

Upper Beeding Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held virtually using Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 19TH January 2021 at 7pm

Present: Councillors: S. Birnstingl (Chairman), I. Allen, A. Chilver, B. Harber, F. Heaver, T Kardos, S. Teatum, C. Verney, C. Warren, D. Wood

Also present: Clerk: Celia Price, County Councillor: David Barling, District Councillors: Mike Croker and Roger Noel, R&R Architects: Russell Barnes, Steyning Grammar School: Michelle Syred.

Members of the public: None

C:0121:01 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Garrod, Cllr Ivatt and Cllr Newton.

C:0121:02 Declaration of Councillors personal or prejudicial interest

The Chairman reminded councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011).

C:0121:03 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on [15th December 2020](#) were approved as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Warren, seconded Cllr Kardos and agreed. The Chairman will sign the minutes as soon as is practical.

C:0121:04 Public Adjournment

The Chairman invited questions and comments from members of the public. Russell Barnes (R&R Architects) introduced himself and invited questions concerning planning application DC/20/2441 (minute ref: C:0121:05).

C:0121:05 To consider the following Planning Applications (chaired by Cllr T Kardos)

[DC/20/2441](#) – The Towers, Henfield Road

Revised access arrangements, removal of enclosure fencing, removal and replanting of trees and creation of additional parking spaces.

Cllr Kardos gave an overview of the application inviting comments and questions. Councillors raised questions concerning road safety, accessibility, traffic numbers, the use of double decker buses and minibuses. Russell Barnes and Michelle Syred were both able to answer questions raised. Councillors asked if there would be an appetite to work in collaboration with the Parish Council and the principle was agreed.

Cllr Birnstingl proposed a comprehensive travel plan for the whole area, including Valerie Manor, the roundabout opposite the Rising Sun, garage, footpaths and speed limits. David Barling was asked to assist with this. Cllr Barling declared an interest as he has worked in a professional capacity with The Towers but is not in any way connected to this project. All agreed a holistic, collaborative approach to the whole area would be beneficial to all stakeholders.

In summary, Councillors agreed to support the proposal, recognising the obvious benefits to the community and, in the interests of the safety of residents and members of the SGS community, request a comprehensive travel plan for the whole area as part of the application. Proposed Cllr Kardos, seconded Cllr Teatum and agreed.

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C:0121:06 Report from County Councillor –

Cllr David Barling reported that the COVID-19 vaccination programme is on track to vaccinate the first four tiers of the population by 15th February. This is being facilitated by 20 GP surgery hubs and is coordinated by WSCC, HDC and the NHS.

WSCC have received confirmation that the Government will be reimbursing COVID costs so the worst-case financial situation has been avoided.

The 2021/22 budget will be discussed at committee on Friday and full cabinet on 12th February. The likely increase is 1.99% on the general precept plus 3% for adult social care. WSCC are on track for a balanced budget for 2020/21.

Cllr Barling also updated councillors regarding the caravan at Hightrees (this should be removed following a further visit from the WSCC legal team) as well as outstanding works at Undermill Road, Newland Road and the Hightrees roundabout.

Questions and comments were invited.

Cllr Wood requested that the good work surrounding the vaccination programme should continue to be promoted to keep residents informed. All agreed.

C:0121:07 Report from District Councillor

Cllr Roger Noel reported that HDC will be receiving £571k from the Government to help with COVID-19 costs. Despite a huge loss of income HDC are still working towards a balanced budget for 2020/21. The financial year 2021/22 is also expected to result in a balanced budget but the next three years will be more of a challenge. The forecast is that it will take 5 years for HDC to recover from financial losses caused by COVID-19.

Cllr Noel also reported that HDC are on target to meet it's recycling targets and by 2023 food waste will be collected separately. It is expected that textiles and batteries will also be recycled. This will mean a change to refuse collection frequency.

COVID-19 continues to affect HDC including staffing levels for refuse collections. Teams from other departments are being seconded to ensure the service to residents is mostly unaffected. There are concerns that residents may become complacent as the vaccine is delivered and it is important to continue to promote the importance of lockdown measures to protect the community.

The Local Plan has faced delays due to the requirement for additional reports. It is anticipated these will be completed soon with the Plan going to committee in the next couple of months.

Cllr Mike Croker reiterated HDC's financial position and advised the long-term challenging projections will require the realisation of some of the District's assets, including the Drill Hall, Rookwood Golf Course and the running track, although nothing has been decided yet.

He also advised, refuse trucks will be trialling the use of biofuel, the benefits of which include lower emissions, lower running costs and there is no need for vehicle modifications.

Questions and comments were invited.

Cllr Warren raised concerns regarding the removal of recreational facilities for the residents of the area, namely Rookwood Golf Course.

Cllr Noel responded advising that amended plans are being reviewed which will only include a small area of development in the southern part of the course, with the northern area being used to expand the leisure space for all residents (more information in 'Our District' magazine).

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Cllr Birnstingl requested an update regarding wildlife corridors.

Cllr Noel responded, advising that routes are being established and the project is progressing.

