



Sedlescombe Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council
on Tuesday 15th September 2020 at 19:00 via zoom

Present:

Pauline Glew (Vice-Chairman)(PG). Peter Anson (PA). David Caney (DC). Roy Chapman (RC). Sally Sidgwick (SS). Beverley Coupar (BC). Jackie Saul-Hunt (JSH)
Parish and District Cllr. Jonathan Vine-Hall (Chairman of the Parish Council) (JVH). Mrs Jackie Scarff (JS) (Clerk/RFO)
County and District Cllr Carl Maynard (CM) part time. There were 4 members of the public

Item	Agenda Item (C20.)	
46	Apologies received and accepted from: Cllr A Walters	
47.	Interests in accordance with 2012 Code of Conduct To receive councillors' declarations of interest regarding matters on the agenda and consider any written requests for dispensation as a result. Any changes to register of interests should be notified. DC registered a pecuniary & prejudicial interest in item 53 as a member of the CIC.	
48.	Public participation session re matters on the Agenda at the Chairman's discretion. It was agreed that the members of the public would speak at the relevant part of the meeting.	
49.	To consider for approval the minutes of the full council meeting 16th July 2020 RESOLVED: That the Chairman is authorised to sign the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 16 th July 2020 as a true record of the meeting. BC commented that she was not recorded as present but did attend the meeting. The minutes would be adjusted to reflect her being present.	
50.	If the committee wishes to exclude the public for a particular agenda item, the following resolution must be passed: 'That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.' There were no requirements to pass this resolution.	
51.	Play Ground and Recreation Area To hear an update and agree any actions required. The clerk updated the meeting that most playgrounds within Rother are now open. The Govt guidelines haven't changed regarding re opening except that groups of people meeting are limited to 6. Local Parish Councils with open playgrounds have put up signs to reflect the Govt guidance. The cllrs discussed the issues and agreed that to be opened there should be appropriate signs. Resolved: The clerk was asked to create signs to put up and RC would open the playground. Any member who was not comfortable with doing a playground check to notify the clerk so the rota could be altered.	
52.	To discuss the request for the Sedlescombe Players to site a storage container on the Village Hall carpark and agree any actions required. The clerk explained that the Village Hall had received a request from the Sedlescombe Players who wished to be allowed to site a storage container on the village hall carpark. The Village Hall had turned this down in line with their lease and had referred it to the Parish Council asking that their decision be upheld. DC suggested to the meeting that the Sportsfield carpark be considered instead. PA explained that this may not be possible due to a covenant on the land. PA also commented that the Garden Club was in the same position looking for storage. JSH commented that it would be useful to try and explore a solution for more storage at the Village Hall. The cllrs were in agreement that they would like to try and find a solution in the village, JVH summarised that it may be possible to put a container on the Sportsfield carpark, RBF would not be suitable and that it would be better aesthetically to look at how a small extension at the village hall could be funded for storage. JVH suggested that the PC have a discussion with the Village Hall.	

