

**BODIAM PARISH COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on  
Monday 16 September 2024 at 6.30p.m. in Bodiam Parish Room**

**Please note these are draft minutes until formally approved at the next Parish Council Meeting.**

**Present: For Bodiam Parish Council:** Councillors: (Chair) Linda Stevens, (Vice chair) Tim Porter, Darren Page, Nick Gilbert.

**In attendance:** Clerk: Lynsey Willard, 3 Members of Public (MoP)

**169/2024 Apologies**

Cllr Graham Peters (Personal), ESCC Cllr Paul Redstone, RDC Cllr Tony Ganley RDC Cllr Tony Biggs (All other business)

**170/2024 Disclosure of Interests**

No disclosures made.

**171/2024 Minutes of Meeting 15 July 2024**

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

**172/2024 Matters arising**

Action points from previous meeting cleared or on this agenda.

**173/2024 Public Questions –** Concerns were raised about some traffic mirrors being damaged around the parish. One is next to the bus stop at Levetts Lane, used by drivers coming out of the drive opposite and people crossing from the bus.

**Action 1:** Speak with the drive owner to see if they own the mirror opposite Levetts Lane bus stop.

**174/2024 Councillors meetings with outside bodies** Councillors met with Hawkhurst United Junior Football club (HUJFC) and the Environmental Agency (EA) – both on the agenda.

**175/2024 Planning – Applications**

**Application:** RR/2024/1191/P

**Location:** Bodiam Business Park - land at, Green Lane, Bodiam TN32 5UP

**Proposal:** Recladding of existing building and construction of 2 no. three unit steel framed commercial buildings to house offices/workshops. **Comments made:** Concerns raised about extra traffic pulling out onto a fast stretch of Junction Road and the dark sky policy

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

**176/2024 Planning - Decisions received or withdrawn****Application: RR/2024/970/P****Location: Castle inn, Main Road, Bodiam****Proposal:** Formation of new door opening and construction of external fire escape staircase to the East elevation. **Application has been withdrawn****Application: RR/2024/1072/P****Location: Rose Cottage, Castle Hill, Bodiam****Proposal:** Proposed extension and improvements**Permission Granted 20/8/24****Application: RR/2024/1132/P****Location: 1 The Peaks, Castle Road, Bodiam****Proposal:** Renewal of extant Planning Application RR/2021/2240/P for a proposed first floor side extension to form bedroom, ensuite and storage; proposed chimney and internal alterations**Permission Granted 5/9/24****177/2024 East Sussex County Council report**

Councillors had received the previously circulated report from ESCC, and the full report can be read on the Bodiam Website.

**178/2024 Rother District Council Report**

Councillors had received the previously circulated report from RDC. Full report can be read on the Bodiam Website.

**179/2024 Recreation Ground & Pavilion - Emergency repair of pavilion doors following break in & replacement of fire extinguishers & first aid kit**

The Pavilion was broken into and vandalised again preceding 4 August 2024. Access was via the previously boarded up double doors. A volunteer from HUUJFC has replaced the double doors at cost for materials only circa of £800 – Awaiting invoice. All three fire extinguishers and the first aid kit needed to be replaced again. Cllrs agreed to use an online fire extinguisher supplier at a significant saving to the usual supplier.

**Action 2:** Cllr Gilbert has asked Clerk to enquire with HUUJFC volunteers if they could quote for replacing the other two pavilion doors with a more secure option.**180/2024 Rental agreement with Hawkhurst United Junior Football Club (HUUJFC)**

The council was approached this summer to rent the pavilion and recreation ground to Hawkhurst United Junior Football club. Agreement for £75 a week paid 4-weekly in advance into Parish Account for hire from 17th August 2024 until 3rd November 2024 or first major flood whichever is earlier. Termination date to be determined by HUUJFC and communicated with clerk for invoicing. Refund to be given for any full weeks paid for if there needs to be an early termination. They will use indoor facilities over the winter and return to the recreation ground once the ground is suitable in the spring – Using the grounds from approx. mid-March – Mid May 2025. Where there have been a couple of initial teething problems with parking, these have been resolved quickly with the club.

HUUJFC have offered as the only user for these periods, to clean the pavilion themselves and pay for the electricity supply for the periods of hire. They have skills between

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

them to carry out maintenance of the pavilion. Major works would have to be pre-agreed and paid for by the Parish Council.

Cllr Gilbert, though supporting the new HUFJFC agreement, noted that the cost of renting football pitches from local authorities is normally considerably higher. If the current deal is to be renewed the Council should take a fresh look at the amount charged.

**181/2024 Contribution to be considered towards machinery hire and Type 4 being laid at recreation ground entrance**

At the end of August, we had heavy rain and the water coming down the hill from Bodiam school, bypassed the drains as they were blocked and ran round into the recreation ground entrance. This caused an immediate problem for HUFJFC and some of the cars got stuck. HUFJFC attempted to clear the problem drains and emailed Cllr Peters and the Clerk to ask if they could put Type 4 down at the entrance at their own cost. Cllr Peters agreed to this as an emergency solution but asked that they share the invoices as he would like the council to consider contributing, circa £600, towards this cost as it is something that has been discussed doing by the council previously. The total cost for materials and machinery hire come to £1206.24 including VAT. Councillors considered two options to either contribute through S137 or to allow the club to use the pavilion and recreation ground rent free from 12 October 2024 – 24 April 2025. It was agreed the rent-free period was the best option. Weather permitting this will equate to a saving of £675 for the club. There is no guarantee of this income over this period as it is subject to the weather, this would take away HUFJFC's concern of paying for something they can't use and go towards the extra cost they have ran too.

**Action 3:** Clerk to contact HUFJFC regarding rent free period and supply a fresh rental agreement for this period.

**182/2024 Further work needed on the recreation ground entrance**

The type 4 laid by HUFJFC has only partially resolved the problem at the recreation ground entrance and during heavy rain the ground is still sodden between the type 4 laid and the hard standing area behind the pavilion. It was discussed using CIL money to improve the entrance properly making it more accessible. It is felt that a drainage solution is needed as well to prevent the type 4 washing away. Cllr Gilbert has offered to discuss the problem and investigate possible solutions with a drainage company.

**Action 4:** Cllr Gilbert to discuss options for possible drainage solutions at the entrance to the Recreation Ground.

**183/2024 Weather proofing of Pavilion**

One of HUFJFC's volunteers is a carpenter and will provide a quote for weatherproofing the river facing side of the pavilion. Depending on quote received – other quotes to be sought.

**184/2024 Next steps for holes & drainage problem following EA meeting**

Friday 6 September, Graham, Linda, Mrs. Lovering, Tony Willard and Clerk met with 2 Environmental Agency officers. They were unable to help with the drainage problem but have agreed to get the sluice gate on the riverbank checked.

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

The holes in the area protruding out into the mown area have been filled in. The bigger hole was dug out further confirming the end of an old drainage system has been found and this would have once fed into a ditch running across the field. Best course of action agreed that hardcore should be put in the hole and then it can be filled back in. It has been raised to consider in the future, whether the wild area is kept on the recreation ground as the field is now being used.

**Action 5:** Clerk to check with Cllr Peters that he is happy for the recreation ground holes to be filled in now.

**185/204 Environment – Water Leak on Main Road, Bodiam**

An extra drain has been discovered beside Rose Cottage and has been uncovered and is now clear. HUJFC cleared the drain on the corner of the village green and discovered it may have a problem.

**Action 6:** Clerk to speak to HUJFC volunteers about problem they have identified with the drain and request a description so it can be raised with ESCC

**186/2024 Speed Limits on Levetts Lane – update**

Contacts were made with the Highways Department, Southern Housing, East Sussex Police and Rachel Scott, local PCSO since July's meeting. There have been no police reports made, however PCSO have offered to keep a watchful eye. It was agreed that there were no further actions open to the Parish Council. Extra information was provided by the public and this will be passed onto Rachel Scott. Speeding incidents can be reported to [www.operationcrackdown.org](http://www.operationcrackdown.org) with the vehicles number plate.

**Action 7:** Clerk to email information received, regarding Levetts Lane, to Rachel Scott (PCSO).

**187/2024 Removal of above-ground gas tank at Blacksmiths Field - RR/2021/328/P**

The tank was placed above ground outside 1 Blacksmith's Field without planning permission over 3 years ago. Planning was approved for the tank to be placed underground 25 November 2021 and it states: 'The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.' Concerns have been raised at previous council meetings for safety and aesthetic reasons.

**Action 8:** Clerk to contact Rother Councillors for the above ground gas tank to be raised again with Planning before the planning application expires on the 24 November 2024.

**188/2024 Village signage – KESR request**

K&ESR have been considering how they can best co-operate with other local tourist businesses in the vicinity of Bodiam station and have approached Bodiam and Ewhurst Parish Councils about putting up signage for local businesses including the Castle and the Train Station. The Councillors are not in support as they do not feel they are appropriate in a rural area.

**Action 9:** Chair Cllr Stevens to respond to email regarding Village signage – KESR request

**189/2024 Trees and Footpaths**

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

No problems reported with the footpaths, all are currently clear. MoP raised a concern about Ash die back for some of the trees in the woodland area on Levetts Lane. One is close to houses. The tree surgeon who crown lifted the oak and chestnut trees on the village green has also recommended dead wooding them.

**Action 10:** Clerk to contact Rother Councillors to see if there is a tree specialist who can come out and inspect for Ash die back and have a look at the trees around the green for dead wood.

#### **190/2024 Crown lifting of trees surrounding village green**

As agreed at July's meeting, the Oak tree and the Chestnut tree on the green have been crown lifted by a local tree surgeon. Payment can only be made by bank transfer, councillors agreed the cheque to be paid to the clerk for £350 who would then transfer the money from a personal account to the tree surgeon's account.

#### **191/2024 Crime and Disorder**

The fire brigade has been called out to two separate incidents this month in the parish. Incidents of catapulting pheasants have been reported to the police.

#### **192/2024 Lloyds Online banking and savings accounts**

It has been agreed that we will transfer the accounts to Lloyds. Parish accounts cannot be opened online initially, it must be done by phone call. The signatories will remain the same.

**Action 11:** Cllr Stevens & Clerk to complete action to move the accounts to Lloyds and consider their savings accounts.

#### **193/2024 Receipts & Payments**

##### **a) Receipts**

20.8.24	Current Account	HUJFC – 17/8/24 – 13/9/24	£300.00
30.8.24	Reserve Account	Nat West Interest	£3.51
30.8.24	Current Account	RDC Precept part 2	£7604.50
30.8.24	Current Account	HMRC VAT Reclaim 23/24	£879.95

##### **Payment of Cheques**

<b>Dated</b>	<b>Chq No.</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
22.7.24	DD	HMRC PAYE	Clerk/RFO PAYE Months 1, 2 & 3	£303.20
19.8.24	2133	Lynsey Willard	Clerk/RFO Salary August 24	£466.65
16.9.24	2134	Lynsey Willard	Fire Protection Online – replacement of extinguishers	£204.22
16.9.24	2135	Lynsey Willard	Amazon – Replacement First Aid kit	£17.51
16.9.24	2136	Lynsey Willard	Clerk/RFO Salary September 24	£373.56
16.9.24	2137	Lynsey Willard	Chq to enable bank transfer to ATG	£350.00

#### **194/2024 Monthly Finance Reports & Bank reconciliation for Year End**

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

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

**195/2024 Internal Auditor**

Keith Robertson has agreed to complete the internal audit for Bodiam Parish for 2024/25.

**196/2024 Date of next meetings - Monday 21 October 2024, The Parish Room at 6.30pm**