

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BALCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 8.00 PM IN BRAMBLE HALL**

Present: Katherine Daniel (KD), Nicky Gould (NG), Lisa Greer (LG), Neil Lindsay-Stewart (NLS), Charles Metcalfe (CM), Alison Stevenson (AS), Sue Taylor (ST).

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

John Jesson & Graham Turner from Lindfield Preservation Society made representation on a proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to install signage to prohibit HGVs using local village roads, restricting them to A Class/Motorways unless local access is required. After further discussion a motion was passed for Balcombe Parish Council to support the TRO.

0076. Public Participation

West Sussex Councillor Bill Acraman apologised for his infrequent visits, he was happy to answer questions and wanted to give input into the discussion on Gatwick. *Paul Milton* highlighted the launch of the Balcombe Arts Trail on Sunday 20 September at 5.00 pm in St. Mary's.

0077. Declarations of personal or prejudicial interest

Cllr Lindsay-Stewart declared a personal interest in Item 8 Planning - 13 Oldlands Avenue as a neighbour of the property (0083).

0078. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllrs Flint (MF), Greenwood (SG), and Record (MR).

0079. Co-option to fill the vacancy on the Balcombe Parish Council

It was resolved to postpone the process for a few months until the skills sets of the present Councillors could be identified and a clear picture of what the new Councillor would be required to take on could be decided. Those who had applied and expressed an interest were thanked for their patience and understanding.

0080. To approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on 15 July & 27 July 2015

The Minutes 15 July & 27 July were signed as a true record.

0081. Matters currently being pursued, report from the Clerk

Cllr Gould and RR had met with Horsham & Mid Sussex Voluntary Action: this organisation can help find volunteers for projects, and offers advice and reasonably priced training. The expertise available on Trusts and governance structures may be relevant for the Victory Hall.

0032 DM/15/1902 The Old Granary, Paddockhurst Lane was withdrawn,

DM/15/2070 Woodward's Farm, Mill Lane granted

0055 DM/15/1348 55 Jobs – granted, DM/15/2645-Counters Cottage, The Broadway Change of Use from retail - granted, DM/15/2691 Woodlarks, Newlands Loft conversion - granted DM/15/1835, 1st Balcombe Scout Hut – granted.

0058 Balcombe's response to the District Plan has been submitted

0061 No further bonfire complaints so the Parish Magazine plea was successful

0062 Both Jamie Kirkman & Ros Thompson have thanked those who had nominated them for the MSDC award and had enjoyed the "inspirational" event.

0082. Urgent Matters

An email from Kirsteen Tidd has questioned the future of the Balcombe Surgery. MSDC Cllr Gary Marsh is meeting with the practice to investigate and Cllr Sue Taylor is happy to attend if this is possible.

Urgent pension correspondence had been received regarding the pension provision for all employees. It was noted that the Clerk was already a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme but the part-time Youth Workers were not registered through Balcombe Parish Council. In order to meet the Automatic Enrolment deadline it was necessary to pass a statutory resolution. It was therefore resolved that Balcombe Parish Council agrees to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, as administered by West Sussex County Council, and all employed members of staff are given opportunity to join.

0083. Planning

DM/15/3322 & 3327 Monks London Road Balcombe RH17 6 - Demolition of twentieth century two storey wing and replacement with single storey extension.

Internal and external alterations. No objection - BPC feel that the work would be an improvement to the external appearance of the house as regards the removal of the 1950/60s extensions. The new construction would complement and be more sympathetic to the original house. We trust that the Conservation Officer will pay heed to any material internal alterations to the older section of the building.

DM/15/3219 Oakland, Stockcroft Rd, Lift oak canopy by 2-2.5 metres – No objection

DM/15/3436 – 13 Oldlands Ave, RH17 6LY – Replace conservatory to rear with a single storey rear extension No objection provided the proposed single storey extension has a similar depth to the existing conservatory – lack of dimensions on the drawings did not allow for clarity on this issue. (*Cllr Lindsay-Stewart vacated the room during this discussion*).

DM/15/3580 – Oldland, Oldlands Ave - Proposed 2 storey side extension and internal alterations & new porch - No objection in principle however the height and proximity to Arosa (the neighbouring bungalow) could be overbearing and we suggest a lowering of the ridge height on the main building and a lowering of the ridge and eaves height on the garage.

DM/15/3603 - 15 Bramble Mead - Refurbish existing outbuilding -No objection.

0084. To consider organising an information session on Gatwick Airport

Cllr Taylor suggested that an information session would be useful to inform residents and Councillors about the pros and cons of another runway at Gatwick in view of the strength of the Heathrow lobby. It was resolved to organise this in the next few months inviting Gatwick representatives and organisations such as the Communities Against Gatwick Noise & Emissions (CAGNE) and WSCC. RR will flag up the forthcoming event in the Parish Magazine. West Sussex Councillor Bill Acraman agreed that the event will be useful: most local MPs are against a second runway.

0085. To discuss MSDC's approval of the change of use at Counters Cottage

It was resolved to write to MSDC to express disappointment about the decision which was based on the lack of facilities, and the higher importance placed on street scene over loss of a shop. RR will draft.

0086. To decide where to house the Village Defibrillator and to consider the purchase of a waterproof cabinet with key pad to house it

It is proposed to form a Working Group to look into the installation, education and liability questions surrounding the Defib. A second defibrillator in the station phone box is also to be considered. In the interim it was agreed that RR will investigate insurance implications and then arrange installation in the bus shelter (the current machine/cabinet is identical to that at Haywards Heath Town Hall). Councillors to

email interest to ST. Stroke information to be added to any education leaflet because Balcombe has the worst record for stroke recovery in Mid Sussex.

Cllr Gould left the meeting briefly during this time due to a car incident outside.

0087. Cash Book Receipts & Payments for July & August 2015

The Annual Return 14/15 has been signed off by the External Auditor PKF Littlejohn. Cash book receipts & payments were circulated and noted. There had been one large payment to SSE (street lighting maintenance contract instalment c£1200). Low August Income from Bramble Hall could be addressed by advertising next year.

0088. Review of budget 15/16

Cllr Taylor requested that Group Leaders review their budget requirements for 16/17 to enable the Precept to be calculated in January.

0089. Dog Bin Contract Update

MSDC are extending the contract to empty bins and have 50 available throughout the District. RR has met with David Harper MSDC to pitch for 3 bins at the School, on the HH Road/Barn Meadow footpath and on Mill Lane (sledging field). Residents are being canvassed about locations through the Parish Magazine.

0090. Mobile phone reception issues

Correspondence from Balcombe Estate has indicated that the problem is due to inefficient contractors. It was agreed that Cllr Metcalfe would write to the O2 CEO.

0091. To decide whether to register the Half Moon as a Community Asset

The Neighbourhood Plan has listed c12 sites as Community Assets. It was resolved to register the Half Moon as a Community Asset which will allow the community the Right to Bid should the owners decide to sell (Enterprise Inns) (proposed CM, seconded ST). It was also agreed that, as a courtesy, a meeting should be set up with the current holders of the lease (NG).

0092. To decide if BPC wants to renew the lease on Bramble Hall after March 2016

The Hall was nearly breaking even and had facilitated the continuing existence of groups like Balcombe Babies and Toddlers; there had been impressive growth in the booking figures and as an amenity it was valuable even without showing a profit. It was resolved that Balcombe Parish Council should renew the Bramble Hall lease and will enter into discussions so to do (NG proposed, NLS seconded). Cllr Greenwood has expressed willingness to aid in lease negotiations.

0093. To approve the re-routing of the No 37 Sussex Bus service through the village and payment of the associated cost of £60

Cllr Gould has been working to resolve the issue of buses being unable to move through the centre of the village because of inconsiderate parking. A new route has been agreed which will resolve this problem and will also offer an internal village service as a bonus. NG was congratulated. The Oldlands Avenue Association and Casteye Barn will be contacted as a courtesy. It was resolved to approve the re-routing of the No 37 Sussex Bus service through the village and to pay the associated cost of £60. The Ranger will be asked to help with signage.

0094. Balcombe Parish Council's response to the CIL consultation

BPC largely supports the District Council's proposals but suggest that there should be a higher Community Infrastructure Levy for Greenfield rather than for Brownfield sites in rural areas, to actively encourage the redevelopment of previously used sites. BPC also agree that a commercial zero rating is appropriate and welcome exceptions

for certain Brownfield sites but we question exemptions for vacant buildings (without viability testing) and charitable trusts. AS will submit the BPC response.

