

Berwick Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Berwick Parish Council held on the Thursday 24th March 2022 at 7pm in Berwick Village Hall.

75. Present

Cllrs K Winter (Chairman), S Carnie, V Burrough, T Mills, D Robinson and B Smith.

County Councillor N Bennett, Alison Stevens (Clerk) and three members of the public were also in attendance.

76. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillor D Watts.

77. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests.

The meeting was then suspended.

78. Report from the County Councillor

County Councillor Bennett has been approached by residents in Common Lane. They are concerned about the amount of traffic speeding there and would like the speed limit reduced to 40mph. He offered to make some enquiries on their behalf. The installation of a new water main, and new cabling for the solar farm should help to slow traffic down in the meantime.

79. Report from the District Councillor

There was no report from the District Councillor on this occasion.

80. Public Question Time

The Chairman began by asking who wanted to speak and said questions will be organised so everyone has the chance to ask theirs and any clarification requested will be made at the end.

A resident asked why there are no dog mess signs on the Berwick Way when the previous minutes said otherwise. Councillors agreed there is a problem with dog mess there too and will look into providing another dog bin there, at the next meeting. The Clerk will order some new signs which will be fitted in the meantime and the minutes will be amended accordingly.

The meeting was then re-opened.

81. Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 27th January 2022 (previously distributed).

The draft minutes were amended to show;

Minute 62 – First Aid should read Firlle Estates.

Minute 74 – The signs have been fitted at the latter not the former.

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The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 27th January 2022 were then confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

82. Clerk's Report on Matters Arising from those Minutes

At the last meeting residents asked for the hedge between 14 Downsway and Berwick Garage to be tidied up. Firlle Estates were contacted and have replied to say the hedge has been cut with the exception of a few areas which can't be reached easily because the ground is too wet at the moment.

The Parish Council is still waiting for an update on the gate opposite Beacon View but will keep chasing Firlle Estates for an update.

83. Planning Applications

- i. The following planning applications were considered;

WD/2022/0468/F - 4 Downsway, Station Road, Berwick, BN26 6TD - Single storey rear extension and garage conversion with raised roof to allow for insulation – There were insufficient documents on the Wealden District Council website for the Parish Council to make an informed decision at this stage so the councillors agreed to submit a formal comment when they have more information.

- ii. Village Plan Survey

The following suggestions will be included on future agendas;

- 1: Improvements to existing play areas and facilities for older children
- 2: Traffic calming – including speed cameras and speed bumps
- 3: Improve the cycle route to the reservoir
- 4: Pavements – better maintenance required
- 5: Better connectivity needed in parts of the parish
- 6: Reduce noise and light pollution – look into Dark Skies Policies
- 7: Emails – consider using WhatsApp and Village Magazine more

Councillors will take the following into account at Parish Cluster Meetings and when considering Planning Applications.

Residents said they would like;

- 1: Localised, small 2-3 bedroom housing with a slight preference for affordable housing for local people.
- 2: To maintain/protect rural character and existing settlement boundary
- 3: To improve and preserve biodiversity and habitats
- 4: Better parking provision at new dwellings
- 5: Building developments limited to individual plots and small developments. There were strong objections to large developments
- 6: Medical facilities – doctors and dentistry
- 7: Better connectivity
- 8: Reduced noise and light pollution
- 9: Any future development to be in keeping with the rural character, scale and location of the existing developments

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10: A village shop

11: For it to be taken into account that more people are now working from home

84. Reports from Parish Councillors

i: Berwick Playing Field – At the last meeting Councillors resolved to buy two new goalposts and asked the Clerk to arrange for them to be fitted. The Parish Council's maintenance contractor has since said that he thinks it might be possible to repair the existing goal posts so Councillors will look into this option instead.

It was also noted that the Bookings Secretary for the Recreation Ground is resigning at the end of the year so Councillors resolved to advertise for her replacement in the Parish News. Berwick Parish Council would like to thank Mrs Hayward for doing such a sterling job.

ii: Highways and Transport Matters

- a. Berwick Parish Council understands that before the County Council will agree any traffic calming measures it (the Parish Council) will need to commission a Feasibility Study. Councillors agreed to commission a study at a cost of £500 plus VAT and submitted the following suggestions;
 - i. Speed cameras in Station Road
 - ii. Speed bumps in Station Road and Common Lane
 - iii. Improved cycle route from the village to the reservoir.
 - iv. Chicanes along Station Road
 - v. Improved raised 30mph roundels.
- b. Councillors resolved to commission another speed survey in Station Road which they can use to monitor traffic speeds and volume in the meantime.
- c. Berwick Parish Council accepted an invitation from Firle Parish Council to jointly buy a Speed Monitoring Device and recommended Firle Parish Council buys one device for each group of ten parish councils who say they are interested. Councillor Mills will be the Co-ordinator for Berwick Parish Council.

85. Reports from Outside Bodies

- i. Village Hall Committee – There was nothing new to report from the Village Hall.
- ii. Cuckmere Community Bus (CCB) – The CCB service is now back to operating at pre-Covid levels. A new bus is expected soon and an electric bus is being considered. More drivers and a new Treasurer are still needed.
- iii. Tree Warden – All paths through Berwick remain clear after the recent storms. There have been a number of tree falls in the Brickyard, Ludlay and adjoining woodland, but these are not the responsibility of the Parish Council. Councillors resolved to pay for Mr Carnie to attend a Basic Tree Survey and Inspection Course which is being held at Ardingly in May. Some residents are still experiencing broadband connectivity issues as a result of the storm damage.
- iv. Cuckmere Community Flood Forum – The sink hole at 13 Downsway reported in the public session at the last meeting has now been reported to the Cuckmere Flood Forum and East Sussex Highways. The Highways Steward has been to inspect it and has asked their drainage team to carry out a further investigation.
- v. South Downs National Park – There was nothing new to report on this occasion.

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- vi. Parish Planning Cluster – Councillor Mills attended the Parish Cluster Meeting which was held in February. ‘Building up’ in Eastbourne was discussed but it is not considered to be an option as there is no demand for high rise properties in the town.

At the last Berwick Full Council Meeting Councillors resolved unanimously to support Chiddingly Parish Council in its effort to convince Central Government to modify its planning policies. 33 Parish Councils have confirmed their support so far and they have been invited to attend a meeting with the ultimate aim of getting the housing numbers in the District reduced. The Clerk has agreed to minute the meeting and Councillors Carnie and Robinson will also attend.

86. Finance

- i: Approval of payments and receipts – Councillors approved the following payments;

		£
101239	HMRC - PAYE	345.75
101240	Mass Media - Website	93.60
101241	A Stevens - Salary – January	460.06
101242	A Stevens - Salary - February	460.26
101243	ESCC Pension	359.26

- ii: Councillors resolved to approve the accounts to 28th February 2022.

87. Queens Platinum Jubilee

At the last meeting Councillors discussed ways to commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee and decided to ask residents if anyone would like to organise an event or has any events planned.

As a result, Councillors understand an event is being planned in the Village Hall and they agreed to consider making a financial contribution towards it when they know more.

Councillors also discussed planting a tree/s in the Recreation Ground and agreed to visit the ground to identify the best possible location. They will then discuss the matter in more detail at the next Full Council Meeting.

88. Assets of Community Value

Also at the last meeting, Councillor Mills agreed to ask both publicans how they feel about the suggestion being made to nominate each pub as an Asset of Community Value. He hopes to be able to report back to the next meeting.

89. Questions from Parish Councillors

The car which appeared to have been abandoned in the Village Hall car park has now been removed.

Councillor Mills said land has been roped off between Cranbrook Industrial Estate alongside the farm on the way to the reservoir and it is causing problems because it is blocking the path and is forcing residents onto the road. He will send photographs of it to the Clerk so she can report the matter to Highways.

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Councillor Smith said the road in Berwick Village is in a terrible state and has water running down it. The Clerk will report the issue to Highways.

Councillor Robinson announced his intention to stand down before the next meeting. Berwick Parish Council would like to thank Councillor Robinson for all his invaluable contributions during his time as a Parish Councillor and said he will be sorely missed.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.00pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:
