

PEVENSEY PARISH COUNCIL
The minutes of the COUNCIL MEETING held online
on 5th January 2021 commencing at 7.00PM

Present: Councillors: Lowton (Chairman), Gibson, Howard, MacKinnon, Peasgood, Pursglove, Turner, Beck, Geary, Buckley and Beaney.

Wealden District Councillors: Cade, Doodles and Clark

S Mosedale (Clerk).

1 member of the public

Cllr Lowton welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting of the council and reminded attendees of the meeting protocols.

231. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Rabbitts and County Councillor Liddiard.

The Clerk advised Cllr Rabbitts was unable to participate in online council meetings due to technology and technical skills, also his landline only takes incoming calls.

It was **RESOLVED** that council would accept Cllr Rabbitts apologies for this meeting. Proposed by Cllr Beaney, seconded by Cllr Pursglove Carried 7/4 with Cllrs Lowton, MacKinnon, Gibson, and Howard against.

The Chairman reminded councillors that they are in an elected position and attending meetings is a statutory obligation. He explained that in order to help councillors attend online meetings, Council are paying for the Zoom online facility to enable council to conduct meetings and continue with normal council business. He went on to say, council have also agreed to reimburse councillors who participate using landlines. Therefore, there is was no reason why all councillors should not be able to attend.

The Chairman said will speak with Cllr Rabbitts with regards to attending meetings.

232. Disclosure of interest

Nothing was declared.

233. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 1st December 2021 were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record, and were signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr MacKinnon, seconded by Cllr Beck and approved by all present who had attended the previous meeting.

234. Presentation on Census 2021

The Chairman welcomed Ben Philips from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) Census Engagement Manager for the Eastbourne and Wealden area to the meeting. The Chairman then invited Mr. Philips to give his presentation to council and members of the public.

Mr. Philips explained his role and the background with regards to the Census and then presented his presentation to council.

Members then asked Mr. Philips the following.

Members enquired how Mr. Philips employment through the ONS) is linked with the employment of the Good Things Foundation.

Mr. Philips explained both come under the same unit. However, they are two different components and are dealt with by separate teams. He explained that the ONS control the process as a whole and the Good Things Foundation are the company who on behalf of the ONS and are responsible for running the census support.

Mr Philips explained his role would be to speak and engage with various community groups in the first instance and once the support centre is set up, he would work in conjunction with them.

District Cllr Cade enquired about job vacancies.

Mr. Philips explained there are several different jobs within the census, and it varies on the depending on the level people apply for.

He went on to say, the information on job opportunities are available on the census 2021 website, which has an easy link to find and explains about census jobs available in the area.

The Chairman asked if the Clerk if these details can be made available on the council's website and social media pages.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Philips for his attendance and informative presentation.

Mr. Philips left the meeting at 7.30pm

235. Update on application to provide census support 2021.

Cllr MacKinnon updated council that the census support application submitted, had been successful.

Council noted its thanks to Cllr MacKinnon for identifying this avenue and giving Council the opportunity to support residents and generate income for the council.

Cllr MacKinnon updated council on the following points, after her meeting with the Regional Advisor for the South East.

- Council can have up to 4 census officers, who will receive online training which will be paid for by the ONS.
- There are already 3 officers in place. However, she enquired if another member of council would like to join.
- The support centre would be set up at the Ethel Wood Community Centre and an appointment system would be used for members of the public
- It will be 35 hours a week
- DBS clearances is required possibly at an enhanced level
- COVID-19 restrictions would need to be maintained throughout
- Local communities would need to be advised that the support centre is there. However, this would also be shared by the ONS.

The Chairman advised he has approached a local group to see if they would provide help during the census and during the pandemic. He went on to explain, this was the reasons council agreed for the budget heading of Covid Support.

Members enquired if the Good Things Foundation have set out a process to establish if they are receiving value for money for the use of council providing the support centre and volunteers. Also, if the support centre is just to be used for Pevensy residents or if it includes the wider area.

The Chairman explained by using volunteers this enables the council to bring the funds from the census back into the council budget, which would then be put back into the community.

Cllr MacKinnon explained each census support officer would have a unique reference number which is passed back to the ONS when each form is completed. With regards to the census support centre, it has not been confirmed if other areas can access this support.

The Member of the public left the meeting at 19:47

236. Local Police Issues

The Clerk read an update from the weekly Wealden Police News report. She went on to say that the burglary reported at the cycle shop in Pevensey Bay falls under the Eastbourne District and information can be found there.

Members enquired if one of the local PCSO's could attend one of the upcoming council meetings.

The Clerk will follow this up.

237. Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

238. County Councillors report

There was no report submitted from the County Councillor.

The Chairman asked if the Clerk could arrange a meeting with the County Councillor, to follow up on previous items discussed.

239. District Councillors' reports

Cllr Cade provided an update which included:

- Council are urged to continue to monitor the WDC website especially with regards to grants and discretionary grants, payments to people who are self-isolation and businesses. He explained its complexed and the benefits team are under pressure. However, councillors are asked if they aware of anyone in need or requires help to either access the WDC website or failing that to contact the District Councillors.
- The calls at the WDC Hub have increased. However, Councillors are asked to be minded of people in need and to refer them the WDC website or the District Councillors.
- The Sunflower Charity runs out of Hailsham and it deals with adults and children who suffer from any mental health problems due to the isolation and general circumstances.
- The next steps program under the housing section are now able to give temporary accommodation in the Wealden District, rather than sending them away. WDC are currently coping with the Homeless situations.
- The latest figures on the Covid situation in the region are: East Sussex have gone up from 479 to 538 per 100,000 when the average in England is 374. Hastings and Rother have gone down slightly. Hasting is 938 and Rother is 620 per 100,000. This indicates how serious the situation is. Councillors are urged to encourage people keep within the government guidelines and be minded that the hospitals are under tremendous pressure.
- There will be a mobile testing centre in Heathfield this coming weekend at the Mill Road Car Park. If there are any issues booking an appointment, then speak with the District Councillors.
- With regards to the Caravan that is parked on Church Lane, it was agreed that this needs to be resolved as soon as possible. Cllr Cade reassured council that he will deal with this by liaising with ESCC and WDC Housing Department. Cllr Cade will keep the Clerk informed.

Cllr Doodes provided an update which included:

- As community leaders' councillors are urged to ensure people listen to the guidance and keep to it. Councillors are also prompted to be minded of peoples hidden worry and loneliness.
- The Cabinet had met and decided not to increase council tax this year, due to people's financial situations. This still needs to be agreed at full Council.
- The local connection fund is still available until the 26th January and its open for local communities who have interests in community work, working with isolation and loneliness. The grant will need to be used by the 31st March
- Cllr Cade added the Cabinet also agreed to freeze any pay awards to the staff at WDC and the also to freeze allowances to councillors.

Cllr Clark provided an update which included:

- Cllr Clark had continued to follow up enquires with ESCC, the Environment Agency and officers in Planning Enforcement and Licensing at WDC, as well as Cllr Liddiard, with regards to the Bay Hotel planning application and the Castle View development. Since the Parish Council Planning meeting, Cllr Clark had received further comments from members of the public about the Bay Hotel. The closing date for public comments on the Bay Hotel is the 12th January, after this Cllr Clark will be having a meeting with the planning officer. The application is not likely going to committee until the end of February.
- With regards to the Castle View development, Cllr Clark is still awaiting a response to see if they have permission to develop all the site or if they need to apply for permission for the western half.
- With regards to parking metres in Pevensey Bay, WDC are fighting to retain free parking to support local businesses. WDC have fought extremely hard not to follow other councils to decriminalise parking. The Police refuse to do any policing for parking due to this, even though it is their duty. However, the Leader of WDC Bob Stanley is in discussions with the Chief Constable about parking. The aim is to try to make common ground and allow PCSOs to issue parking tickets. There's nothing to say parking meters will be appearing in Pevensey Bay this year. However, Cllr Clark will keep the council informed.

The Chairman enquired whether it's time to make Sea Road Car Park free. He suggested that this issue should be looked at so that there are parity to local businesses with those elsewhere in Wealden.

Cllr Clark explained that Sea Road Car Park and Alfriston are treated differently because they tourism carparks not shopping carparks.

Cllr Clark left the meeting at 20:04

Members suggested that it might worth putting the information about the Sunflower Charity and other organisations on the council's website as well as the government message to stay at home.

The Clerk will follow this up.

Cllr Doodes informed council that she had a recent meeting with the Local MP, Huw Merrieman and raised concerns about the lack of communication with regards to roll out of the Covid Vaccine. It was agreed that communication will be improved.

Cllr Cade advised he believes that the Government are planning on setting up vaccination hubs. He went on to say, information about the vaccinations will be on the local GP sites.

Members suggested the Clerk could contact the local surgeries and see if there is any information that could be circulated to residents.

The Chairman thanked the District Councillors for their reports and attendance.

240. Adoption of Safeguarding Policy

The Safeguarding policy had been circulated with the agenda.

Council noted the policy, and no comments were made.

It was **RESOLVED** that council would accept policy as presented. Proposed by Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr MacKinnon. Motion was unanimously agreed.

241. Councils comments for the Community Safety Action Meeting.

The Clerk advised no comments had been put forward from Councillors.

The Chairman reminded council if they had any issues that need to be addressed at the meeting to inform the Clerk. However, the Chairman will raise the following at the meeting.

- Parking
- Speeding and speeding in various locations that have previously been mentioned.
- Antisocial behaviour

242. Clerks Update

The Clerk provided updates on the following, including agenda items from the previous meetings.

Agenda 123 - PWL Update – an email was received on the 16th December explaining that the councils application will be looked at. There has been a delay with workloads and absences. However, updates will be provided during the application process.

Agenda 212 - As well as a new dog bin being placed on the fence opposite the Pavilion, there will be a 2nd new dog bin put in the slip road between 284 and 286 on Coast Road. The relevant documents are being processed.

Agenda 212 – As previously reported the allotment society has raised safety concerns about pedestrians using the public footpath in the allotments. This had been investigated by ESCCs right way department and they acknowledged that the path links two roads and areas of housing and agreed there is an argument that it would be a good candidate for an upgrade to a hard surface, should funding ever allow.

They have agreed for this be put on their list of works. However, the list of paths to be considered for improvement is apparently already long. The number of paths they can include in their annual surfacing programme is few in numbers, especially in the current economic climate. The Allotment society are currently getting quotes.

Agenda 219 – As per the agreed recommendations on the report on the conditions of the bus shelters. Both Gresham and ESCC Highways have been written to and asked to cut back the vegetation. Also, to remind the nominated councillors – Cllr Mackinnon, Geary, Peasgood and Pursglove about the monthly checks

Other Updates

- The muddy Pathway from the car park to pavilion is due to be repaired on the 12th January. This work is being done by the Chairman of the Sports Club with the materials being paid for by council.

- The fence around the playground in Wallsend road has been temporarily repaired and the post at the kissing gate at the skate park is due to be repaired by the one of the council's contractors.
- As of 5th January, the Government Guidance confirmed that the council do not have to shut the playgrounds. It has been agreed that the adult fitness equipment and the half pipe can remain open. The risk assessments and signage has been updated and this will be done on a 3-weekly basis. The community centres must close except for some limited activities. It has been agreed that the EWCC will not re-open until after lockdown.
- As Council are aware Brexit has arrived. However, it does not impact directly on anything council do.

The Clerk asked, due to the uncertainty with regards to the pandemic and restrictions in place council need to consider if the following events should go ahead.

- Information Day in April
- Vehicle Meet in March

Council agreed to cancel the Information Day as it would not be suitable for this event to go ahead. With regards to the Vehicle Meet, this will be discussed and confirmed at the council meeting in February.

243. Agree Precept Figures for 2021 – 2022

The Precept Figure for 2021 – 2022 have been circulated prior the meeting

The Chairman explained that in past years the precept had not been raised and council had used reserves to balance the budget. He went on to say that the council are facing some exceedingly difficult financial challenges, mainly due to the large number of council capital assets that are coming to the end of their natural lives. Therefore, council have no choice but to raise their element of precept.

The Chairman summarised the main reasons for the budget increases, which are stated on the paper. He urged councillors, when asked why the precept has increased and what the council are doing, to explain it's for a good reason and council has little reserves, as well as completing various projects within the Parish.

The Chairman finished by saying, the budget proposal comes down to £20.04 increase in precept for the average band D council taxpayer in the Parish, which equates to £0.38p per week.

Cllr Doodes explained that other Parishes within Wealden has also increased their precept as they have other expenses, and it is quite normal for a Parish to increase precept if there is a reason to do so.

It was **RESOLVED** that council would accept the precept figure for 2021 - 2022. Proposed by Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr Pursglove. Carried 10/1 with Cllr Beaney against.

The Chairman enquired as to why the member was against the proposal, as he not said anything. The Chairman said that Councillors were entitled to vote as they wished but he was keen for councillors to share their views to aid the debate and to make sure that the council are providing value for money for local people.

The member declined to comment and advised his comments had previously been made.

244. Three Year Plan update 2021 -2022

The Chairman explained that the 3 year plan was in need of being updated. He would therefore be circulating the 3 year plan to the Chairs of the committees for them to discuss with their committees and update and provide comments.

Once updated the plan will be re-circulated to council so that by the end of the financial year the amended version can be debated and agreed ready for the new Council year starting in May.

245. Councils response to the Planning Validation Guide Consultation.

The Clerk explained only one member forwarded comments on.

Members explained that the closing date for comments was the 4th January 2021. However, members who have raised comments have already submitted these.

246. Councils response to the Direction of Travel Consultation.

The Clerk explained no comments have been received and the closing date for comments is on the 18th January 2021.

The Chairman reminded councillors to submit comments to the Clerk by the 12th January 2021.

