

BODIAM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Lynsey Willard 34 Levetts Lane,
Telephone: 01580 830935 Bodiam,
Email: clerkbodiam@hotmail.co.uk E. Sussex, TN32 5UL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday,
 22 January 2024 at 6.30p.m. in Bodiam Parish Room**

Present:

For Bodiam Parish Council: Councillors: - (Chair) Linda Stevens, Graham Peters, Darren Page, Nick Gilbert, ESCC Cllr Paul Redstone, RDC Cllrs Tony Ganley and Tony Biggs.

In attendance: Clerk Lynsey Willard & 2 Members of the public (MoP).

10/2024 Apologies for Absence: - (Vice chair) Tim Porter

11/2024 Disclosure of Interests

Cllr Peters declared a personal interest as a Trustee of the Parker& Ashcombe Trust.

12/2024 Minutes of Meeting 8 January 2024

The minutes, which had previously been distributed were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Matters arising: None, as all on agenda for discussion at this meeting.

13/2024 Public Questions

MOP raised question with Cllr Redstone regarding two points - Speed limits in School Zone & Damage to verges by Bodiam School due to parking. Discussions have been minuted against the Environment for order of the minutes.

14/2024 Planning**Applications - None****Awaiting Decision**

RR/2023/2133/P New House Farm, New House Lane, Bodiam TN32 5EQ Erection of a vineyard tasting room, parking area and new woodland planting. **Representation submitted via planning website/awaiting decision.**

Decisions

RR/2023/2420/O Annex to Fourboys Farm, off Main Road, Bodiam – decision date 15.1.24 – Lawful development certificate for the proposed erection of solar panels.

Enforcements

ENF/243/23/BOD Park farm Oast, Park Farm Lane, Bodiam, East Sussex, TN32 5XA - Events Exceeding Ancillary Use – Waiting Further information.

15/2024 RR/2021/328/P – 1 Blacksmiths Field, Bodiam.

Planning was granted 25.11.21 for an underground fuel tank for LPG to supply central heating. Planning was never given for the above ground tank. The Planning team is monitoring as planning for the underground tank ends November 2024.

16/2024 East Sussex County Council report

Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....

Councillors had received the previously circulated report from ESCC, and the full report can be read on the Bodiam Website. Cllr Paul Redstone explained that Rother would be taking £4million out of their reserves and it depends on the settlement from the Government if this will get worse in coming years. May have to start looking at cutting services. County are feeling the squeeze but in a better position than others.

17/2024 Rother District Council Report

Councillors had received the previously circulated report from RDC. Full report can be read on the Bodiam Website. Rother have a blackhole of £3million and there is no sign of resolving this. This area relies heavily on tourism and parking and closing toilets is destroying places like Battle.

Actions: 1. Cllr Peters will compose a letter to support Cllr Biggs regarding the cutbacks and to include the topic of grass cutting and their plans for the village.

18/2024 Internal Audit

Previous Auditor has agreed to complete the audit for a final year. Interim check completed last week and all in good order.

19/2024 Recreation Ground – Future of the Pavilion

Only 17 out of 170 survey responses were received. 9 suggested decommissioning the pavilion. 1 voted to strip it out, 3 to repair it and 4 suggested it be replaced. Although it would be a shame to lose it, it is currently a cost to the village with no viable income in the current state. The only use last year was the school sports day and school summer fete. The pavilion had to be extensively cleaned for this to happen and then was vandalized. Most grants do not cover refurbishment. Decision has been made that the council should take this to the Parish Assembly for discussion with the public. Survey to be returned to Active Places with a brief explanation.

20/2024 Recreation Ground – Horse Riding

There is evidence that some one has been horse riding on the recreation ground, churning up the grass. Horse riding is not permitted on the recreation ground.

21/2024 Meeting Dates

List of dates provided for the following financial year – normally 3rd Monday of the month.

Actions: 2. Cllrs to check their availability for future meetings.

22/2024 Parish Assembly Planning

Possible speakers were discussed and Cllr Biggs to speak to a couple of contacts with PCSOs and the environment to see if they would be willing to speak. Councillors to have a think and any ideas or contacts for interesting speakers are welcome. It was agreed that the ideal venue would be Claremont School if available. Date still to be decided, depending on available venues and dates of other local parishes.

Actions: 3. Cllr Stevens to speak to Claremont school about availability as a venue.

23/2024 D Day 80 – 6 June 2024

Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....

Celebrations are being arranged around the country to commemorate 80 years since the D-Day landing. Neighboring villages may be lighting their beacons.

Actions: 4. Cllr Stevens is to speak to the bell ringers to see if they would be available to join the countrywide bell ringing at 6.30pm on the 6 June 2024.

