

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Brightling Parish Council held on
Wednesday 6th July 2022 at 7.30 p.m. at Brightling Village Hall**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs Caroline Croft, Daniel Lambert-Gorwyn, Judy Petty, Dianne Mower and Andrew Wedmore and Joanna Coleman (Chair)

Parish Councillors absent: Cllr Jane Oxenford

In attendance: Gilly Lowe, Clerk to the Council

1. Apologies for absence

Received from Cllr Oxenford, District Cllr Barnes, County Cllr Kirby-Green and Doug Edworthy, Tree Warden.

2. Disclosures of interest

None.

3. Additional agenda items

There were no further agenda items that had not already been included on the agenda.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 11th May 2022 as a true and correct record.

5. Open Forum

5.1 In her absence, Cllr Kirby-Green had submitted a report from ESCC. Cllr Coleman shared the highlights of the report, and it is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Cllr Barnes also sent apologies and had also sent a report. This was read out by the Clerk and is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

5.2 There were no members of the public in attendance.

6. Finance and Governance

6.1 RFO Report

6.1.1 The bank reconciliation to 30th June 2022 had been previously circulated and Cllr Wedmore confirmed that having checked online, the balances were correct as stated.

6.1.2 The schedule of receipts & payments for May & June 2022 had also been previously circulated and was approved by members.

6.1.3 The first quarter's income & expenditure report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The RFO reported that no reserves have been used so far, and all other expenditure to date was as expected.

6.1.4 The following payments were approved:

6.1.4.1 Jon Avery - £360 – Churchyard mowing

6.1.4.2 Akismet spam filtering - £22.50 – (Retrospectively paid on the credit card)

6.1.4.3 ESALC Chairman training - £48

6.1.4.4 50% share of Direct Dox & postage costs - £288.31

7. Gypsum Mine Noise Pollution

Cllr Wedmore provided an update which is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

8. Cllr Mower had attended the RALC AGM held earlier in the day. She reported there were new appointments of Chair, (David Young, Ewhurst PC) & Vice-Chair (Keith Robertson, Catsfield PC); those villages using the Black Cat data (speeding device) were pleased to report an improved rapport with the police on data feed-back; a group of parish councils have formed the 'Northern Parishes of Rother' to focus on planning enforcement issues in the area - there was a protracted discussion on the inadequacies of the enforcement department. The Parish Conference will take place on 19th October at Brede (more details to follow). There was a general feeling that the Renaissance Project at Bexhill Town Hall was still vastly expensive, and Rother DC agreed to Sue Prochak's suggestion that they make a presentation to RALC about it at the next meeting. On Highways matters, John Barnes is campaigning for 40mph national speed limit on unclassified roads; there was concern about the poor quality of road repairs, although as County is responsible for structure & Highways for maintenance, there is often no coordination. Finally, the new Chairman suggested an increase in RALC subs in the future to build a 'war-chest' to deal with issues such as enforcement collectively. Cllr Coleman asked if RALC has much authority as a body and Cllr Wedmore replied that it's mainly a discussion forum, but when parishes act collectively, greater pressure can be usefully exerted.

9. Matters arising from the previous meeting:

9.1 Village Generator – There was a general discussion about the requirements from a generator for the village as part of an Emergency Plan. Cllr Wedmore had provided a good summary of options at the Annual Assembly in April and that depending on the model, costs could vary between £1200 & £4000, plus the need for an oil tank to supply it. Cllr Croft felt that it would be a lot of expense for something (hopefully) not often used. Cllr Coleman felt that something to charge devices and provide power to a microwave for a hot meal would be sufficient. She proposed that someone take the matter to the VH committee as it would need maintaining & managing. It should perhaps be purchased by the Village Hall and supported by the PC. Cllr Petty offered to do so at the next VH Committee meeting. Cllr Mower felt that costs could spiral out of control and she suggested adding the details of those who have personal generators and are happy to share them could be included in the Emergency Plan?

- 9.2 Start time of meetings – Cllr Coleman proposed an earlier start time of 7pm. Cllr Mower seconded the proposal, and 5 members were in favour. The motion was carried, and the Clerk was asked to update the information for future meetings.
- 9.3 Councillor Email addresses – The clerk reported on 3 suppliers with costs varying from approximately £180 per annum to £420 for 7 emails. Cllr Coleman preferred to stick to a more well-known provider e.g Microsoft and proposed adopting councillor emails. Cllr Petty seconded the motion and all members agreed. The Clerk asked for some IT support from a local company to set up the email addresses and will provide further information.

10. Gatwick Expansion

The Clerk had previously circulated some information from the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC) about the proposed noise envelope at Gatwick in relation to the expansion of the airport. There was a brief discussion around the position paper drafted by GACC and Cllr Coleman proposed that the parish council support the comments. Cllr Croft seconded the proposal, and all members agreed. The Clerk was asked to respond to GACC accordingly and inform neighbouring parishes.

11. Community and Business Development

11.1 Broadband

Cllr Wedmore provided an update on the ultra-fast broadband scheme. (Attached as an appendix). Cllr Petty proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr Wedmore for all his hard work to date on the project.