C:0121:08 Neighbourhood Warden Report

The Neighbourhood Warden report for [December](#) was circulated prior to the meeting. Question and comments were invited.

Cllr Wood was pleased to note the significant increase of visits to elderly and vulnerable residents and thanked the Wardens.

The next Warden Steering Group meeting will take place on 11th February. Councillors were invited to contact Cllr Shaw and Cllr Wood with any questions or comments as they will attend the meeting.

It was resolved to note the contents of the report.

C:0121:09 Clerks Report

The Clerks written [report](#) was circulated prior to the meeting. Questions were invited. Cllr Harber noted the new website is looking great and has been a significant piece of work for the Clerk. It is recognised this is an ongoing project but the improvements and benefits are considerable.

It was resolved to note the contents of the report.

C:0121:10 Facilities Committee

Draft minutes for the meeting held on [12th January](#) were circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Warren gave an overview of the meeting and committee recommendations.

It was resolved to refund 3 months hire fees to the Football Club and suspend the annual maintenance for this year, as recommended by the committee.

Proposed Cllr Wood, seconded Cllr Verney and agreed.

C:0121:11 Grounds Maintenance Contract

The 3-year grounds maintenance contract is overdue to go out to tender. However, considering the COVID restrictions, uncertainty of WSCC and HDC cuts and the maintenance of current prices for the financial year 2021/2; it was resolved to appoint Grastex for an extended period of 1 year as recommended by the Facilities Committee.

Proposed Cllr Wood, seconded Cllr Kardos and agreed by all.

C:0121:12 [2021/22 Precept](#)

Following agreement of the 2021/22 budget in December (minute reference C:1220:13) it was resolved to agree and submit the precept requirement of £199,492.00 (one hundred and ninety-nine thousand, four hundred and ninety-two pounds).

Proposed Cllr Harber, seconded Cllr Warren and agreed.

C:0121:13 Finance Reports

The income and expenditure reports were circulated prior to the meeting ([detailed](#) and [summary](#)). Cllr Harber gave an overview as to the current position and invited all

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Councillors to join the Finance Committee in a bespoke training session facilitated by SSALC on Tuesday 26th January at 7pm via Zoom.
It was resolved to note the content of the reports.

- C:0121:14 Bank Reconciliation**
The bank reconciliations for December ([current account](#) and [investment account](#) – JPCC) were received and noted. Cllr Harber confirmed he has reviewed the reconciliations in detail.
- C:0121:15 Bank**
The Clerk distributed a [report](#) prior to the meeting recommending the move from the Co-operative Bank to Unity Trust Bank. The report was discussed and questions invited. The Clerk and Chair of Finance satisfactorily responded to all questions raised. It was resolved that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Finance Committee, open new accounts with the Unity Trust Bank and make the necessary arrangements to move the funds and close the Co-operative Bank accounts.
It was also resolved that there will be 5 signatories on the new accounts (The Clerk and four Councillors).
Proposed Cllr Verney, seconded Cllr Chilver and agreed.
- C:0121:16 Payments List**
The payments list for [December 2020](#) totalling £4881.47 was received and noted in accordance with the Financial Regulations.
- C:0121:17 2021/22 Meeting Dates**
A proposed list of meetings dates from [January 2021 to May 2022](#) was circulated prior to the meeting.
It was resolved to agree the proposed dates.
- C:0121:18 Annual Parish Meeting**
A [supporting paper](#) was circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed that the likelihood of a face-to-face meeting is very unlikely and virtual options should be investigated. It was resolved to delegate the organisation of the APM to the Community Committee.
- C:0121:19 Re-naming of Hyde Street Open Space**
Various suggestions were discussed. It was resolved that “Hyde Street Open Space” is re-named “Hyde Street Green”.
Proposed Cllr Verney, seconded Cllr Warren and agreed.
- C:0121:20 Horsham District Council**
Details of the [Public Space Protection Order Consultation](#) were circulated prior to the meeting and the contents were noted. Councillors were reminded they can respond as individuals to this public consultation if required.
- C:0121:21 Correspondence**
It was resolved to receive and note the [correspondence](#) as circulated.
- C:0121:22 Chairman’s Announcements**

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The Chairman sent an email update to all councillors including a report about issues at Truleigh Hill and an overview of a recently attended meeting of the Greening Steyning Biodiversity Action Group.

C:0121:23

Matters raised by Councillors

Cllr Wood suggested collaborating with existing groups when considering the rewilding of verges and open spaces. It was agreed that both the Community and Facilities Committees include this in their agendas for recommendation and discussion at full council.

Cllr Chilver reported that SCYP are doing a brilliant job providing virtual sessions and support for our young people whilst the current restrictions preclude the youth club meeting in person.

Cllr Allen suggested messages of support from the Council to Councillors that are experiencing particularly challenging times. The Clerk will facilitate as appropriate.

Cllr Heaver reiterated concerns regarding the timescale for the Towers planning application. Ensuring the safety of residents and pupils must be paramount. It was suggested that Michelle Syred (SGS) is invited to future Community Committee meetings to investigate collaborative working.

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 8:52pm

Minutes Signed By:

Date