	Clerk to arrange a meeting.	
53.	<p>Sedlescombe Sports Pavilion. To receive an update and agree any actions required including the following Cllr D Caney registered a pecuniary and prejudicial interest as a founding member of the CIC. He did not take part in the conversation or decisions as a parish councillor but updated the meeting as a member of the CIC. JVH suggested that item ii should be discussed first, agreed by all.</p> <p>ii To agree any actions required as a result of the correspondence from the Croqueteers. The clerk explained that she had received a letter, and a copy of a letter sent to Rother District Council expressing concerns that the sports field is being used to walk dogs and that dog mess is not always being picked up. There is a public footpath running along side the field that dog walkers can use, keeping the dogs on a lead. One of the issues seems to be the lack of appropriate signage. The clerk had ordered signs from environmental health. The clerk had asked for signs to be put on all entrances to the Sportsfield.</p> <p>JVH closed the meeting at 19:24 for a member of the public (a member of the croqueteer club) to speak. The resident explained that there were no signs, other than one by the kissing gate to let people know that dogs must be kept on a lead. There is an increase in the number of dogs roaming on the field which is causing a disruption while the croqueteers are playing. There was a comment that the carpark is not a right of way entrance to the public footpath. There should instead be a sign to explain that it is a private carpark. JVH reopened the meeting 19:29 and thanked the member of the public for being the first to speak at a Sedlescombe zoom meeting.</p> <p>RC discussed the issue of cars parking in front of the gates to the carpark and they access the field through the gap. It would help to be able to stop access from that point. The clerk was asked to have a sign made to let people know that there is no access to the Sportsfield from there.</p> <p>An update on the Tenancy at Will The clerk updated the meeting that the Tenancy at Will is being renewed each month. There was a discussion about the current financial affairs and current use of the Pavilion. JVH invited DC to give an update of the CIC position. The CIC had agreed that they are not in a position to take on the work required at the Pavilion. JVH expressed a desire to find a solution that means the maintenance requirements of the pavilion are met, to prevent deterioration, and the site is able to accommodate a range of sports in the longer term. The CIC will attend the October full council meeting with a proposal. JVH thanked the 3 members of the football club for joining the meeting and speaking. The Three members of the football team left at 19:40</p>	
54.	<p>Highway Matters To receive an update from Sedlescombe Traffic Advisory Group (STAG) To consider the purchase of a Black Cat Radar box. To discuss the required Speed testing for Sandrock Hill and agree any actions required. DC confirmed that the group has been unable to meet and the project is on hold. There are speed surveys that need to be done to progress the project and the team would like to do them as soon as possible now. ESCC had advised that they should not be done until the schools were back. DC explained where the surveys needed to be done.</p> <p>JVH asked the councillors if they were in favour of purchasing the Black Cat Radar box and whether they would be in favour of renting it out to other Parish Councils. DC suggested that the PC apply for a grant to Safer Sussex Roads.</p> <p>BC asked if it was worth asking another council if they would like to share the cost? This may cause further delays while finding a partner. JVH also clarified that the development at Churchill Farm is waiting for the outcome of the speed reduction agreements to be able to finalise the planning permission.</p> <p>JVH proposed that the PC that the PC agree to buy the Black Cat Radar box and apply for the grant before purchasing it and if we weren't awarded a grant the Parish Council would purchase it from reserves. RC asked about the training. The PC had been informed that this is not onerous .</p> <p>Resolved All agreed that the clerk should apply for a grant to The Safer Sussex Road Partnership. If this was not successful the PC would fund the purchase.</p> <p>JVH asked DC for an update on siting the CCTV camera. DC explained that he was trying to find someone to host the cameras and would follow up this week.</p>	

55.	<p>To consider a response to RDC regarding their request for Settlement Study information JVH explained that the District Local plan is being reviewed and there is some information that RDC have requested that the settlements fill the surveys in and send them back to RDC. JVH suggested that he start the process and circulate it to create combined PC view. All agreed.</p>	
56.	<p>Finance and Audit To receive the monthly statement of accounts to 31st August 2020 Received and noted To receive the bank reconciliation to 31st August 2020 Received and noted To receive and approve payments for the month and agree any actions required. £499.20 AB Fire & Security £270.83 GBurley & sons Ltd Agreed To agree and additional signatory for the Parish Council bank accounts. The Croquetteer member left the meeting at 20:04 BC volunteered, all agreed.</p>	
57.	<p>Reports, Correspondence, Questions and Future agenda items not requiring decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Red Barn Field- Nothing to report b) Sedlescombe Jobs Network – No news to report c) Any other - Reports from County and District Councillors and local PCSO were sent in advance of the meeting and are included below. <p>Report from JVH as District Councillor. Key things arising at the District Council.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early engagement for the revision of the local plan: In the past Parishes and Towns have not had input to the Local Plan at such an early stage. I have been very much the driver behind this new approach knowing that Towns and Parishes have some really useful input to the creation of the Local Plan. Here is the early engagement questionnaire which I hope you will to fill in and submit via the following web-link: Early Engagement Form. All responses will need to be provided to officers before 4.30pm on Friday 9 October 2020. I really hope you will engage with this and am happy to help by running a workshop or any in other way if that is of any assistance. If it helps, you don't need to complete the whole form if you don't have anything to add just complete or comment on areas that you feel you want to make comment on. There is also a questionnaire to help update local information on shops and services and try to identify areas where there may be opportunities to allow housing along more historic patterns of development etc. 2. Change in Structure at Rother: Rother moved from a single Chief Executive some years ago to having two Executive Directors who shared the management of the Authority. Those two officers have proposed that the Authority moves back to a single Chief Executive. This change needs the approval of the Full Council and will go to the Full Council meeting on the 22nd of September. 3. The financial impact of Covid 19 on the Authority: It is expected that the current worse case is about £2m negative impact on reserves through additional expenses and lost income. There may be some clawback on lost income particularly in planning. 4. Creation of a housing company: Because of the ever increasing housing list and the many stalled housing sites in Rother combined with the development of the large Blackfriars site and the need for a significant increase in affordable housing (exacerbated by the fact that a number of developers are seeking to have themselves released from providing on site affordable housing through viability assessments) the Authority is creating a housing company which will at first work with Registered Providers to deliver housing in Rother. The Housing Company will be called Alliance Homes (Rother) Ltd and will initially be involved in the Blackfriars site and targeting stalled sites with planning approvals. 	

