

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Brightling Parish Council held on  
Wednesday 8th September 2021 at 7.30 p.m. at Brightling Village Hall**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Caroline Croft, Daniel Lambert-Gorwyn, Judy Petty, Jane Oxenford, Dianne Mower and Andrew Wedmore (Chair)

Parish Councillors absent: Cllr Rodderick Wrenn

District / County

Councillors present: ESCC Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green, Cllr John Barnes

In attendance: Gilly Lowe, Clerk to the Council & 1 member of the public

1. Apologies for absence  
Received from Doug Edworthy, Tree Warden.
2. Disclosures of interest  
None.
3. Additional agenda items  
There were no further agenda items that had not already been included on the agenda.
4. Adoption of Minutes  
The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 30th June 2021 as a true and correct record.
5. Open Forum
  - 5.1 Cllr Kirby-Green read from a report previously submitted to the Clerk with an update from ESCC. This is attached as a separate document.  
  
Cllr Barnes confirmed that the reorganisation of Rother DC was now complete. The Local Plan is making progress and is currently at evidence gathering stage. The financial position is slightly better than expected with a smaller deficit than forecast, but this is largely due to the postponement of capital projects due to the pandemic.
  - 5.2 Mrs Jenny Yeo wanted to express her thanks to BPC, particularly Cllr Petty, for continued efforts to get something done about the bridge on the B2096 bordering her property. She had to have her muck heap moved as the surface water running off Netherfield Hill and into her property would have caused contamination of the stream leading to Darwell Reservoir. Sandbags placed on the opposite side by a contractor have been eroded. She feels that the walls of the bridge on both sides are on the point of collapse. It is extremely worrying and despite writing twice to Highways she has had no response. Cllr Kirby-Green asked the Clerk to send the photographs taken by Cllr Petty and

said that she would raise it with Nigel Powers, in charge of Drainage, when she met with him the following morning. Mrs Yeo thanked the Chairman.

## 6. Finance and Governance

### 6.1 RFO Report

6.1.1 The bank reconciliation to 31<sup>st</sup> August had been previously circulated and the Chairman confirmed that having checked online, the balances were correct as stated.

6.1.2 The schedule of receipts & payments for July & August had been circulated for information.

6.1.3 The Meeting Papers previously circulated detailed the following payments which were approved for payment:

6.1.3.1 RALC Subscription - £75 (previously paid by BACS)

6.1.3.2 Doug Andrews – Fingerpost repair - £225.60 (fully covered by ESCC P/Order & credited to account)

## 7. Quiet Lanes

Cllr Mower had attended a meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> August with the Quiet Lanes (QL) group from Burwash. They had asked if BPC were prepared to support the initiative following the presentation given at the June meeting. The support would include various traffic-calming measures, facilitate consultation with Brightling residents in Willingford Lane and support of their councillors at RALC meetings. There was also a request for a financial contribution. After some discussion amongst councillors, Cllr Wedmore proposed the following: BPC would support the QL initiative in principle, but not financially. Cllr Petty could support Burwash councillors at RALC meetings, and the QL group could approach Brightling residents in Willingford Lane on that basis. Cllr Lambert-Gorwyn seconded the motion, and all were in favour.

**Action: Cllr Mower to respond to the QL group.**

## 8. Highways

Cllr Petty provided an update on Highways matters. There has been extensive work at Oxley's Green and Mr Meakin wrote to thank BPC for their help and stated that he was very happy with the work carried out and the good rapport he had with the contractors on site.

However, the bridge on the B2096, as previously reported by Mrs Yeo, needs urgent repair, and there has been absolutely no progress here at all. There is no current Customer Service Manager (CSM) for our area and the workload is being shared with other CSM's. Communication with Highways is poor and staffing problems don't help. The matter has been raised several times at SLR meetings and as an individual problem. Despite various site visits, there is no connection between reporting and whoever is responsible for resolving the problem. Cllr Kirby-Green reiterated that she would raise the issue with Nigel Powers, stressing the urgency and ask him to call Mrs Yeo.

Cllr Petty felt that the noise from speeding motorbikes had seemed to be improved of late, and that Steve O'Connell had been very helpful with offers to increase police presence.

