

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Brightling Parish Council held on
Monday 18th November 2019 at 7.30 p.m. at Brightling Village Hall

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Daniel Lambert-Gorwyn, Dianne Mower, Jane Oxenford, Judy Petty, Rodderick Wrenn & Andrew Wedmore (Chair),

Parish Councillors absent: Cllr Caroline Croft

District / County Councillors present: Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green, RDC
Cllr John Barnes, ESCC

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

1. Apologies for absence
Received from Cllr Croft

2. Disclosures of interest
None

3. Additional agenda items
None

4. Minutes

4.1 The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 30th September 2019 and the special planning meeting held on 19th August 2019 as true and correct records of the proceedings.

5. Open Forum

5.1 RDC councillor's report:

Cllr Kirby-Green stated that the cross-party Climate Emergency Committee held its first meeting on Friday 15th November.

There will be an increase in the cost of the brown bins next year (garden waste) going up by £5 per annum for the next 3 years, bringing the total to £50 per household.

Cllr Oxenford asked if the changes to the planning committee mentioned at the last meeting had come into force yet. Cllr Kirby-Green confirmed that the necessity of a petition with at least 10 signatures in order to address the planning committee is no longer a requirement; Parish Councils can address the committee as well as the petitioner – there used to only be one representative; also the limit of 5 minutes for someone to address the committee is at the Chairman's discretion and therefore further interjections can be made beyond the allocated 5 minutes.

Cllr Barnes added that the 21 day limit to comment on planning applications from the date of the pink notice being displayed has also been scrapped.

ESCC councillors report:

Cllr Barnes reported that the housing target had yet to be settled, and whilst the government would effectively like to double it, the Council will argue strongly against it on the grounds of AONB etc which may reduce it slightly, but it will still be high. There is a Housing Strategy meeting next Monday and Rother DC will be setting up a housing company.

He reiterated that the re-draft of the core strategy is ongoing and comments can be fed back through Cllr Barnes and Cllr Kirby-Green.

County are in purdah in the run up to the election so no decisions can currently be taken. There is a general state of limbo with the fairer funding review and the Green Paper on social care for old people on hold.

There should be a one-off funding of £6.5-10m which will help to off-set cost cutting. The Council is getting close to a point where it can just carry out its statutory duties. This makes it hard to budget but it is likely that Council Tax will increase by the maximum permitted which will be used especially for adult social care. Tax payers shoulder 70% of the total bill and business rates and various charges cover the rest.

Locally, there are going to be safety improvements on the road from Three Cups Corner to Darwell Hole. The line-painting and cats-eye repairs as traffic enters the village from Long Reach is hopefully imminent but the weather needs to be drier.

Cllr Wedmore asked if the objective test applied to the housing strategy was simply a formula of house prices in the area and wage levels which produces a required number of new houses that should be built. Cllr Barnes confirmed that it is, and that it doesn't fit the area of Brightling very well as there are a number of commuters and wage levels (the amount employees pay) rather than income levels is the information used in the formula.

Cllr Wedmore also asked if it was true that the house building strategy could be taken under national control if not enough houses are being built. Cllr Barnes confirmed that if the supply level drops below a certain number there could be sanctions.

5.2 Members of the Public

The owner of Becket House explained that the delay in the re-building of her wall was due to the difficulty in sourcing reclaimed bricks, although most have now been found. Once sourced, she will need to apply for the appropriate planning permission so there is still some time before the wall can be re-built. She thanked the Council again for organising the safety meeting with Highways in August and confirmed that a maintenance team had visited the site recently.

However, in the meantime with colder weather approaching, Ms Franssen asked if the Parish Council would consider paying for a new grit bin to be licensed, installed and maintained somewhere near the bend to decrease the risk of vehicles skidding on ice or snow and doing further damage to her property. Cllr Mower asked where the location of the bin would be and Ms Franssen believes

that East Sussex Highways would ultimately decide the best location. She thought it could be positioned to also be used for the village hall car park.

Cllr Oxenford asked if it's always been the case that the Parish Council had to fund the grit bin and Cllr Barnes confirmed that this was the case. Ms Franssen felt it should be actioned quickly with the winter fast approaching.