11.2 Crime, anti-social behaviour & police relationships

Cllr Croft had attended the local police meeting the previous night. There were mainly reports of thefts of vehicles and from sheds in the local area. Cllr Petty asked if the Community Speedwatch representative had attended as the signs promised for the B2096 had not yet been delivered. Cllr Croft said that he hadn't attended, and she would follow up at the next meeting.

11.3 Defibrillators - nothing to report.

11.4 Environment Policy & Biodiversity

Cllr Wedmore had previously circulated a report (attached as an appendix). The Clerk mentioned that she had met the Burwash parish councillors from their Environment Workstream who were still interested in collaboration with Brightling. Cllr Coleman said that she would make contact. The Clerk will provide details.

11.5 Footpaths & Bridleways

Cllr Petty noticed the trees had been cut around the bridge on the closed footpath, Brightling 23. The Clerk confirmed that work had begun but a piece of machinery was required that wasn't currently available. The Clerk will ask for a progress report from the Rights of Way Team.

11.6 Highways, hedges & potholes

Cllr Petty reported that repairs had been carried out to an area of potholes on Hollingrove Hill and she was hoping for the same on Rectory Hill - works are scheduled for August. The overgrown hedges in Brickyard Lane had been reported and after inspection by the Steward, are due to be cut. There was a discussion about the wildflower verge trial as Cllr Petty had noticed people cutting their own verges for improved visibility and that the grass is high at some junctions. Cllr Petty proposed providing some

appropriate feedback and Cllr Coleman seconded the proposal. Most members agreed and the Clerk was asked to contact Highways.

11.7 Messenger Magazine - nothing to report.

11.8 Phone Box

Cllr Coleman said that she will speak to Jamie & Chris French about using heavy machinery to move the phone box back onto its base.

11.9 Trees – nothing to report.

11.10 Utilities – nothing to report.

11.11 Refuse Collection – nothing to report.

11.12 Village Hall

Cllr Petty reported that Wifi is now in use in the village hall and an associated heating control is to follow.

11.13 Website

Cllr Wedmore had previously circulated a report (attached as an appendix).

11.14 Welcome Packs

Cllr Mower asked Cllr Wedmore to print the updated packs, and Cllr Coleman asked why a digital version isn't available. Cllr Wedmore said that the document is quite lengthy but rather dry and suggested a complete overhaul to make it one page only with pictures and details of links to various societies. This could then be available on the website also. Cllr Wedmore offered to update and shorten the welcome pack.

12. Planning Matters

12.1 Enforcement / Northern Rother Parishes meeting

Cllr Petty reported on the recent meeting attended by Huw Merriman, MP. Many of the big planning matters aren't relevant to Brightling. However, Cllr Petty is attending as an observer at present and will continue to feedback information to members.

12.2 New Planning Applications

12.2.1 RR/2022/1350/P The Oast, Brickyard Lane, Oxleys Green, Brightling TN32 5LB

Proposal: Retention of outbuilding (retrospective) and re-instatement of grassland.

Cllr Wedmore had previously circulated the following suggested comments:

Brightling Parish Council objects to this application. The building's position and appearance is damaging to the High Weald AONB, contrary to the objective in Rother's plan to "protect and enhance the High Weald AONB". The building does not conform to the High Weald Design Guide, which has been adopted as a planning consideration. The same building was described in a previous planning application as a "Log Cabin". Log cabins are not a traditional form of building in the High Weald. The very existence of any new building here is damaging to the High Weald AONB. However, if Rother are minded to approve this application despite the objections, we would request that the following conditions be imposed:

1. No external lighting (to respect the "Dark Skies" policy) and no roof-lights to be inserted (either now or later). 2. Access to be via the existing entrance to The Oast, not via any new drive (planning application

RR/2021/1982/P) 3. The building should not be sold off separately from The Oast, or rented out, or hired out as holiday accommodation, or used for any other commercial purpose, but solely for the residents of The Oast. This condition should be secured by a legally enforceable agreement (eg section 106 agreement). 4. Planning permission should not be granted until details of heating and energy use have been supplied, to conform with Rother's policy SRM1: Towards a Low Carbon future.

Cllr Coleman proposed the comments be submitted online and Cllr Wedmore seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

12.3 Decision Notices – **For Information Only**

12.3.1 RR/2021/1945/P The Oast, Brickyard Lane, Brightling
Retrospective permission granted with conditions for erection of a workshop shed.

12.3.2 RR/2021/413/P The Coach House, Brightling Road
Permission granted with conditions for first floor side extensions.

13. Training – no requests for current training.

14. Correspondence

The letter from Victim Support thanking the council for its donation had been circulated to all members. There was a discussion about raising the amount from £55 to £60 for all recipients of grants for the current year. Cllr Coleman proposed that council agree to this increase, and Cllr Wedmore seconded the motion. It was carried unanimously.

15. Parish Councillors' Forum

The Clerk had circulated a consultation document from Transport for the South East (TfSE). It is a huge document and the Clerk offered to propose some headline responses for approval, and use her delegated authority to submit comments before the closing date of 12th September. Members thanked the Clerk.

16. Information for Councillors / Future Agenda Items - None

17. Future Meetings

17.1 The next meeting of the parish council will be in Brightling Village Hall at 7.00pm in line with Item 9.2.

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

2022: 14th September, 10th November.

2023: 11th January, 8th March, (12th April Annual Assembly), 10th May (AGM)

..... Signed (Chairman)

Date