

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BALCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY 2016 AT 8.00 PM IN BRAMBLE HALL**

Present: Katherine Daniel (KD), Nicky Gould (NG), Simon Greenwood (SG), Lisa Greer (LG), Neil Lindsay-Stewart (NLS), Charles Metcalfe (CM), Alison Stevenson (AS) and Sue Taylor (ST). Cllr Mat Record (MT) arrived late at Minute Item **0180**.

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

**0174. Public Participation**

Paddy Horne drew attention to planning law changes which allow development on brown field sites without planning permission. AONBs are exempt.

**0175. Declarations of personal or prejudicial interest**

Cllr Greenwood declared a prejudicial interest in Item 15 Oil (**0187**) and Item 13 Bus Route as shop landlord (**0183**) - Cllrs granted SG dispensation to stay in the room whilst the implications of the bus route and roadworks on the shop were discussed. Cllr Taylor declared a prejudicial interest in Item 7 Planning (Abercorn) (**0180**).

**0176 Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Martin Flint (MF).

**0177. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 December 2015**

The Minutes 16 December were signed as a true record.

**0178. Matters currently being pursued, report from the Clerk**

**0157** DM/15/4588 School House, London Road and DM/15/3896 Elkanah, Deanland Road chalet bungalow granted.

**0162** Proposed costs for the audit procurement service are in line with current rates

**0163** Claire Tester at MSDC has acknowledged our response to the District Plan Focused Amendments consultation.

**0172** Thanks were extended to AS for updating the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

**0173** The Practice Manager at Ouse Valley Practice is being chased for a meeting Dates for BPC meetings are set to avoid History Society meetings.

The Annual Parish Meeting has yet to be scheduled (between 1 March – 1 June)

**0179. Urgent Matters**

In view of the Haywards Heath Road closure and impact on the village businesses it was agreed to fund two banners (church layby and Newlands verge) to say “Balcombe Businesses Open as usual,” at an approximate cost of c£150 each. RR will suggest to the individual businesses that they can put their own signage up on the green. KD will design the banners and get a price.

*Cllr Taylor left the meeting*

**0180. Planning**

*DM/15/5094 - Abercorn, Stockcroft Road* - Proposed single storey rear extension and proposed single storey detached workshop to rear of existing dwelling – We have no objection to the single storey extension but would ask that the height of the workshop be reduced in the interests of good neighbourly relations.

*Cllr Taylor re-entered*

*DM/15/5009- 9 Combers* - Replacement single storey front extension with alteration to extension roofline plus internal alterations & energy efficiency measures - Whilst we admire the proposed design we note that it is not in keeping with the street scene which is harmonious at present.

**0181. To consider the funding of a Rubbish Freighter at a cost of £312.72**

It was agreed to fund the Rubbish Freighter (£312.72) on Sunday 19 June.

**0182. Report from Defibrillator Working Group**

Karin Schulte was introduced and thanked for her work on the Defib project. ST reports that the Victory Hall is an unsuitable location so two alternatives are being pursued – Threads wall or Bramble Hall. RR will contact the United Reformed Church, and Isabel Gordon will be approached (SG would support his tenant). A short film showing the operation of the machine was shown. When it is installed there will be training in the Victory Hall and a leaflet drop to each household. ST will relocate the machine from the Pub to the Club in the interim and the ambulance service will be informed.

**0183. To discuss the impact on businesses of the rerouting of the bus and the Haywards Heath Road closure**

There have been letters of complaint from Oldlands residents about the possible damage caused by buses. Balcombe Stores have written, noticing a down turn in business as a result of the new route. Maybe an Extraordinary Meeting could be held for all interested parties to discuss the pros and cons of the changed bus route. Positive comments are being received from the bus users. BPC met with the Chair and Secretary of the Oldlands Avenue (Balcombe) Maintenance Association, and Councillors are meeting with WSCC Highways and will seek advice on the potential damage concerns, plus the central village problems which have initiated the route change. The annual Oldlands Avenue inspection is due in April which will provide feedback on the rate of wear and tear on the road. If it is discovered there is additional “wear and tear” BPC could consider a grant to help with repair work. Gary Stimson made representation on the perceived negatives for Oldlands residents and a suggested alternative route. Susie Horne spoke about the buses speeding; NG will ask the bus company to keep their speed under 20 mph. The shop and Post Office loss of business is a concern. Short term the banners and Balcombe First article should help. A working party could look into how to help our businesses (MR volunteered) and this could be a subject for the Annual Parish Meeting.

