase was higher than needed to cover running costs. The increase would provide additional income for the district council. This had meant voting against all the terms of waste the contract. Central government required kerb side food collection by March 2026. With this in mind Rother District Council is acquiring a new site from the County Council. Food collection cost to residents would depend on the amount of central government subsidy.

ii. County Councillors Report

The report had been circulated.

6. The meeting reconvened at 8.00 pm

7. It was unanimously resolved to approve the signing by the Chairman of the minutes of the meeting of 13 February 2024.

8. Planning

i. Applications considered:

- a. RR/2024/195/L and RR/2024/248/P Ludley Farm, Ludley Hill: Repair and conversion of curtilage listed agricultural building to form a 3-bedroom dwelling. **It was resolved to support. Councillor Murphy abstained as newly joined the council.**
- b. RR/2024/177/L and RR/2024/176/P The Vines, Main Street: Replace outbuilding on same footprint, replace and increase width of gates and widen vehicle crossover. **It was resolved to support. Councillor Murphy abstained as newly joined the council.**
- c. RR/2024/241/P and RR/2024/242/L Chestnuts Main Street: Proposed alterations to C20th utility extension, alterations to C20th kitchen extension including new rooflights, alterations to fenestration and fireplace (Amendment to scheme approved under RR/2022/2122/L and RR/2022/2121/P). **It was resolved to support. Councillor Murphy abstained as newly joined the council.**

ii. Planning Permission Approved:

RR/2023/2332/P Ilex Cottage, Main Street: Alternative to previously approved scheme RR/2023/778/P for the proposed erection of a self-contained log cabin annexe.

iii. Planning Applications Refused

RR/2023/2317/P The Vineyard, Whitebread Lane: Erection of two detached houses served by new vehicular access and relocation of field gate.

iv. Enforcements

ENF/163/23/BEC Land at Main Street (RR/2021/2253/FN) Land being used for private horses: Although the animals are personal use as opposed to agricultural, no harm is being caused, as such no formal action required. Therefore, no further action will be taken.

v. For notification only – None

9. Finances

i. Monthly balance and sign off

a. NatWest

	Current Account	Reserve Account
Bank statement 31 st January 2024	£ 33,983.59	£ 613.10
Receipts	£ 5.18	Interest £ 0.71
Payments	<u>£ 1,816.64</u>	<u>£ 0.00</u>
Running balance 29 th February 2024	<u>£ 32,172.13</u>	<u>£ 613.81</u>
Bank statement 29 th February 2024	£ 32,870.13	
Unpresented cheques	<u>£ 698.00</u>	
Running balance	<u>£ 32,172.13</u>	

b. Lloyds Bank which currently holds no funds

10. Highways

Councillor Thorneycroft raised the fly-tipping at the layby on the road to Peasmarsh after Panes woodyard. Clerk to report.

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

i. Report on regular checks of Jubilee Field

The equipment was satisfactory whilst the wet weather made the grass boggy and unusable. The woodchip under the play equipment was holding up. Councillor Penny continued to empty the bins inside Jubilee Fields.

ii. Frog Field Information Board

The printer was waiting for the pole clips for the board.

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

Councillor Penny had met with the Highways contractor drainage manager on site. Highways confirmed that it would allow a non-return valve to be fitted to the culvert pipe on the council side. **It was resolved to contract Gibbs & Son to reform the bank to drain inlet on the School Field.** Estimated cost £310.

iv. Other Flooding

a. Buddens Green

Councillor Thorneycroft attended Buddens Green No 1 and No 2 when the parish council was contacted about the flooding there. He reported that the ditches either side of the lane beside Buddens Green needed clearing. The Parish Council was responsible for the land from the roadside to No1 as well as the field behind No 1. The Highways drainage manager confirmed, to Councillor Penny, that the ditch along the track beside Buddens Green was connected to the main drain and would forward the council the drainage plans. Highways advised that the ditch must be cleared to a one metre depth and this would also need a post and rail fencing to make the ditch safe. The clerk was instructed to obtain quotes to clear from the pavement up to the boundary with the Housing Association land as an initial start. The Housing Association should deal with their section. A resident was trying to contact the Housing Association to allow for collaboration to resolve the issue.

