

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BALCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 8.00 PM IN BRAMBLE HALL**

Present: Katherine Daniel (KD), Martin Flint (MF), Nicky Gould (NG), Lisa Greer (LG), Neil Lindsay-Stewart (NLS), Charles Metcalfe (CM).

Cllr Mat Record (MT) arrived late during Minute Item **0193**

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

0193. Public Participation

Cllr Bill Acraman asked BPC to make representation to Natural England in support of surfacing work to the Greentrees Bridleway to make it fit for horses; WSCC money is available for the work. NLS will draft a response and individual councillors are requested to do the same.

Gary Stimson asked about bus damage in Oldlands/Newlands, the results of the inspection and the progress of a new bus route. NG said that the Oldlands inspection is not due until April (commissioned by Oldlands Avenue Maintenance). The first/last bus will be diverted down Bramble Hill from April meaning one less bus each way along Oldlands. A new route is not being pursued.

Malcolm Kenward referred to recent emails from house buyers nervous about Cuadrilla and he believed that one home owner had reduced his price. He expressed regret that the vacancy for the Councillor was not decided democratically by co-opting the last person on the list after the election.

Paddy Horne referred to the recent flow testing at Horse Hill and a document from UKOG Plc who mention multi-well pads and drilling taking place for c3 years.

0194. Declarations of personal or prejudicial interest

Cllr Record declared a personal interest in Item 7 Planning (**0198**) as a neighbour of Elkanah, Deanland Road.

0195 Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllrs Alison Stevenson (AS) and Sue Taylor (ST)

0196. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 January 2016

The Minutes 13 January 2016 were signed as a true record.

0197. Matters currently being pursued, report from the Clerk

0179 Businesses Are Open Banners are up and were very well received

0186 A new bank account is progressing

0180 DM/15/5009 9 Combers was passed despite our design comments

0191 Devolution workshop was cancelled

0198. Planning

DM/16/0171 6 Foxwells - Two storey side extension and single storey front extension – No objection but would ask that the side window facing 8 Foxwells is opaque
DM/15/5038 Dean Land Shaw Jobs - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 5 detached houses - We object to the new design, re-sizing and re-orientation of Plot 1 because of the impact on the adjacent property, Ashdown; we have already objected to the felling of the apple tree between the properties because of screening issues and this new plan is imposing. We also object to the re-orientation of Plot 3 which necessitates a Walnut tree being felled which we objected to in our response to application DM/15/4561. We welcome the change to Plot 2 and 5 having their own separate garages. However we question whether there is sufficient off-road parking, in addition to the garage space, for some of the plots. We ask that street lighting is designed to avoid light spill onto the gardens of Oldlands and Stockcroft Road.

DM/16/0191 Elkanah, Deanland Rd - Three oaks reduce by 3m. Oak reduce by 2.5m. Oak reduce by 2m. Ash reduce by 3m – No objection

DM/16/0222 2 Box Cottages, High Street - Create new driveway access in keeping with surrounding area – No objection but request hedges are planted in the gap.

DM/16/0155 13A Newlands – Retain the use of the property as a self-contained dwelling. This is an application to establish whether the development is lawful. This will be a legal decision where the planning merits of the existing use cannot be taken into account - Whilst we cannot make judgement on the legal issues we believe that 13a Newlands was a separate residence used by an aged couple who lived independently from family in the neighbouring property.

DM/16/0201 Forest Farm, Paddockhurst Lane – Conversion of redundant farm building (old granary) into a 1 bedroom dwelling - The new plans submitted are still overly domesticated in external appearance. We would want any design to retain as much of the original character and look of the existing building as possible.

DM/16/0337 Little Colliers, Mill Lane - Provision of secondary double glazing to four ground floor windows - No objection

DM/16/0509 High Trees, Oldlands Ave – Oak (T1) reduce by 2m – No objection

0199. Cash Book Receipts & Payments for January 2016

Cash book receipts & payments for January were circulated and noted. There was nothing unusual except £130 for Bramble Hall carpet cleaning: this has been successful which negates the need for new carpets. Blinds are being investigated. There is now £86,000 in the bank and we are well within budget for the year.

0200. Greentrees bridleway progress and the need for additional surfacing

It was agreed that NLS will draft a letter to Natural England to ask for resurfacing.

0201. To consider the recruitment of a New Councillor

It was agreed to launch the process to Co-opt a new Councillor. The need for formal process prevented the appointment of the last on the list at the last election.

0202. To consider a grant of c£200 to Tiggers Pre-School

It was agreed to give Tiggers c£200 towards new uniforms.

0203. To consider a grant of £400 to Handcross Community Bus

Cllr Gould proposed that a grant of £400 be paid to Handcross Community Bus (MF seconded), passed.

0204. To consider sponsorship of a Neighbourhood Watch social event c£80

It was unanimously agreed to sponsor the event and Councillors praised the team.

0205. Report on the Redrow consultation on Penland farm

Several Councillors had attended: the downsizing and repositioning of the Penland roundabout would be advantageous for Balcombe but undoubtedly the proposal for c230 houses would have significant traffic implications. We should actively seek CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) money from it to fund traffic calming here. KD expressed concern that the Highways input had been ill-conceived and incorrect. Section 106 money should also be available for specific projects.

