Brightling Parish council

Chairman
Cllr Andrew Wedmore

Clerk to the Council
Dr Brian Holdstock

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Brightling Parish Council held on Monday 11th March 2019 at 7.30 p.m. at Brightling Village Hall

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Chris French, David Gasson, Daniel Lambert-Gorwyn, Andrew Wedmore (Chair) and Rodderick Wrenn

Parish Councillors absent: Cllrs Caroline Croft and Jane Oxenford

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

In attendance: Brian Holdstock, Clerk to the Council, Gilly Lowe, Clerk in waiting & 3 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence Received from Cllrs Jane Oxenford & Caroline Croft

2. Disclosures of interest

2.1 None

3. Additional agenda items

None

4. Minutes

4.1 The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 14th January 2019 as correct records of the proceedings.

5. Open Forum

5.1 ESCC Cllr John Barnes reported as follows:

5.1.1 The previously reported proposed cuts of £17 million will now only be £5 million This is a one off and the following year is forecast to have £18 million worth of cuts. Council Tax is being increased by 4% Services spending of £375 million means that children's services are amongst the best in the country. Adult social care is further integrated with health care. Next year there will be a fairer funding review, a spending review and a Green Paper, so hoping for better news.

5.2 RDC Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green reported as follows:

5.2.1 Council Tax is increasing by 1.9% (approximately £5 per household) There is no funding from central government. The bulk of spending is on police for safer communities, improving the 101 service and 100 new PCSOs for rural areas

5.2.2 Cllr Kirby-Green reminded the Council of the existence of Community Grants – Dallington recently received £500 to install Broadband into the village hall

5.2.3 She also asked about the development of council sites, particularly Park View, which although owned by the Council is vacant, but not leased. Cllr French confirmed that it is vacant & not leased, but has not been developed as there is asbestos on the site.

5.3 Oldwood Surgery PPG:

5.3.1 Steve MacDonald came to the meeting to explain what the PPG do – namely provide a conduit between GPs and their patients to report on services, help with health improvement initiatives and shape the practice. A new surgery is being built in Robertsbridge behind Culverwells and there is an opportunity to have input into the kind of services that will be on offer. The PPG have an online service and are keen to hear from members of the public. They can organise talks, demonstrations on use of equipment such as defibrulators and hold bi-monthly meetings ready to feedback information gathered.

The Chairman invited the Tree Warden to address Council, rather than wait until item 9.3.1 on the agenda.

5.3.2 Tree Plan

Doug Edworthy reported that following the last meeting, a Tree Group has been formed of volunteers (a good response – 7 members of the public) and that there are 3 phases to the plan: a survey of trees & their value; analysis of the stock and finally a form of propsals to the PC. Doug Edworthy is waiting for approval from the Council to go ahead and also for the Tree Council for advice on how to record information and data gathered. The Chairman asked some questions on how the survey will be carried out as there are literally thousands of trees, and Mr Edworthy explained that blocks of land will be denoted as "mainly…" whilst highlighting any particular noteworthy trees. Landowner's permission will be required, but a lot can be surveyed from footpaths with a pair of binoculars.
Cllr Lambert-Gorwyn proposed and Chairman Wedmore seconded the proposal for the group to go ahead.

5.3.3 A member of the public complained about erosion of the carriageway at the bottom of Rectory Hill between the ditch & the verge. The Clerk suggested that she file a report online to East Sussex Highways and will be given a Case ID which the Clerk offered to follow up with the Customer Services Manager.

6. Finance and Governance

6.1 RFO Report

6.1.1 Members received a statement of income and expenditure against budget to 28th February 2019. There were no significant variances from budget. The RFO mentioned that the reserves for fingerposts were insufficient after unexpected expenditure for replacement of fingerposts within the same fiscal period, and proposed that an amount be transferred from General Reserves which itself currently stands at more than 50% of the precept. This motion was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr Lambert-Gorwyn.

6.1.2 Members received a bank reconciliation to 28th February 2019.

6.2 Receipts and Payments

6.2.1 Members received a schedule of receipts and payments in January and February 2019 and this was approved on the motion of the Chairman and seconded by Cllr Lambert-Gorwyn.

