

Upper Beeding Parish Council

**Minutes of the Upper Beeding Parish Council meeting held at
Beeding and Bramber Village Hall
on Tuesday 31 October 2023 commencing at 7pm**

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chair asked for reflections and a moment's silence in memory of Cllr Alan Chilver, following his sudden death on Tuesday 17 October.

Present: Councillors: F. Bull, S. Birnstingl, J. Cannon, F. Heaver, B Harber (UBPC Chairman), I. T. Kardos, S. Teatum and C. Warren.

Also present: Cemetery Clerk: Colette Harber; Mr. R. Potter (Bramber Parish Council) and Mr. M. Owen, both representing The White Bridge Project.

Members of the Public: No members of the Public were present.

C:1023:01 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Steve Keogh, Upper Beeding Parish Clerk; County Cllr. P. Linehan; District Cllr. R. Noel and Cllrs. P. Bull and C. Deadman.

C:1023:02 Declaration of Councillors personal or prejudicial interest

The Chair reminded councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011). No further declarations received on this occasion.

C:1023:03 Minutes of the last meeting

It was resolved to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2023
Proposed: Cllr. C. Warren; seconded: Cllr. F Heaver and agreed.

C:1023:04 Public Adjournment

No members of the public were present on this occasion.

C:1023:05 White Bridge Project

In introducing to the meeting, the speakers for the White Bridge Project, Cllr. Harber welcomed Roger Potter, as Chair, and Michael Owen.

Councillors were shown slides indicating how far the project had progressed, and were informed that the White Bridge had been closed by West Sussex County Council (WSSC) due to large amounts of structural rust and scouring under the bridge supports.

The White Bridge replacement discussions with West Sussex County Council will generally go through Steve Keogh, Clerk of Upper Beeding Parish Council, on behalf of Bramber, Steyning and Upper Beeding Parish Councils.

In the discussion that ensued concern was expressed that the biggest risk to the project was that the White Bridge replacement costs may not be included in WSSC's 2024/25 budget.

Assurances were sought from WSCC that it had documentary evidence for its plans for the White Bridge.

It was also noted that:

- the Public had engaged with the project via two Open Days which were well supported,
- there would be a need to obtain a bespoke licence from the Environment Agency re the re-surfacing on the riverbank,
- all gates would need to be replaced by self-closing gates allowing people to pass through easily,
- there was a need to have clear signage,
- the tendering process had been progressed with indicative quotes received from three suppliers,
- various funding sources had been approached; in particular The Wilson Memorial Trust and Horsham District Council (HDC).

Other discussion included:

- The need for determining who would take charge of cutting back the overgrowth of the paths and keeping them in good order,
- the need to have 'buy-in' from Steyning Grammar School at the former Towers Convent in Upper Beeding,
- the consideration of livestock needs in fields adjacent to the project.

With the continued absence of County Cllr Linehan, Cllr Kardos offered to discuss the matter with another County Cllr, Joy Dennis, who attends Fulking Parish Council meetings, and report back.

It was further noted that specifications for the riverbank path in Upper Beeding were being produced.

The Chair thanked Cllr Potter and Mr Owen for their informative presentation and answers to their concerns.

Cllr Potter and Mr Owen left the meeting at this juncture.

C:1023:06

Report from District Councillor Mike Croker

Cllr Croker reported that:

- the purchase of a site in Henfield of 114 acres at a cost of £800,000 would no longer be going ahead,
- the electronic voting system for HDC Councillors was being referred back to the Government as there was a need for further training,
- HDC had confirmed its objections to the proposed expansion of Gatwick Airport,
- Planning and Infrastructure across the Region will be set higher standards than currently set by the Government Regulations; this will be made public in early December,
- a review of the operation of HDC Planning Committees was underway and should finish next Spring. Initial thoughts included replacing the two current planning committees (North and South) with a single small planning committee, whose members would be expected to undertake far more training in planning matters than at present.

In the discussion that ensued, Cllrs raised:

- the concerns with Willow Cottage, Small Dole
- how the new planning standards could be enforced if standards were over and above those set by the Government.

The Chair thanked Cllr Croker for his report.

C:1023:07 Neighbourhood Wardens Report

Councillors received and noted the monthly report for September 2023 provided by the Neighbourhood Wardens.