9. Cllr Petty had attended a RALC meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July. The ineffectiveness of the Highways Dept had been raised by many of the Rother parishes. Cllr Kirby-Green said that unfortunately until there was a change of Contractor, (January '23) there would be little progress. However, the process has begun on contract renewal. Other matters raised at the RALC meeting included the results of a planning satisfaction survey, a reminder of Community Rights from the Localism Act of 2011, an update on speeding from Keith Robertson and the news that Burwash PC were considering taking the lease over of the toilet block with a view to installing an electric vehicle charging point.

## 10. Planning Matters

### 10.1 Applications

#### 10.1.1 RR/2021/1080/P (and/L) – Perch Hill Farm, Willingford Lane, Burwash TN32 5HP

This application had since been withdrawn. Brightling Parish Council had submitted comments objecting to the application prior to its withdrawal.

#### 10.1.2 RR/2021/1063/P – Perch Hill Farm, Willingford Lane, Burwash TN32 5HP

*Proposal – Construction of greenhouse & garden store.*

The following comments were submitted previously online by the Clerk, delegated to comment on behalf of the council: *Brightling Parish Council has no objection to this application subject to the following condition: there should be no internal or external lighting in line with our "dark skies" policy.*

#### 10.1.3 RR/2021/1431/P – Perch Hill Cottage, Willingford Lane, Burwash TN32 5HP

*Proposal – Conversion of existing garage to form ancillary studio accommodation.*

The following comments were submitted previously online by the Clerk, delegated to comment on behalf of the council: *Brightling Parish Council has no objection to this application, subject to the following conditions: 1. The proposed rooflights are shown as larger than the existing rooflights. The new rooflights should either be removed from the proposal, or there should be a condition that they should be fitted with glass that cannot emit light after dark in line with the "dark skies" policy. 2. Likewise there should be no external lighting ("dark skies" policy) 3. Any approval should be conditional on the applicant providing further details of the heating and energy design of the development to ensure compliance with policies SRM1(ii) and SRM1(v) of the Local Plan.*

#### 10.1.4 RR/2021/1741/P – Birchin Farm, Cackle Street, Brightling TN32 5HY

*Proposal – Single storey side extension.*

Cllr Wedmore proposed that no comment be made regarding this application & it was seconded by Cllr Oxenford.

### 10.2 Appeals

#### 10.2.1 APP/U1430/W/21/3270671 / 2748 - Telegraph Point, Coldharbour Farm Estate (in relation to planning application RR/2020/2255/P)

**Action: The Clerk to re-submit the comments previously made in connection with this appeal before the 21<sup>st</sup> September deadline.**

- 10.2.2 APP/U1430/W/20/3270899 - Park Pale House, Mountfield Lane, Mountfield TN32 5LD  
*Appeal overturned and costs awarded to the appellant.*

Cllr Wedmore passed comment about the poor decision that had been made by the planning committee when granting this application, and that an appeal had been inevitable. The fact that the appeal was overturned, and costs awarded, which is unusual, lead him to believe that others also felt incorrect decisions had been made originally.

- 10.2.3 APP/1430/C/20/3261419/2722 - Land to rear of Fir Tree Cottage, Netherfield Hill, Battle

This appeal was held by video hearing on 18<sup>th</sup> August – no further information following the hearing had been made available by the time of the meeting.

### 10.3 Decision Notices

The Forge, Oxley's Green – Planning permission granted of revised plans with conditions.

### 10.4 Planning Training

- 10.4.1 A YouTube link to a presentation about Building Control that took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> July had previously been shared with all councillors. Cllr Wedmore highly recommended it.

Action: The Clerk was asked to re-send the link as some councillors hadn't received it.

- 10.4.2 ESALC's offer for rural parishes – this planning training was taking place by video conference the following evening and three councillors were due to attend. The Clerk had liaised with ESALC to offer the training to neighbouring parishes, and in total 16 attendees from 7 rural parishes were due to attend, reducing the cost per person substantially.

## 11. Community and Business Development

### 11.1 Broadband

Cllr Wedmore circulated a report with an update on broadband which is attached as a separate document to these minutes.

### 11.2 Crime, anti-social behaviour & police relationships

Cllr Croft had attended the latest Teams meeting with the PCSO and there was very little recent crime in the area.