24/2024 Trees and Footpaths

MOP reported that they don't believe the footpath running from Sternberg's property to the back of the Castle meets the required minimum width for a public path. Others agreed that it is narrow. MOP has measured since and reported that it does meet the minimum width of 100cm.

25/2024 Environment

Speed limits in the school zone & Damage to verges by Bodiam School due to parking. - MOP raised with Cllr Redstone about the speed limits past the schools. Although this is 30mph limit people do not abide it. The preschoolers must cross to the pre school on a blind bend which is particularly dangerous. Crossers must rely on being able to hear oncoming traffic and this is not always possible with electric cars. A host of new signs have been put in place outside Bodiam Primary School and Cllr Redstone will chase up the flashing lights that are also due to be installed. Cllr Redstone is also working with the school about the laybys and parking. A lot of parents park illegally at school time but on the flipside, this does slow the traffic down. If anyone has any suggestions, Cllr Redstone is happy to raise them with the Speed Safety team.

Actions: 5. Clerk to place note on Village notice board with QR code for people to provide suggestions.

RDC reducing grounds maintenance budgets – This is a difficult one as it is unclear what areas in the village are owned by different groups and the Parish Council does not have the money in the pot to take over this extra mowing. Is there an appetite for volunteer working groups to tidy up parts of the village?

Actions: 6. Cllr Peters to include in his letter to Cllr Biggs regarding service cutbacks.

7. Clerk to enquire with Southern Housing and try to find out their strategy for mowing.

8. Cllr Stevens to have a look through the box of old maps to see if there is one detailing responsibility for each bit of land in the village as this would be useful .

Claremont coaches parking on verge in Levetts Lane – Claremont responded that they would investigate this, and coaches have not been seen parking in the lane recently.

Samaritans Clothes Recycling bin on Levetts Lane – MOP raised that the bin had not been emptied in months. Bin has now been removed from Levetts Lane.

Southern Housing Association – Sale of vacant houses on Levetts Lane – no response was received from Southern housing regarding the sale of social housing on Levetts Lane – Number 11 has now been sold and was bought by a local family.

Posts surrounding village green & Gate entrance to the sports field – An amount has been budgeted for in the precept to complete these two projects. It is hoped we can get a party of volunteers together. Cllr Gilbert contacted a local Hop farmer about the possibility of gaining hop poles but to no avail as only creosoted ones held.

Actions: 9. Cllr Gilbert to try other contact for hop poles.

10. Clerk to write to Southern Farmers to enquire about availability of old hop poles.

Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....

Highways - Water problem by 4 Northland – Customer Service manager for Highways is due to meet the drainage team to discuss the problem 23 January 24. Cllr Redstone will take this up if no result.

Grit Bin on the junction of Bodiam Rd and Main Road looks to have been removed in December. This one was owned by Highways.

Actions: 11. Clerk to email Highways Customer Service Manager to ask them to investigate missing grit bin and requested it be replaced.

26/2024 Crime and Disorder – Nothing to report.

27/2024 Finance - Agreement of Budget and Precept for 2024/2025. The precept was discussed at the Budget meeting on the 8 January and confirmed at this meeting for £15209. This equates to an extra £0.40 per week for a Band D dwelling.

28/2024 Receipts, Payments & Uncashed Cheques

a) Payments

29.12.23	Reserve Account	Nat West Interest	£3.36
----------	-----------------	-------------------	-------

b) Uncashed Cheques – cheques are valid for 6 months.

Dated	Chq No.	Payee	Amount
15.5.23	002065	Bodiam CE Primary School S137	£80
15.5.23	002069	Rother Citizen's Advice Bureau S137	£95
17.7.23	002076	Mayell Groundworks Ltd – Drain Installation valve – reported lost – replacement cheque to be issued.	£300

c) Payment of Cheques

Dated	Chq No.	Payee	Description	Amount
22.1.24	002095	L. Willard	Website Domain renewal & admin Expenses	£19.14
22.1.24	002096	L. Willard	Clerk/RFO Salary (Dec/Jan)	£466.65
22.1.21	002097	Mayell Groundworks Ltd	Replacement for cheque 002076	£300.00
22.1.24	002098	Rother District Council	Contested Election Fee	£1828.20

29/2024 Monthly Finance Reports

The Clerk/RFO presented the bank statements with the monthly financial report and budget reports, which were signed by the Chair. All financial documents and invoices are circulated to Councillors for inspection at the meeting.

30/2024 Information for Councillors – Councillors to confirm availability for meeting dates for the next financial year via email.

31/2024 Date of next meetings

Monday 19 February 2024, at 6.30pm in the Parish Rooms. There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Minutes signed as a true record.....Dated.....