5. **Introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement by ESCC:** This will commence on the 29th of September and Cllr Maynard will probably update on this. In line with this and the extra demand that will likely be placed on Rother owned carparks the Council is introducing charging in some existing car parks and aligning charges to the new on street parking charges. This affects Rye and Battle but mainly Bexhill.
6. **Bexhill Town Council:** The creation of the Bexhill Town Council is moving forward with an expectation that the first election will be in May 2021. Ultimately, this will result in a considerably reduced cost for Rother District Council and will see residents of Bexhill taking more direct responsibility for local decisions and running local services as happens across the rest of Rother. Currently the special expenses charged to Bexhill residents (which is substitute for a Parish precept) does not cover the full costs of the expense incurred by the District Council for Bexhill.
7. RDC committee meetings are all on-line and are also being live streamed which has allowed many more residents to watch meetings from the comfort of their own home. Viewership varies but the highest was the last planning meeting with 229 viewers increasing from the previous high of 140 viewers. We are really pleased with being able to make Council meetings more accessible to all residents. Planning committee site visits resumed in August with all the appropriate Covid protections in place.
8. The PGL application was deferred in August following a letter from solicitor Richard Buxton who has conducted a number of Judicial Reviews for residents and Parish Councils as an approval at committee may have led to a JR or a refusal to costs being awarded against RDC at appeal. Officers are reviewing the report and I am yet to receive an update.

Report from CM as County and District councillor.

Rother:

Staff restructure. Tony Leonard now taking redundancy as a result of staff restructure. Malcolm to become CEX with a review of his performance after a year

External consultants engaged at a potential ALLOCATED cost of up to £35k

Other context to note that over 32 staff have left since last May. I remained concerned as to the long term resilience of the authority as a consequence.

ESCC :

Several parts of the electoral division including Sedlescombe have seen patching and surface dressing at a cost of £286000 and £315000 respectively.

I would also remind members this is in the context of a £30m annual maintenance programme. Gangs have been out repairing potholes throughout lockdown.

Government have now approved CPE orders so that will come into effect later this year across Rother.

Reports from local PCSO

- Out buildings have been broken into in the area of Hurst Lane, between 23/08 – 24/08
- A work shop has been broken into in the area of Brede Lane between 23/08 – 24/08
- A farm has been broken into between during the evening of 24/08 and a quad bike was stolen. This has since been recovered.

In addition it would be worth noting the following crimes that have occurred nearby.

- Two workshops on a farm were broken into in Staplecross, between 18/08 – 19/08. A motocross bike was stolen.
- A quad bike and other machinery were stolen from a farm on Ticehurst Road, Ticehurst, between 16/08 – 17/08
- Tractor fuel and a saw were stolen from a farm in Lower Platts, Ticehurst, between 16/08 – 17/08
- A site was broken into and tools were stolen between 18/08 – 19/08 – Ticehurst
- A quadbike has been stolen from a farm in Etchingham between, 26/08 – 27/08.

In regards to quadbike thefts and farm breaks, Daryl and I have been monitoring and looking into these types of crimes for the past 2 years, working closely with Kent to target cross border crime that we have been experiencing. For the last year they have been mainly on the Rye side of Rother so have not had any cause to contact you but approximately 18 months ago we were seeing them in and around your area. Please be assured that we are looking into each of these reports that come in and follow up any lines of enquiry. We speak to our Kent counterparts on a daily basis about what is occurring on our respective areas, often join each other on patrols and have organised warrants together when appropriate. We also have also developed strong working relationship with farmers on our area. In the past 6 months Sussex Police have also established our own Rural Crime Team.

Another crime we have received a couple of reports of is heater oil theft. At this time we have not received any reports of this in your area, however we have on the Eastern side of Rother so there is a chance it could travel over. Sadly we see this type of crime occur each year although normally a little later in the year. I do not know if you have any form of messaging residents / groups in your area but if there are, please can the following advice be disseminated where possible to residents in your area.

Diesel theft is a problem for many farms and rural properties. Fuel tanks stored in rural and isolated locations are very attractive to thieves looking for an easy target.

- Keep tanks stored close to the property where you can see them. If this isn't possible, you should consider installing CCTV to watch over isolated tanks and restrict access with walls, fences and hedges. Security lighting such as 'dusk till dawn' or motion detection lighting can also be an effective deterrent to thieves.
- Remember to check the oil level in your tank regularly. Look for any spilt fuel, marks on the locks or anything else suspicious.
- Avoid installing a storage tank in an isolated area or outlying building.
- Consider using a mobile bowser (tanker) kept in a secure place when not in use.
- Use 'diesel dye', making your diesel traceable and less attractive to thieves.
- In addition to what I was saying in regards to the work we have been doing around cross border crime, last week there was a warrant conducted by the Metropolitan Police. I was unsure if I could report this, however I have just taken a look at our press release so happy to share this.
- Officers from Sussex Police were involved in a significant operation led by Metropolitan Police in London.
- Warrants under section 46 of the Firearms Act 1968 and under section 8 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 were executed at Star Lane, Orpington, Bromley, in the early hours of Wednesday (September 9).
- The warrants followed extensive work carried out by the Met, supported by officers from the Rother prevention team in East Sussex.
- This identified a series of crimes believed to have been carried out by suspects linked to this location, including a number of crimes that took place in Rother and its neighbouring rural areas.
- Over the course of several months, a package of evidence was developed around the suspects at the centre of the investigation, culminating in the warrants being executed around 2.45am on Wednesday.
- Hundreds of officers in more than 30 vehicles carried out a number of search warrants at the site. The operation involved highly-trained Counter Terrorism Specialist Firearms Officers, teams from the Territorial Support Group, Dog Support Unit and specialist search officers.
- Sussex Police's Prevention Enforcement Team has also been on site assisting with the searches, which are ongoing.
- Seven people have been arrested for offences including possession with intent to supply drugs, handling stolen goods and burglary.
- Inspector Jonathan Hartley of the Rother prevention team, said: "This was a significant operation following many months of hard work by the Met Police and our officers here in Sussex.
- "Searches have already identified a number of items reported as stolen from Rother, and we will continue liaising with the Met to investigate all of the findings from the operation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This shows we will always target those we suspect of committing crimes in our district, wherever they reside, and will work with other forces to address any cross-border criminality and find those responsible for it. • “I’m very grateful to the Met for their support in tackling cross-border crime. <p>Finally, please can it be mentioned within the meeting to remind residents to ensure they are securing their property as best as they can, be aware of any unusual activity and to please report it to us at the first opportunity, we would much rather check a vehicle for example that is all in order than miss one that is not.</p>	
There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:25		

Chairman.....

Date.....