### 11.3 Defibrillators - nothing to report.

### 11.4 Environment Policy & Bio-Diversity

Cllr Oxenford said that East Sussex Highways had asked for an interim report on the no-cut verge trial and despite asking for comments from members of the public in The Messenger, none had been received. Cllr Oxenford was going to make the request to some specific residents who had expressed interest in wildflower verges and respond to Highway's survey in due course. Cllr Croft stated that quite a lot of people locally had commented on the overgrown verges, but the wet humid summer conditions have led to vigorous growth which was an unfortunate coincidence. Cllr Kirby-Green said that verges are due to be cut from the end of this month.

Also, the Himalayan Balsam that was sprayed in the Weed-spraying programme on 12<sup>th</sup> August had not died back, and the Clerk was asked to report it to Highways for further treatment.

On the environment, Cllr Wedmore asked again about ESCC's Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) scheme. See separate report attached to this document.

**Action: Cllr Oxenford to collate survey response and submit to Highways verge cutting trial.**

**Action: The Clerk to ask for Himalayan Balsam to be treated again by weed spraying department of Highways.**

11.5 Footpaths & Bridleways – nothing to report.

11.6 Highways, hedges & potholes

For Highways matters see item 8. Cllr Croft had reported 10 days previously overhanging branches at the Darwell crossroads as visibility when looking left up Netherfield Hill was quite obscured and was becoming dangerous. No action had been taken.

**Action: The Clerk to report it again and to find out who owns the land that the trees are on.**

11.7 Messenger Magazine

Cllrs Petty & Oxenford had various items that were going into The Messenger magazine including a recent meeting with the local MP, the Made in Lockdown art exhibition and the Quiet Lanes initiative. Cllr Oxenford asked if Cllr Mower could provide a brief written about the latter.

**Action: Cllr Mower to send a QL report for The Messenger to Cllrs Petty & Oxenford.**

11.8 Phone Box - nothing to report.

11.9 Trees

The Tree Warden had sent news that he had yet to arrange the meeting with Bernard Hibbs at the Bruderhof community having been in contact with him over the summer.

11.10 Utilities – nothing to report.

11.11 Refuse Collection – nothing to report.

11.12 Village Hall

Cllrs Petty & Oxenford reported that the village hall has been open for bookings since regulations were relaxed, and that it has been quite busy. The dog training classes are also back.

11.13 Website

Cllr Wedmore circulated a report with an update on the website which is attached as a separate document to these minutes

11.14 Welcome Packs – Cllr Petty said there were some new tenants nearby, and Cllr Oxenford offered to drop off a welcome pack.

12. Training

Cllr Mower will attend a First Aid Course on 21<sup>st</sup> September at Horam. Cllr Croft was unable to make that date

**Action: The Clerk to find out about another First Aid course.**

13. Correspondence

13.1 Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway Project

Some residents had previously circulated some comments in opposition of the expansion at Gatwick Airport and had asked for the Council's support. The Chairman asked all councillors for their thoughts, and after a brief discussion, Cllr Wedmore proposed a resolution to support the comments. Cllr Mower seconded the proposal, and all councillors were unanimously in favour.

**Action: The Clerk to submit the comments.**

13.2 Future bus service

This consultation on future bus services was deemed not to be relevant to the residents of Brightling who have been without any bus services for a long time.

13.3 Rowena Suthers' email correspondence regarding the increased activity of the conveyor belt from the gypsum mines. This together with Cllr Wedmore's replies had been previously circulated for all councillors' information. Cllr Wedmore is invited to attend a presentation at British Gypsum on 10<sup>th</sup> September and has offered to raise the question then. Nothing further to report at present.

14. Parish Councillors' Forum

Cllr Petty reported on the recent meeting with the Huw Merriman MP. Almost all councillors had been able to attend, and it was an enjoyable and constructive opportunity to discuss local matters including planning, broadband & housing.

**Action: The Clerk to write a thankyou letter on behalf of BPC.**

15. Information for Councillors / Future Agenda Items

None

16. Future Meetings

16.1 The next meeting of the parish council will be in Brightling Village Hall at 7.30pm.

16.2 The following are the remaining dates for council meetings in the current council year:

2021: 10<sup>th</sup> November.

2022: 12<sup>th</sup> January, 9<sup>th</sup> March, (6<sup>th</sup> April Annual Assembly), 11<sup>th</sup> May (AGM)

..... Signed (Chairman)

Date .....