**0184. To set the Precept for 2016/17**

ST explained that our reserves are growing. With the prospect of services being withdrawn, major traffic projects in the village centre, and possible capping CM proposed that the Precept be maintained at £60,000 this was agreed.

**0185. Cash Book Receipts & Payments for December 2015**

Cash book receipts & payments were circulated and noted. Coding of some accounting items will be adjusted next year (Recreation Ground, Lighting).

**0186. To ratify the decision to transfer £50,000 into a Lloyds Bank Account**

RR still investigating because Lloyds will not allow a “sleeping account,” the number of transactions necessary will be ascertained.

*Cllr Greenwood left the meeting*

**0187. Oil**

DrillOrDrop has produced a round-up of the oil and gas sites that may see action in 2016: Balcombe’s site remains “suspended;” Cuadrilla is required to establish a residents’ forum and work must begin by May 2017; the site must be restored within six months of the start date. This document will be put on the BPC website.

AS reported that her contact at Cuadrilla had said “we are busy in Lancashire you’ll be glad to know.”

ST also drew attention to the methane leak in California at Porter Ranch which has been declared a national emergency with areas being evacuated.

*Cllr Greenwood re-entered*

**0188. Facilities & Amenities (Halls)**

A meeting with the URC to discuss the Bramble Hall lease has been set up. The carpets were cleaned over Christmas. A lighting issue is currently being dealt with. A possible booking from the Church may expedite the need for blinds, and a dongle could sort out internet issues as it was decided that it was not worth the expense of installing a phone line. MR suggested that expertise within the village could help local businesses so a Working Group including these experts would be desirable. A business forum will be organised to enable dialogue to start. Registering village assets will go on next month’s Agenda.

**0189. Rights of Way**

A fallen branch has been removed on the London Road. RR will speak to Jamie Kirkman about trees on the Haywards Heath Road. Faulty stiles should be reported to the landowner. Greentrees Bridleway resurfacing is still a contentious issue with a court case possible. Work on historic footpaths is progressing. St. Mary’s Trustees - improvements for the West end of the Church are out for tender and work should start this year.

**0190. Victory Hall Management Committee Report**

NG proposed that the Victory Hall fall in line with other village organisations in applying for funding for specific projects. At present the survey funded by BPC to project needs and create a rolling plan for maintenance is not being implemented. It was agreed that BPC would only accept applications for funds for specific projects on the basis of a forward plan being in place formulated from the Council funded survey.

**0191. Correspondence**

**06/W2** KD to attend the Devolution (W & E Sussex, Surrey) workshop 11 March

**010** The Church are planning an event 12 June to celebrate the Queen’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, BPC is not planning any conflicting event and will offer support

**011** RR has asked for clarification on SSE offer of new service

**W3** Winter FAQs will be forwarded to the Ranger

**W6** Pensions Auto-Enrolment for Youth Workers being dealt with

**013** Current grass cutting fees compare favourably to a recent alternative quote

**019** The Ranger will be asked to investigate the Recreation Ground path drains

**0192. Exchange of Information**

Annual Meeting – SG suggested a talk from the Ambulance/Fire Service. A business forum giving shops an opportunity to promote themselves was also suggested.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.32 pm.

**THE NEXT REGULAR PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY  
17 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 8.00 PM IN BRAMBLE HALL**

Signed..... **Date: 17 February 2016**