0095. Neighbourhood Planning

Consultation responses are being examined, the skateboard park has been removed from the plan and the burial grounds proposal may be revised. The process is ongoing. Terms of reference: Complete the writing of the Final Neighbourhood Plan for submission for Independent Examination by end 2015 including all supporting documentation: Consultation Statement, Basic Conditions Statement, Strategic Environmental Assessment & Sustainability Appraisal and the Design Guide. Continue to keep local residents informed as to the progress with the plan. Liaise with local land-owners with regard to the development sites and NP progress. Publicise Independent Examination and Referendum phases to local residents with the help of MSDC. Liaise with MSDC with regard to the NP progress.

0096. Oil

ST reported further licences have been released in Yorkshire and Lancashire. Terms of Reference: a watching brief.

0097. Health, Safety & Security

There have been thefts in Crawley Lane. Terms of Reference: to liaise with Neighbourhood Watch and the police and to report. Home energy events are being offered by MSDC to help people reduce energy costs/switch supplier.

0098. Young People

Youth Club has started again and there were 6 attendees. RR has distributed posters and fliers. LG needs another person to help; a creative and enthusiastic individual. Cllrs Record and Flint will be approached by CM. Once another Councillor is in place non-councillors can be invited to volunteer.

0099. Traffic Group

Reported problems are being chased. Terms of Reference: To address highways, traffic, parking and footway matters affecting the Parish. To explore options to progress improvements to reduce traffic speed, road safety and pedestrian safety and access, with special regard to the issues identified in the parish plan 2007. To work alongside the NP team to progress the aspirations for traffic, parking and pedestrian access within the plan and its associated infrastructure.

0100. Facilities & Halls

Terms of Reference: To maintain the assets of the Parish Council and liaise where necessary with outside organisations for the maintenance and repair of those assets. To manage and implement the village snow plan and liaise with WSCC for winter maintenance activities.

0101. Rail

Terms of Reference: To liaise with the rail operator in respect of the following: Service frequency to ensure it continues to meet the needs of commuters and other rail users; Office hours and manning, including ticket and car parking machines; Station access and facilities, including station architecture and heritage. To engage with the residents and other station users regarding the quality of services, activities of the BPC Rail Group and inform them of wider communication with/from the franchise operator.

Cllr Flint has been progressing issues with Eddie Toase but he is now no longer in the post and a replacement contact has yet to be identified.

0102. Rights of Way

Terms of Reference: Liaise with the Rights of Way (ROW) Access Ranger at WSCC - (currently Sue Philipson). Liaise with Landowners/tenants with regard to maintaining access/repairs to stiles and gates on footpaths/bridleways. Liaise with Volunteer Inspection Rangers – (currently Laurie Dunne, Alex Henderson & Ricky Fitzpatrick). Report to ROW at WSCC any maintenance/repairs found necessary to footpaths/bridleways surfaces and or furniture. Parish Clerk to be kept informed on all reporting correspondence. Make the local community aware of, and the reasons for, any temporary ROW closures. Encourage all users of the ROW network to act responsibly by following ‘The Countryside Code’.

RR & NLS have met with Sue Philipson – various repairs have been reported and attended to. Balcombe is due for repair work which runs on a 15 month cycle. NLS will attend a Friends of St. Mary’s Trust meeting on 28 September.

0103. Victory Hall Management Committee Report

Rodney Saunders has been working on re-writing the rules and governance structure, all committee members are now managing trustees with voting rights. A maintenance budget has been set. They want confirmation that the £4,500 grant is unconditional but NG has stressed the benefits of paying VAT bills to reclaim 20%.

0104. Correspondence

W8 RR asked that NLS complete the WSCC Walking & Cycling Questionnaire

W10 WSCC Resilience survey to be re-circulated to all

O17 NLS to complete the Forestry Certification Survey

O26 Community Warden briefing – Sue Taylor will attend 8 October

0105. Exchange of Information

ST is now Treasurer for the Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils. She will attend a meeting on Dementia.

KD reported that the Balcombe Road will be closed for 5 months in 2016 for water main work. Community Initiative Funding possibly suitable for Scouts or the Parish Room roof insulation project – RR to email Ron Parker. Haywards Heath Town Centre transport study was interesting.

CM said that the Garden Party awards were a real “feel good” session.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.48 pm.

**THE NEXT REGULAR PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY
14 OCTOBER 2015 AT 8.00 PM IN BRAMBLE HALL**

Signed.....

Date: 14 October 2015