6.2.2 On the motion of Cllrs Wrenn & French, members approved the following payments-

6.2.2.1 B.P Holdstock – Clerk Expenses - £31

6.2.2.2 Mrs Gilly Lowe – Training Allowance - £245.

6.2.2.3 Cllr Andrew Wedmore – colour printing - £44.80

6.3 Governance

6.3.1 The dates for parish council meetings for the following 12 months were reviewed and duly agreed upon, although subject to the Council approval after the elections on 2nd May 2019.

6.3.2 The Lead Responsibility for Rights of Way was agreed to be shared by Cllrs David Gasson and Cllr Daniel Lambert-Gorwyn.

6.3.3 It was agreed that the Clerk will examine the latest review on standards in public life and compare it with existing Standing Orders and create headlines to report back to the Councillors.

7. Community and Business Development

7.1 Newcomer's orientation and information pack – No report in Cllr Oxenford's absence.

7.2 Village website – the Chairman had nothing to report

7.3 Broadband – The Chairman reported that there are still 18 properties in Brightling that do not receive superfast Broadband which was meant to have happened by the end of January. A survey has been carried out by ESCC and the findings of that twill be available soon. Chairman Wedmore said that this situation was not acceptable and asked what Cllr Barnes could do to exert some pressure on the relevant department. There is clearly much frustration, but it was agreed that Cllr Barnes would make a formal complaint and attempt to reach out to the Chief Executive for further information.

7.4 Other utilities

7.4.1 Water – the planned road closures in order to facilitate the improvement to the water supply throughout the whole of Brightling were read out by the Chairman who also agreed to publish the information on the website.

7.5 Phone box – No update in Cllr Oxenford's absence.

7.6 Other community matters – The Clerk confirmed that all arrangements were in hand regarding the Annual Assembly

8. Planning Matters

8.1 Existing applications – members noted progress and outcomes of those tabled at a previous meeting. Cllr French reported that all prior planning applications have now passed, and the Parish Council had not had any objections.

8.2 New Applications - None

8.3 Breaches and enforcement – to note the following update:

8.3.1 ENF/133/16/BRI – Little Sprays Farmhouse, Penshurst Lane, Brightling – Work carried out on a listed building in 2010 without Listed Building Consent. *No further action.*

8.3.2 ENF/23/19/BRI – Fern Hill, Brightling Road, land adjacent to – Change of use of agricultural land to a private car park for 2 vehicles (Retrospective application which was refused) *Enforcement Report listed on 4/3/19 – wait to hear results of report.*

8.3.3 Telegraph Point – site allocations document shows the deadline of 17 July 2018 as the end date for lawful occupation of the caravan. *No appeal to declined planning application.*

9. Highways Matters

9.1 Finger posts (report) –

9.1.1 Darwell Hole – new finger post is work in progress at supplier. Expected to be completed and installed within four weeks.

9.2 Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR)

9.2.1 It was agreed that no actions had so far resulted from the meeting in January regarding potholes or flooding at Stacey's Corner, but ditch clearing had been seen to be done in some areas. The Clerk agreed to request an update from the Customer Service Manager on actions discussed at the last meeting.

9.3 Countryside -

9.3.1 Tree Plan – see point 5.3.2

9.4 Road Names –Cllr Wedmore reported that he had consulted with Burwash PC and agreed on the revised map concerning the road names. The updated map was passed around Council and approved. The map will now be sent to Rother DC.

9.5 Bridleway Battle 1 –Tim Wheatley had not replied to the letter sent on 6th February asking him to clear the bridleway. Cllrs Wedmore and Lambert-Gorwyn agreed to walk the route and confirm if the obstruction is still there, before reporting back to the Clerk who can then take further action as necessary.

10. Correspondence received

10.1 The Clerk reported that Laurence Keeley was persevering in his quest for social housing and had circulated his latest information to all Councillors.

10.2 The Chairman noted that the English Rural Housing Association's notice seeking a tenant for Burwash should have been scanned and posted on the website as well as pinned on the noticeboard.

11. Parish Councillors' Forum

11.1 The Chairman reported that the upcoming elections had been posted on the village website and published in the parish magazine.

12. Information for Councillors / Future Agenda Items

None

13. Next meetings

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

13.2 The following are the remaining dates for council meetings in the current council year:
8 April 2019 Annual Assembly
13 May 2019 Annual Meeting

. . . . . Date . . . . . .
Signed (Chairman)