The Chairman then moved forward Agenda item 9.1 under Standing Order 1.a in order to discuss the grit bin. Cllr Wedmore felt that these bins are ugly, bright yellow and usually made from heavy duty non-recyclable plastic. He had asked the Clerk to find out if other alternative materials or forms of grit bin were available, and whilst Highways had advised that the yellow plastic variety were usually the only ones, they were going to investigate further and let the Clerk know.

Cllr Wedmore confirmed that the road is on the gritting route, and the white lines and other safety measures were hopefully going to be carried out soon, so he proposed waiting to get more facts on the alternatives available and discussing it further at the meeting of the Parish Council in January, which follows a 6 monthly SLR meeting with Highways. Other councillors agreed. Ms Franssen left the meeting.

6. Finance and Governance

6.1 RFO Report

6.1.1 Member received the bank reconciliation to the 31st October 2019. The Chairman confirmed that he had logged on to the bank account and verified the totals as stated.

6.1.2 Members received the income and expenditure report against budget for the first 7 months of the year ending 31st October.

6.1.3 The Clerk proposed that the first stage of budget planning was to increase the precept by the September's CPI inflation rate which was confirmed at 1.7%. Cllr Wedmore feels strongly that the impact on individuals should be zero increase after inflation. The RFO agreed to apply the inflationary figure and work on the budget.

6.2 Receipts and Payments

6.2.1 Members approved the schedule of receipts and payments for October 2019, proposed by Cllr Wedmore and seconded by Cllr Oxenford.

6.2.2 The following payments were approved after being proposed by Cllr Wedmore and seconded by Cllr Petty :

6.2.2.1 Rother Rural Trust - £55

6.2.2.2 Clerk Expenses - £39.43

6.2.2.3 Doug Andrews - £675.60 (late addition to this agenda item)

N.B 50% of this invoice will be reimbursed by ESCC

6.3 Governance

6.3.1 Standing Orders – The Clerk had previously circulated by email the model standing orders completed for the purposes of Brightling Parish Council for approval by Councillors. These were duly approved and adopted after the motion was proposed by Cllr Wedmore and seconded by Cllr Petty. The Standing Order to appoint an RFO if the current RFO is ever unable to attend a meeting will be discussed at the next meeting and another RFO appointed.

6.3.2 Cllr Wrenn signed the acceptance of office

7. Community and Business Development

7.1 Broadband

Cllr Wedmore reported that there was no real change to the situation but the updates do come through every couple of months. The national organisation needs to approve the survey carried out by BT and that means the March 2020 deadline is certainly going to be missed. Dates for completion are no longer being mentioned. The situation is in limbo as whilst awaiting progress from BT and being in discussion with them, you can't enter a dialogue with others. The UK has now entered the charts of countries that provide a certain percentage of the population with full fibre broadband, but we are very much at the bottom of the list!

7.2 Crime, anti-social behaviour & police relationships

Cllr Croft was absent.

7.3 Defibrillators

Cllr Croft was absent.

7.4 Footpaths & bridleways

Cllr Lambert-Gorwyn reported that it has been confirmed that the refurbishment of the remainder of the bridleway Battle 1 was a candidate for inclusion in next year's budget. Cllr Wedmore suggested chasing it up in February next year to keep it uppermost on the list. The rest of the footpath though is unlikely to be improved upon. Cllr Wedmore also reported that he had noticed a sign on the bridge that said it was closed to riders.

7.5 Highways, hedges & potholes

Cllr Petty reported that we are currently without a highways steward and so at a recent RALC meeting she mentioned the particular problems that need to be remedied to Isla Dacey who duly noted them down. Having previously reported that the drains outside the village hall were in need of clearing, the clerk confirmed that they had been done last Sunday evening (10th November). The next SLR meeting is in January.

There is a change to the grass cutting next year. ESCC will continue to fund two annual cuts but the further 4 cuts that Rother DC used to fund will no longer be provided, The Chairman suggested that as a situation this is monitored throughout 2020 to see if

further cuts are required or not. Cllr Wedmore proposed this motion and it was seconded by Cllr Oxenford.

7.6 Phone Box

Cllr Oxenford reported that no further progress had been made on the phone box, and Cllr Wedmore asked if 2020 could be the year that this project is pushed on to completion.

7.7 Refuse Collection

Nothing to report, but the Clerk confirmed that a speaker for the Annual Assembly in April '20 has been confirmed to discuss waste management and recycling in particular.

7.8 Signposts

Doug Andrews has repaired the signpost at Stacey's Corner that had been damaged by an ant's nest. His invoice was duly approved and authorised for payment. ESCC will be contributing 50% of the cost.

7.9 Trees

Cllr Lambert-Gorwyn reported that he still has 6 black poplars ready for volunteers to take some and plant in the area.

7.10 Utilities

Cllr Oxenford reported that there had been quite a few power cuts and that Cllr Croft was keeping a log of them. The Chairman asked the clerk to invite a representative from UK Power Networks to speak at the Annual Assembly in April.

7.11 Village Hall

Nothing to report.

7.12 Website

Cllr Wedmore reported that he had noted that the website could be hosted by Rother and has asked the clerk to investigate further.

7.13 Welcome Packs

Cllr Oxenford will contact newcomers with the help of the Clerk. The Welcome Pack needs some updating.

8. Planning Matters

8.1 Existing applications – members noted progress and outcomes of those tabled at a previous meeting.

8.1.1 Edlins Farm, Mountfield Lane, Mountfield TN39 5LD Ref: RR/2019/1682/P

To demolish Edlins Farm House & adjacent barn. Build a new house on the existing foundations of the present residential part of the barn.

Status: Refused

8.2 New Applications

8.2.1 Coldharbour Barn – Annexe, Battle Road, Brightling TN21 9LQ

Ref: RR/2019/2258/O - Lawful Development Certificate for the existing use of the annexe outbuilding as a separate dwelling unit.

PC Response: Nothing to add.

8.2.2 Doves Barn, Brightling Road, Oxleys Green, Brightling TN32 5HD

Ref: RR/2019/2338/P - First floor extension to garage to create guest accommodation

PC Response: No objection but feels it should be subject to Section 106, preventing it from being sold off as a separate property in the future.

8.2.3 Bank Cottage, Cackle Street, Brightling TN32 5HZ

Ref: RR/2019/2358/P - Extension and alterations to dwelling plus new detached garage and associated ground works.

PC Response: Councillors felt that the height of the two storey extension going on elevated ground would be too tall and that the finished building should be subject to Section 106 (see above)

8.3 Breaches and Enforcement

8.3.1 Notification Letter for Appeal Ref: APP/U1430/C/19/3222918

Telegraph Point, Coldharbour Farm, Battle Road, Dallington TN21 9LQ

PC Response: The Chairman asked the clerk to re-submit previous comments to the planning authority and the appeal inspector also.

9. Highways Matters

9.1 RALC Speeding

The results of the speeding survey and subsequent workshop are summarised on the attached document. The main point was that a campaign on driver safety needs to be nationwide with a bid to make speeding as unacceptable socially as drink driving.

9.2 Highways letter concerning work on B2096 Three Cups Corner to A271 Battle

10. Training

10.1 Online Mapping training

Cllr Petty and the Clerk had attended this training and deemed it useful particularly for planning applications. The other councillors expressed an interest in being able to use the software and the clerk will find out if the number of users is limited or not.

10.2 Planning Training

Cllrs Petty, Oxenford & Lamert-Gorwyn had attended this event and found that a large proportion of it was not relevant to rural planning situations. There were some useful items but the clerk is going to investigate a training session for parish councillors that may be more relevant to rural applications.

11. Correspondence received

Letter of thanks from RNLI
CPRE request for donation

12. Parish Councillors' Forum

No items

13. Circulation Folder

None

14. Information for Councillors / Future Agenda Items

14.1 Power cuts

14.2 Rother's Parish Conference in May '20 on Climate Change – ideas to be put forward

14.3 Alternative RFO

15. Next meetings

15.1 Meetings of the parish council will be in Brightling Village Hall at 7.30pm on a Monday.

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

2020: 13 January, 9 March, (6 April Annual Assembly), 11 May (AGM)

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Signed (Chairman)

Date