In the discussion that ensued it was suggested that the Neighbourhood Wardens be requested to make a social call to Willow Cottage as a pro-active intervention.

C:1023:08 Report from County Councillor

Due to the non-attendance of WSCC County Councillor, Paul Linehan, there was no report on this occasion.

Councillors expressed their continuing disappointment at the non-attendance of County Cllr. Linehan.

C:1023:09 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received and noted.

In the discussion that ensued, it was suggested that there could be a need for a comprehensive fire risk assessment for all Council owned properties.

C:1023:10 Finance Committee – 17 October 2023 Minutes

Councillors received and accepted the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 17 October 2023. Proposed: Cllr Kardos; seconded Cllr Teatum.

C:1023:11 Finance Committee Recommendations

Councillors received and agreed the recommendations of Finance Committee meeting held on 17 October 2023. Proposed: Cllr Birnstingl; seconded: Cllr Teatum.

C:1023:12 Community Committee Minutes

Councillors received and accepted the minutes of the Community Committee meeting held on 3 October 2023. Proposed: Cllr Cannon; seconded: Cllr F Bull.

C:1023:13 Community Committee Recommendations

Councillors received and accepted the recommendations of the Community Committee meeting held on 3 October 2023. Proposed Cllr Birnstingl; seconded Cllr F Bull.

In the discussion that ensued, Councillors noted that plans were already in place for a Dementia Lunch at the Rising Sun at a cost of £10 per head and would include the carers of those suffering from Dementia.

It was noted that the Sports Hall charges would be increased and that discussions had been held with the allotment holders.

Councillors also discussed:

- the possibility of installing a Defibrillator at the Sports Hall, and that the Clerk should speak to SAFER re its maintenance.
- the potential future maintenance costs of Saltings Field who bore the responsibility. It was noted that the lease from HDC currently costs UBPC £300 per annum, and that the lease expires in four years' time.
- the need to co-opt another Councillor to the Community Engagement Joint Parish Youth Committee.

C:1023:14 Co-option

Councillors received and noted the poster inviting residents to become a Parish Councillor. Following the death of Cllr Chilver a further vacancy had been created.

C:1023:15 Finance Reports

Councillors received and noted the income and expenditure (summary and detailed) for year to date.

C:1023:16 Bank Reconciliation

Councillors received and noted the Bank reconciliations up to 30 September 2023.

Cllr Birnstingl and Cllr Warren expressed their desire to receive further training for the role of bank signatory; the Clerk to organise.

C:1023:17 Payments List

Councillors received and noted all payments made in September 2023 for a total of £9,478.01 in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

C:1023:18 Correspondence

Councillors received and noted correspondence which had been emailed in advance for September/October 2023.

C:1023:19 Chairman's Announcements

The Chair reported on his and the Clerk's recent attendance at the Annual Meeting and Conference of West Sussex Association of Local Councils.

C:1023:20 Matters raised by Councillors

Cllr Cannon – gave updates re the format of Cllr Chilver's funeral, proposals for a 20 mile an hour area for Steyning and the need for a Speedwatch day through Upper Beeding High Street, this together with the suggestion that HGVs should be prohibited from using the High Street.

Cllr Bull – the Government's Climate and Ecology Bill currently going through Parliament should be supported by all local Councils and suggested that a draft motion be written. Cllr Bull also offered to attend the Climate Action Network meeting as the representative for Upper Beeding Parish Council. Proposed Cllr Bull; seconded Cllr Cannon and agreed.

Cllr Birnstingl – expressed concern re flooding by the riverside which was thought by residents to be due to an unrepaired valve flap or the water run-off from Salting's Field. Requested that the Clerk discuss with the Environment Agency as a matter of urgency.

Cllr Teatum – Winter Newsletter will be published in Steyning Yours at a cost of £189.00, with the first edition being in the December issue.

Cllr Warren – Scheme whereby households can apply for tokens from the Government re faster connectivity for Broadband; this is already happening in Small Dole.

Cllr Heaver – Steyning Grammar School at the Towers Convent, where no crossing wardens have been put in place to assist the children crossing the road and the buses continue to turn the wrong way across the Henfield Road.

Cllr Kardos – will ask for UBPC's support and future engagement with Fulking and Poynings Parish Council re a 20 mile an hour speed limit through these villages and Edburton.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.58pm

Signed:

Date: