

MINUTES OF THE BALCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING (BPC) HELD IN BRAMBLE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 5th July 2023

Present: Cllrs Alison Stevenson - Chairman (AS), Nicky Gould (NG), Lloyd Thompsett (LT), Paul Williams (PW), Manouchehr Nahvi (MN), Nick Major (NM), Jo Blundell (JB), and Helen Caudrey (HC).

709. **Declarations of personal or pecuniary interest in any agenda item listed**

None declared.

710. **Apologies for absence**

Massi Smith (MS) – Bereavement in the family and Nick Beecroft (NB) - travelling.
District Cllr Gary Marsh (GM).

711. **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th June 2023**

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting. They were then signed by the chairman.

712. **Public Participation**

Three members of the public were present. The first two members of the public to speak, spoke about the inappropriateness of the Parish Council funding a legal case surrounding a matter which was and is highly divisive within the village. The Council should support causes beneficial to the whole village and not just [a divisive] part.
Their opinion is that the Council is relying on a public vote of nearly 10 years ago which made no mention of or is in contemplation of the situation we currently find ourselves in.

In response Cllr AS said that the Parish Councillors had based their votes upon the poll which the Parish Council instructed a third party to conduct in 2014. The results were 52:48 in favour of stopping any oil exploration in the village. At the meeting on 14th June BPC voted in favour and approved a grant of £2500 to FFBRA, this was subject to obtaining legal advice from both Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) and West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC).

The third member of the public was present to state his interest in the casual vacancy of Parish Councillor. The member of the public introduced himself and was greeted by the Cllrs present. The Parish Clerk will continue to keep in contact with the member of the public and ask for him to make a formal application for possible co-option in September.

713. **Matters currently being pursued, report from the Clerk**

- Signage has been purchased and will be going up on the pavilion rear gates and fascia boards to try to deter youths from scaling the roof. Damage has led to necessary repair works and costs have been incurred.
- A designated socket has been installed inside the pavilion for use when there are events such as the Fete. Previous events overloading the electrics have led to them tripping the power.

- A contractor has been instructed to replace three dilapidated windows at Bramble Hall.

714. **Updates on Planning applications:**

Number	Site/Address	Proposal	Decision/ Decision Date
DM/23/1131	The Larches, Deanland Road	Conifers (x21) - Fell. Young hollies to be pruned by approx. 2-3 metres. Removal of x1 multi-stemmed Holly and removal of x2 dead Field Maples.	No objections 20 th June 2023
DM/23/1141	Little Bretts, Haywards Heath Road	Removal of a 1930 - 1950 brick inset within inglenook to enable installation of a log burner.	Permission granted 28 th June 2023

715. Planning - to consider the following applications:

Number	Site/Address	Proposal
DM/23/1458	Brettsway, 1 Bretts Orchard.	Trees in a Conservation Area Magnolia T1 - Fell. Pear T2 - Fell.
BPC has no objection – the recommendation would be to replace the tree with another appropriate native species tree.		
DM/22/2432	Greentree Hall, High Street	Erection of a folly in a field to the north-eastern side of the access drive leading to the wedding business main venue building and to the northern side of the highway. Amended drawings received on 20.06.2023 for alternative location of folly. Expiry Wed 12 Jul 2023
BPC wishes to make no comments other than the previous comments made, when the planning permission was originally sort, and would defer to the conservation officer with regards to the location in AONB.		
DM/23/1500	21 London Road, RH17 6PZ	A single storey side extension and side dormer with associated fenestration. Changes to the existing windows. Expiry Thu 20 Jul 2023
BPC had no objection but commented that they wished for the fenestration style to remain with individual windowpanes, to be in keeping with Victorian features.		

716. **To consider Planning Applications received after publication of Agenda.**

DM/23/1618	Little Bretts, Haywards Heath Road.	Listed building consent. Replace the single glazed windows and external doors.
BPC did not wish to object and would defer to the conservation officer.		

717. **To receive an update from: “Recreation, play, youth, halls”, Neighbourhood Plan, Planning & New Development, Transport, Energy, Admin and Assurance.**

Recreation, play, youth, halls – No updates. Cllrs LT made the Parish Council aware that part of the ‘Wobbly Steppers’ in the enclosed playground had been removed he presumed by MSDC.

Neighbourhood Plan – Ongoing communication with District Councillors and Mid Sussex District Council, Shanly Homes etc to try and discuss the matter of the car park, as yet with no success. Cllr AS has responded to Judy Holmes to refute her comments that WSCC were unlikely to support for the second entrance, and that tree loss would not be an issue as there are no trees at that section of the boundary.

Cllr LT will look to raise a formal complaint to MSDC's planning department.

Planning & New Development – No updates.

Transport – The 20 mph survey continues to be live and will be promoted at the Fete. It will remain live until the midnight on Sunday 16th July.

- The Speedwatch group will be undertaking a 'day of action' in collaboration with our PCSO to address speeding through the village on 7th July. Multiple roadside sessions will take place, and the PCSO will roam other hotspots in the village.
- Cllr PW spoke about the speeding on the Haywards Heath Road early in the morning and between 6 - 7pm.
- Concerns were raised by members of the public to BPC with regards to the potholes being reported but having a long lead time for the repairs to take place. The large pothole near to the via-duct has finally been repaired using the 'Jet Patcher' and we have received a heads up that the section of road from BordeHill to the Village is scheduled to be resurfaced in August.
- The hedge along the section of the Haywards Heath footpath is going to be cut back by a group of volunteers to improve the width of the path 8th July.
- There continues to be dangerously parked cars partially on the road before the station (Haywards Heath side). The police are monitoring, and BPC will look at possible land to obtain further station car parking.
- The Chailey Beat Boardwalk and the Mill Steps are currently still closed. Good news is that WSCC have almost completed the works to the Mill Steppers footpath. Balcombe Estate are in the process of removing ash die back, but once completed WSCC will return to the area and install the handrails.
- Cllr HC updated the Cllrs with regards to the response received from Sue Furlong (WSCC) regarding the drainage issues and said that a blocked/ collapsed drain had been identified outside Rose Cottage on the Haywards Heath Road but as CCTV investigations are not normally funded by 'Operation Watershed' she would need to see if funding could be obtained.

Energy – Street light no. 65 on the London Road is still awaiting a resolve by UKPN's. BPC's contractors have chased again and were notified that the cut-out is broken in two places and requires them to replace. Until this is carried out by UKPN the streetlight is unable to be upgraded to LED.

718. **To approve June's Cashbook and Receipts.**

The cashbook receipts and payments were approved.

719. **To consider renewing the subscription to Parish Online at a fee of £120.**

The Cllrs Resolved to renew the subscription to Parish Online.

720. **To receive an update on the progress of FFBRA's high court action to stop oil exploration in Balcombe**

Cllr NB forwarded the correspondence obtained from FFBRA regarding other examples of funding made by parishes and councils towards legal fees.

721. **Correspondence**

Correspondence items were circulated amongst the Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Cllrs AS to share information about National Rails announcement regarding closing ticket offices.

The section by the station along the Haywards Heath Road is also due to have works carried out to reinforce the bank.

Cllr LT has received a document from MSDC outlining the Section 106 allocations, and has been asked to explain, share, and feed the information back to the council at the next meeting. Cllr JB raised the topic of Gatwick airport, and the plans to use the North Runway for commercial flights.

722. **Exchange of Information.**

The Cllrs to confirm rota for BPC Fete stand and to email any printing requests to the Clerk.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 10:02pm.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE Wednesday 6th September 2023 – at 8:00pm - Bramble Hall

Signed Chairman:

Date: