

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BALCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY 2015 AT 8.00 PM IN BRAMBLE HALL**

Present: Cllrs Alison Stevenson (AS), Rodney Saunders (RS), Mike Talman (MT), Catherine Dennison (CD), Simon Greenwood (SG), Robin Williamson (RW), Kevin Bottomley (KB), Katherine Daniel (KD), and Peter Huxley (PH), who arrived at Minute Item **3496**

In attendance Rosemary Robertson (RR) Clerk to the Council.

3491. Public Participation

Mid Sussex District Cllr Gary Marsh handed over draft budget information and stated that there would be no increase in Council Tax in the forthcoming year. He spoke about the Mid Sussex District Council's position to "strongly oppose" the second runway proposals at Gatwick, mainly because of noise issues. Flight paths would now impact on Balcombe, although stacking movements would be moved. Gatwick have promised to avoid flying over towns but have not mentioned villages. MSDC will be debating next Wednesday and responses are needed by 3 February.

3492. Declaration of personal or prejudicial interest

Cllr Greenwood declared prejudicial interest in Items 14 Oil (**3503**) and Item 18 Neighbourhood Planning (**3507**), plus possible personal interest in Item 20 Lodge-lands (**3511**). Cllr Bottomley declared a personal interest in Item 14 Oil (**3503**).

3493. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Jarvest and Dearden.

3494 To approve Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 December

The Minutes (circulated) were approved & signed by the Chair as a true record.

3495. Clerk's Report on Matters Arising

3472 Dangerous parking on Bramble Hill has been referred to PCSO Jayne Milne and the owner of land adjacent to St. Agnes has been asked to trim hedges.

3435 Kemps Farm footbridge opening ceremony still not scheduled.

3487 BA/14/03840/FUL Land to the side of 36 Newlands Rd RH17 6JA Granted
BA/14/03292/FUL Dean Land Shaw, Jobes RH17 6HZ Granted

3489 Highspeed broadband is now in the village.

3490 The Clerk asked that Councillors notify her if they were not standing again.

3496. Financial

Cash Book Receipts & Payments for December 2014 were noted as presented and unanimously approved. The Year End reserve is expected to be in the region of £45,000. RW presented a Draft Budget and recommended that the Precept stay at £60,000 which would mean a reserve for next year of £43,000. Cllr Saunders proposed that the Precept remain at £60,000, Cllr Stevenson seconded, PASSED.

Cllr Peter Huxley arrived during this item.

3497. Adoption of New Code of Conduct

The Clerk had circulated the new Code from MSDC which had not changed materially since the last one. Cllr Daniel proposed that this be adopted, Cllr Williamson seconded. PASSED unanimously.

3498. Request from Balcombe Football Club (BFC) to update the Pavilion

There was a requirement from the Football Association to provide a separate WC for the referee and BFC had asked if BPC were happy for alterations to be made within the Pavilion to accommodate this, possibly giving up a Store Room to facilitate it.

BPC had no objection in principal to alterations, but reserved the right to review any drawings. As far as funding is concerned it was suggested that they apply for funding from the County Local Committee, the MSDC Community and Economic Development Fund, and also approach BPC through the usual channels: they should seek to pay for some of the costs themselves through fund-raising or donated hours.

3499. Congestion during school pick up/drop off on Haywards Heath Road

Cllr Talman highlighted the problem of congestion on the Green which he had witnessed whilst trimming the willow tree. These problems would be exacerbated by the Penland Farm development. The problem was noted and AS indicated that off street parking had been allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan. The knock-on effect of traffic calming was viewed as a good thing.

3500. Yew Tree Farm/Kelsey House Footpath decision on adoption

The Clerk reported her conversation with Fiona Coveney, the Yew Tree Tenant, and highlighted a letter from George Back (agents for Paddockhurst) indicating that the adoption of the footpath would be looked on favourably if the footpath could be diverted away from her yard to alleviate the security risk which was posed by walkers coming through her premises. BPC agreed to actively support and promote the diversion in conjunction with the adoption of the footpath. It was also mentioned that this could be adopted as a bridleway not a footpath.

3501. Gatwick Second Runway Consultation and Balcombe Parish Council response

Information from MSDC had been circulated and it was agreed that the data and information that had been provided by Gatwick was imprecise and could not be trusted. Cllr Daniel was of the opinion that the MSDC response was strong on detail whereas the WSCC report contained no specifics. Cllrs had differing views; understanding the economic benefits but having concerns about infrastructure implications. It was resolved that RR would re-send Cllrs a link to the MSDC response and would ask all to vote on whether they supported, rejected or had no opinion on the MSDC position to object to the second runway proposal. This would form the basis of the BPC response which was due by 3 February. It was also suggested that we should advise the public through the website and Parish Magazine that this consultation was taking place.

3502. Vandalism in the village

A spate of vandalism in the village, especially New Year's Eve, had taken place with gates and road signs kicked in, cars moved and the salt bins tipped up. This had been reported to Jayne Milne and to the official police website, with an incident log number given. MT was mending the road signs.

Cllr Greenwood left the room

3503. Report from the Oil Exploration Working Group (OEWG)

Cuadrilla have made no attempt to clear conditions/informatives. A circular traffic management plan relating to the previous Conoco consent had been shared by the Frack Free Balcombe Residents' Association. Cuadrilla's last comment was that they had no immediate plans for Balcombe. Assuming that they would not risk scheduling anything in the summer, and assuming 6 months to resolve the conditions then they still have a year available. KB urged caution in dealings with the press and the public: people should be referred to the BPC website. Cuadrilla was currently focusing on Lancashire.

3504. Residents' Meeting issues from January, review of Surgery offering

There had been no requests in January and so a February date had not been scheduled. However AS had suggested that a March session be held to give information to prospective councillors. This was scheduled for Wednesday 18 March between 6.30 – 8.30 pm in advance of a Balcombe Parish Council meeting which would run half an hour later than normal. Each Working Group should produce an information board, KB will organise, set up and man, with KD co-ordinating displays (A3). RR will email prompts for deadline 9 March.

3505. To consider discussion with URC about long term lease of Bramble Hall

It was agreed that this should be a matter for the new council. The current lease is scheduled to expire 31 March 2016.

3506. Victory Hall Management Committee (VHMC) Update

RS would be presenting a new draft Constitution at the next meeting. RS would propose the formation of a separate Building Maintenance Sub-Committee. Julian Smith is the new prospective Chair. The importance of the relationship between BPC and the VHMC was stressed. It had been acknowledged that Bramble Hall had made no impact on their income. RS had made it known that the Victory Hall would always take priority over Bramble Hall.

3507. Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Draft Plan had been sent to MSDC and two pages of changes had been received which the team were working through. Consultation had therefore been delayed but was now targeted 30 January. MSDC are busy with the District Plan so will not offer help in the short term. It is hoped that consultation happens in February/early March.

3508. Facilities & Amenities

Vandalism already discussed but MT added that grills from drains were being taken up which posed a serious risk. The Village Green sign was found to be rotten and SG has kindly offered to donate a new oak post at cost for the repair. We are currently in dispute with SSE about an invoice for a lamp that has not been repaired, and may be an issue for UK Power Networks. MT and RR are trying to schedule a meeting with SSE.

3509. Rail Issues

The car park is much fuller, with only 10/15 spaces free, 10 cars remain on verges and Newlands still has an anti-social parking issue. RR to supply Rick Evans with tickets. WSCC have offered support with bollards/posts on verges, but cars are still there at weekends even though the car park is free at weekends. There are issues with the new timetable because commuters now have to change trains because of the disruption at London Bridge. This will continue for the next 18 months as London's rail infrastructure is expanded. Staggering the timetable has meant reduced delays if you miss a train. Eddie Toase has been responding to concerns about the ticket machine/cleanliness/office hours, and certainly the ticket machine is proving more reliable. AS drew attention to the fact that Balcombe is the only station which has easy access to the platform posing a risk for suicide. The absence of a manned ticket office may be a contributing factor.

3510. Traffic Matters

Newlands TRO for a single yellow line is now in formal consultation till 5 February and implementation is likely in the next 3 months if there are insufficient objections.

Gary Marsh has pledged assistance with enforcement in the early weeks. It was suggested that a ticketing campaign be repeated when it is passed. The damage to verges in Newlands should be made good by the contractor.

3511. Planning

14/04625/TCA Pippins, Oldlands Road, Fell T1 Ash – No objection

14/04640/TCA The Parish Room, Stockcroft Road G1- Group of Beech Trees - Reduce to a high hedge by removing 10ft. T1 - Remove the 3 lowest branches that are protruding into the paved area of the Parish Rooms – No objection.

14/04593/HOUS Lodgelands, Crawley Lane, Single storey rear extension, first floor extension, internal and fenestration alterations – No objection.

3512. Correspondence

W2 43/48 Newlands has caused at least two injuries which have been reported to WSCC – it was suggested that this be escalated to Helen Card, Bill Acraman, Gary Marsh; BPC believe it is out of spec. KD asked that Haywards Heath Footpath be dealt with concurrently.

O11 NALC are proposing to change the rules on the numbers of villagers who can call a village poll.

W7 There was an invitation to a Safer Sussex Workshop on Rural Crime – AD?

W6 The Facebook link to the Talk With Us MSDC page is now working

010 RW needs to sign the RBS Software letter

M5 Penland Farm was granted on appeal, documentation does not discuss traffic

M4 BPC Response to the District Plan available

3513. Exchange of Information

The Half Moon was congratulated on winning the Mid Sussex Times Pub of the Year competition. Interviews for the new Chef were underway.

Balcombe Station Gardens had been nominated for an Award; result in April

Poppy patch on the green would be discussed at the Gardeners' AGM in February.

KB informed Councillors that the Cricket Club had had a lawn mower stolen.

Victory Players in rehearsal for Noises Off by Michael Frayn.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.00 pm.

**THE NEXT PARISH MEETING WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2015
8.00 PM IN BRAMBLE HALL**

Signed.....

Date: 11 February 2015