a. Clayhill

Councillor Penny mentioned to the drainage engineer the blocked drains on Clayhill. The engineer had seen the issue upon arrival and had scheduled clearance work.

b. Horseshoe Lane

Whilst with the drainage engineer, a conversation was held with the relevant farmer to clear a ditch on Horseshoe Lane to prevent flooding of properties near its junction with Main Street.

v. Jubilee Field Drainage

Councillor Bunn had met with Bournes to review the original drainage system of 2004. The system installed by Judges consists of pipes at 4 metre intervals connecting to a main chambre. Only a small trickle was visible in the chamber. Councillor Bunn will investigate the slit level in pipes. Councillor Bunn thanked Anne Jones for information about the earlier works.

vi. Main Street Hedge

Councillor Penny would shortly replant the final gap in the hedge.

12. Land at Buddens Green

- i. The recent heavy rains meant the contractor found the ground to be too wet to get heavy machinery on the land. Rain has continued since then.
- ii. Housing Needs Survey.
A grant application has been submitted. Councillors confirmed that they are happy with the survey questions and agreed the cover letter and communications plan. Surveys will go out around the 2nd May. **It was resolved to agree to delegate to the clerk should any decisions needed between meetings in consultation with councillors.**

13. Bus Shelters, Defibrillators and Noticeboards

The wall mounted directional signs, to highlight that a defibrillator can be found at the village hall, have been mounted on the entrance to the village hall. Councillor Bunn was thanked for mounting these.

14. Fingerpost Maintenance

Opposite King's Bank Lane: The fingerpost is back in situ and a good job refurbishment completed.

15. D-Day Commemoration

It was resolved to acquire a commemorative flag to be flown on June 6th. £28.80 5 ft x 3ft including vat and postage.

16. Finances

- i. Allocation of reserve funds
It was resolved to allocate reserve funds initially towards drainage issues.

- ii. Payments authorised

It was unanimously agreed to draw the following cheques

£ 782.17	Clerk's Salary – no paye due to previous overpayment
£ 18.00	Beckley Village Hall Trust – February Meeting Room Hire
£ 3,297.43	Sussex Rural Community Council (vat £549.57)
£ 420.00	Netwise website host (vat £70)
£ 53.75	M Philo: Office cost, key and stamps
£ 1,183.92	Playdale Playgrounds: Play area outstanding bill for net and accessories (vat £197.32)
£ 46.77	Refund M Philo: Defibrillator signs for the village centre (vat £7.80)
£ 145.00	M W Slegg: additional work to fingerpost
£ 51.00	Refund N Chillingworth: Green paint for hall donation (vat £8.50)
£ 252.81	Refund M Philo: Paint and accessories for village hall donation

17. Information for Councillors

- i. The village hall has thanked the parish council for the donation of paint and accessories.
- ii. Councillor Penny completed a visual inspection of the clerk's office.
- iii. Rother Voluntary Action have requested to come to talk to residents. The Clerk was asked if they would attend the Parish Assembly.
- iv. The Parish Online Mapping subscription would no longer be via the Rother Association of Local Councils but should the council wish to continue a similarly discount membership would be offered. The Clerk was asked to resend the logging in information.
- iv. Neighbourhood Watch stickers have been delivered.

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

- i. Tennis Net
- ii. Shed donation to Growers Group

19. Public Questions 8.51pm

None.

20. Date of next meeting – 16 April 2024 commencing 7.30pm

21. Pursuant to section 102 of the public bodies (admission to meeting) Act 1960, it was resolved that, because of the confidential nature of business transacted, the Public and Press leave the meeting during the Clerk's salary from 1st April 2024 and the parish council requirement for pension.

Following discussion it was resolved to:

- i. To increase the hourly rate for scale point 28 to that agreed by the National Association of Local Councils for the 1st April 2023 and start this from the end of the probation period.
- ii. To enrol the position of the clerk in the East Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme as of the 1st April 2024 to comply with legal requirements. Councillor Penny and the Clerk to manage the scheme and paperwork.

Meeting closed at 9.20 pm.