0206. The current status of the Half Moon pub

The Half Moon lease is on the market, free of tie and with no “change of use.” BPC has listed it as an Asset so we have 6 weeks to decide if we want to bid. RR will speak to the owners at the Victory and MR will investigate further.

0207. To consider the report from Balcombe Youth Club about its future viability

The Youth Club Committee has met to consider the dwindling numbers (in 2016 only one/two and once 0 attendees). They have resolved to carry out research to find out if there is a demand for the service and what form it should take. There is competition in the village from different clubs, post school activities and although Bolney had a successful Club but this was a scarcity amongst other villages. The cost of running the Club with reduced numbers is also a consideration but “success” is difficult to quantify. The Youth Workers themselves have suggested a suspension. It was agreed to temporarily suspend the Youth Club with a view to carrying out research and drafting a strategy for the future to present back to BPC in May. A cash competition to encourage participation in the research exercise was suggested and a figure of £225 was agreed.

0208. To discuss the impact of rerouting the bus and the Haywards Heath Rd closure

There had been one further letter of complaint. It was agreed to pay £60 to amend the route at the beginning and end of the day so that it missed Oldlands. Cllr Gary Marsh said that Oldlands/Newlands was not fit for buses and he had received many verbal complaints which he will follow up. NG, AS and RR met with WSCC in January and an aspirational centre village plan was needed to discourage anti-social parking and alleviate traffic concerns. Short term AS was working on APL (Access Protection Lines). Facts were called for in advance of any new discussion on the bus.

0209. Report from Defibrillator Working Group

It was agreed to install the Defibrillator on Bramble Hall as the Working Group has recommended. Training could be Sunday afternoon.

0210. Neighbourhood Planning

MSDC are about to release the Plan to Independent Examination. AS had noted. "I suspect few of the councillors present today could possibly fully appreciate what a long journey this has been or how much of a part Katherine has played to get this finished. She joined a large group of non-councillors on the neighbourhood plan working group 4 years ago, that group dwindled by the week but typical to form half way through she joined us as a fully-fledged councillor and continued to push this plan from inside! Not only is she one of the most dedicated and consistently focused people I have yet to meet she is also intelligent, skilled, diplomatic and decisive. We would not have finished this without her of that I have absolutely no doubt. Her contribution simple cannot be measured ensuring hopefully a good poll result and a secured development plan for our village. Thank you Katherine".

AS's note also extended thanks to Carol Jarvest, Catherine Dennison, Peter Huxley, and Sarah Nicholson: plus Wendy from CABE, ST and NG. Cllr Marsh insisted that MSDC had not ignored Crawley Down's Neighbourhood Plan in a recent decision.

0211. Oil

Horse Hill flow testing has produced encouraging results which is not good news for Balcombe. The initial flow rates are higher than Conoco achieved in Balcombe in 1986. Cuadrilla are trying to overturn the decision to refuse planning permission to drill and test frack in Lancashire. The Secretary of State is putting pressure on the Chancellor to fast-track fracking, directly conflicting with Localism.

0212. Facilities & Amenities (Halls)

The decision to renew the Bramble Hall lease for 5 years with a small rent increase from October 2018 (£500 per annum) plus a break clause at 2.5 years was ratified.

The Southern Synod are pleased with the general condition of the hall.

0213. Victory Hall Management Committee Report

It is decided that the VHMC will be responsible for the outside of the building and the Balcombe Club will pay a contribution in kind by being solely responsible for cleaning, water, sewerage etc. There may be an underspend of the BPC grant this year so NG proposed (CM seconded) that next year BPC should offer a grant of £5,000 subject to the condition that specific projects are identified and the money is allocated against these: this was agreed. Next year they do have a defined work plan.

0214. Rail

MF & MR have met with Ian Wragg the Station Manager and although there is no opportunity to consult on the current timetable there may be an opportunity in December, MF will chase. The station is due to be repainted and ticket office opening may improve if dedicated Balcombe staff are recruited, the toilet may be decommissioned. The status of the 9.22 am train has been resolved. There is a need to promote the station for walkers etc to increase footfall. Cllr Marsh suggested taking to Gordon Reay, the Economic Development Officer.

0215. Rights of Way

It was agreed to make representation to Natural England about the Greentrees Bridleway. The Westup stile had been mended. St. Mary's Trustees are securing tenders for the church improvements and may apply for a BPC grant. There was an opportunity to input cycling and walking improvements through Sustrans (RR to email link). A cycle lane at the Threads junction may be a consideration.

0216. Correspondence

M2 MSDC are checking that Fetes etc have appropriate licensing. A TENS Licence is for 500 or less, if there are more then a Premises Licence is needed. It was uncertain whether Balcombe Fete ever had 500 people attend. Cllr Marsh will investigate further with Paul Thornton the Licensing Officer

O21 A pelican crossing for the school was requested but it was hoped that 5 parents would volunteer to do the remaining lollipop duty slots.

0217. Exchange of Information

NG will meet with the Community Payback Team to secure work on various projects around the village.

The Estate had helped to trim trees to light the Haywards Heath Road footway.

A storeroom handle has been repaired at the Pavilion. The Football Club are installing a Referee's toilet to comply with league requirements (permission already granted).

RR to forward the Survey for the Community Support Teams again (**W3**).

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.28 pm.

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

Signed..... **Date: 16 March 2016**