Members explained that the document is long and complex. However, it was suggested that the link and information should be circulated on the council's social media site for residents to comment.

The Clerk will resend the direction of travel consultation link to councillors for their comments. The Clerk will also circulate the link on councillor's social media site.

District Councillors Doodles and Cade left the meeting 20:44

247. Appoint Three New Advisory Officers for the Ethel Wood Committee.

The Clerk explained that there had been four nominations for the advisory position.

It was agreed that this would be discussed and agreed outside the meeting.

248. Appoint of one Advisory Officers for St Wilfrid's Committee

The Clerk advised there was one nomination which was Cllr Beck.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that council would accept Cllr Becks nomination. Motion was unanimously agreed.

249. Correspondence

No correspondence received

250. Matter of Urgent Public Safety (MUPS)

Nothing reported.

251. Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman summarised an email regarding the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioners request for parishioners to complete a survey regarding the police putting up their element of the Council Tax.

The Chairman said he was contacting the head of Pevensey Support Group to see what they have planned during this lockdown, and if Council could provide any direct support, as previously they been incredibly supportive during the other lockdowns. He went on to say, if there are any other local groups that require support, they can contact the council.

252. Orders of Payment

The listing appears at the end of these minutes as an integral part. Proposed Cllr. Pursglove seconded Cllr. Turner to accept the figures as presented.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the figures as presented. Motion was unanimously agreed.

253. Advisory Officers reports

- **Sea Defences and Water Management** – Cllr Peasgood reported that there had been a lot of work on the beach to protect it. Cllr MacKinnon advised the next Water Board Management meeting is on the 2nd February. The Chairman requested an update on the water pump to be put in.
- **St. Wilfrid's Hall** – Nothing to report.
- **Ethel Wood Community Centre** – Nothing to report.
- **St. John's Trust** – Nothing to report.
- **Sports Club** – The Chairman circulated a paper regarding fencing repairs prior to the meeting. The Chairman summarised the content of the report. He went on to explain, the purpose of the report was to highlight the work that was required to council and to authorise the Clerk to obtain the quotes on works laid out within the paper. However, any emergency repairs highlighted would be dealt with now.

Members pointed out the following points:

- To acknowledge the email sent from other council members prior to the meeting.
- That another style of fencing (post and bar fence) could be quoted for on section F of the fence.
- Members felt section F should remain in place as a safety item and prevents balls being lost in the river.
- In previous years council did have posts in place in front of section E. However, these were removed as there was concerns, they were causing damage to cars.
- Members felt that a small contingency would be required for any unforeseen extra costs.
- Members suggested another contractor that could be contacted. Therefore, up to four quotes will be obtained.
- Members felt it would be more costly to remove section F then repair it.
- Members confirmed that council have incorporated new budget for the new financial year to cover costs.

Therefore, council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations made and for the Clerk to obtain the necessary quotes for the repairs/replacements highlighted within the paper and to obtain the costs of the railway sleepers. It was also agreed for the Clerk to obtain 2 quotes for section F. Motion was unanimously agreed.

- **WDALC** – Next meeting is on the 13th January and mediation is on the agenda to be discussed. Also, Inspector Gross is due to attend.
- **Memorial Hall** – Cllr Beaney reported that both boilers have been repaired and the nursery is due to start back on the 7th January 2021.
- **Tree Warden** – Cllr Beaney updated that ESCC have cut back the trees on the unregistered land at the back of the castle. Also, the hawthorn tree which had fallen outside of Dukelands on Wallsend Road will be removed by Seaside Tree Care.

254. Public Excluded to consider quotes received for a valuation of land.

It was **RESOLVED** that in accordance with Standing Order 3 (f) and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be

transacted, the public and press were excluded from the discussion of the following item.

255. Holy Rood Valuation.

The report had been circulated with the agenda to councillors.

Members discussed the professional valuation and recommendations as stated in the paper.

Members proposed to initiate negotiations with the interested party of the land and to authorise three delegated Council representatives to carry out the negotiations on behalf of Council. These were the Chairman, the Chairman of Planning Committee and the Clerk.

However, some members wanted an amendment added to the resolution to include the neighbour within the negotiation. Thereby potentially securing a better price. However, the amendment was not carried as the vote was 3/8 against.

Council, therefore **RESOLVED to** initiate negotiations with the interested party of the land and to authorise three delegated Council representatives to carry out the negotiations on behalf of Council. Proposed by Cllr MacKinnon, seconded by Cllr Gibson. Carried 8/3 with Cllr Beaney, Pursglove and Lowton against.

256. Public invited back into the meeting.

The public were invited back into the meeting.

Date of next meeting will be on Tuesday 2nd February 2021 via zoom.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.38 pm.