

Berwick Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Berwick Parish Council held on the Thursday 25th November 2021 at 7:30pm. This meeting was held at Berwick Village Hall.

41. Present

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

Alison Stevens (Clerk) and eight members of the public were also in attendance.

42. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor N Bennett and District Councillor D Watts.

43. Declaration of Interests

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

The meeting was then suspended.

44. Report from the County Councillor

County Councillor Bennett sent a written report which said;

'National legislation, policy and proposals

Government has recently published:

1. The national Net Zero Strategy [Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/net-zero-strategy-build-back-greener)
2. the Treasury's Net Zero Review [Net Zero Review Final Report - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/net-zero-review-final-report)
3. the Heat and Buildings Strategy [Heat and buildings strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/heat-and-buildings-strategy)

Government also has a number of consultations on climate-related items. Possibly of most relevance to ESCC is consultation on electric vehicles in which government is seeking views on whether to introduce a statutory obligation on local authorities and others to plan for and provide EV charging infrastructure ([Future of transport regulatory review: zero emission vehicles - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-transport-regulatory-review-zero-emission-vehicles))

The national Net Zero Strategy - headlines

- Power:
 - The Government aims to fully decarbonise the UK's power supply by 2035 via offshore wind and new nuclear.
 - Increase the cost of gas relative to electricity to incentive a switch to electricity.
- Transport sector (not sure what's new money):
 - £3 billion to create new bus networks and a net zero rail network by 2050.
 - £2 bn for cycling and walking.
 - A further £620m support for the purchase of EVs and installation of EV charging infrastructure.

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- Domestic sector:
 - start to phase out gas boilers (no new gas boilers from 2035).
 - £3.9 billion new funding for decarbonising heat and buildings between 2022 to 2025 (eg. boiler upgrade schemes).

- Public Sector:
 - £1.425 billion Decarbonisation Scheme. Not clear if some of this has already been allocated.
 - £295 million to enable local authorities to prepare to implement free separate food waste collections for all households from 2025.
 - Government will establish a Local Net Zero Forum to bring together national and local senior officials on a regular basis to discuss policy and delivery options on net zero, to help set clearer expectations on how central and local government interact in the delivery of net zero.
 - Continue to fund the regional energy hubs (in practice this gives East Sussex access to ¼ of an energy specialist for advice).
 - Government believes that over 30% of carbon reductions rely on local authority involvement to some degree.
 - No government plans to put any net zero statutory targets on local authorities, but this may change if government doesn't see enough progress.

The Heat and Buildings Strategy – mostly covers some of the same items under 'domestic sector' and 'public sector' as above.

The Treasury's Net Zero Review - headlines

- 1) It concludes that the cost of inaction significantly outweighs the costs of action and that UK climate action could boost the economy.
- 2) Government may incentivise the market to fund most of the transition to net zero, through carbon pricing.
- 3) Where government should intervene to address market failure is on specific technologies (eg. heat pumps) and to support lower income households, who tend to spend a higher share of income on carbon and are more vulnerable to adverse distributional impacts of decarbonisation. Higher income households should bear higher costs from the transition, as they tend to have higher carbon footprints.
- 4) The transition to EVs will erode tax revenues from Fuel Duty and Vehicle Excise Duty. No clear alternative set out.
- 5) The Treasury will continue to develop the Green Book and its supplementary guidance so that it includes the latest evidence on carbon appraisal.

Update on current ESCC external climate change activity – some headlines

1) Climate emergency road map: final comments requested from TES, Environment Board and Ds & Bs by end of October. Revised version (to include the new national strategies above) to be drafted by end of November, to be recirculate to TES etc for final review. Subject to partner agreement, a completed road map should be available in December.

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2) Sussex Solar Together: all the local authorities in Sussex are partners in promoting this bulk buying scheme for solar PV and battery storage to residents. Over 400 installations were completed under last year's scheme and over 7,000 residents across Sussex have registered their interest for this year's scheme.

3) Electric vehicle charge points:

1. SPACES (the 'Strategic Property Asset Collaboration in East Sussex') has agreed to be the forum for co-ordinating public sector planning and delivery of EV charge points.
2. We've appointed a specialist consultancy to assist ESCC to develop a prioritised first list of sites for EV charge points and support the procurement of a private sector provider of charge points.
3. We'll shortly start the recruitment process for an EV infrastructure manager post.

4) LoCASE business support: working with Brighton University, we've supported 25 SMEs so far this year to cut their carbon through energy audits and grants.

5) Fuel poverty: the East Sussex Energy Partnership, led by ESCC's Public Health team, has bid for a further £2.2m to help scale up the delivery of low carbon domestic retrofit to those in fuel poverty, for delivery up to end of 2022-23.

6) Community groups: ESCC recently ran a £25,000 CrowdFunding competition to support local community groups to develop and deliver grass roots projects to reduce carbon. 6 projects were selected from 22 entries, covering a wide range of activity (eg. food, land management)'.

45. Report from the District Councillor

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

46. Public Question Time

A member of the public asked;

- Why there appears to be a lack of transparency when it come to the A27 dual carriageway because his question (ie: why the MP is considering schemes when she has publicly stated she opposes them) was not recorded in the previous minutes and the ESCC Report fails to mention it supports an off line scheme. The Parish Council pointed out the off line A27 is one of 32 potential projects but only one will be considered. It is very much on its radar and when it receives notification from official sources it will go on the agenda. Residents were invited to set up a voluntary group and start pulling together views in the meantime. Anyone who would like to volunteer to lead the group was asked to let the Clerk know. In the meantime the Clerk will invite Mr Tom Beasley, Project Manager, Regional Investment Programme (South) at National Highways to a Parish Council Meeting in the New Year to update residents and answer any questions.
- Why the A27 was not on this agenda because some residents in the parish have received letters from National Highways asking for permission to access their gardens for an environmental search. Residents were given a two week deadline to respond which passed on the 15th November. The Parish Council subsequently wrote to National Highways and asked for an extension to allow residents more time to look into the matter and received the following reply;

'Thank you for your response on behalf of the Berwick and Arlington Parish Council regards to our land access letters that were sent out on the 26th October 2021.

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We understand the anxiety our request for access may have caused with the residents, we can assure you this is unfounded.

The project team is in the process of identifying the best possible options and once we have completed this stage of our work, we will share these options with you.

We value the feedback from local people and organisations and this feedback is closely considered as our work continues.

We will be having a comprehensive public consultation programme well before any potential schemes are considered for future funding by government.

These land surveys do not confirm that any particular land would be needed as part of any project.

We have set the 15th November deadline, because we need to carry out these surveys at this time so that we can account for seasonal variations in, for example, wildlife habitats.

More information about the A27 Lewes to Polegate scheme can be found at:
<https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/pipeline-of-possible-future-schemes/>.

Once again, thank you for your response, if you have further enquiries, please approach National Highways project team directly at: a27lewestopolegate@highwaysengland.co.uk

Another resident said she felt the 'Public Question Time' should be later on in the meeting. She also reported that the gate at the Berwick Way is still missing so the Clerk will chase the County Council up for an update.

The meeting was then re-opened.

47. Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 22nd July 2021 and the Extra Ordinary Meeting held on the 24th August 2021 (previously distributed).

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 22nd July 2021 and the Extra Ordinary Meeting held on the 24th August 2021 were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

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

There was nothing new to report on this occasion.

49. Planning Applications

No planning applications were considered at this meeting.

Village Plan Survey

The Chairman read through a summary of the results of the survey, a copy of which will be put on the Parish Council's website. A report of the findings will also be produced which will include the total number of responses.

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50. Reports from Parish Councillors

i: Berwick Playing Field – Councillor Winter said he will measure the existing goal post so the Clerk can order a replacement. The Clerk will also see if it is possible to buy a second hand one.

ii: Highways and Transport Matters – Councillors discussed the possibility of reducing the speed limit in Station Road, Common Lane and alongside Arlington Reservoir. They decided to look into the option of commissioning a Feasibility Study and agreed to think of suggestions on what to include in it at the next meeting.

51. Reports from Outside Bodies

- i. Village Hall Committee – There was nothing new to report on this occasion.
- ii. Cuckmere Community Bus (CCB) – The CCB service is now back to operating at pre-Covid levels. One bus has been sold, the new bus has been delayed and another has been ordered for next year. Newer buses mean less operating costs.
- iii. Tree Warden – There was nothing new to report.
- iv. Cuckmere Community Flood Forum – It is too early to say whether recent repairs have improved the flooding situation in the field next to 14 Downsway but its looking hopeful.
- v. South Downs National Park – There was nothing new to report.
- vi. Parish Planning Cluster – The latest Cluster Meeting was held on the 25th November. The SHELAA process was explained and those attending were asked for any information they have on any specific sites in it. For example Arlington Parish Council pointed out land which floods badly. The SHELAA is the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, details of land submitted for assessment can be found at; <https://maps.wealden.gov.uk/WebMap/> (Map Features – Planning Policy – click on the triangle). Councillor Winter declared an interest and did not take part in any discussions where land at Selmeston was being discussed. The updated site plan is expected to be out for consultation around Christmas.

Councillors said they have pushed to get the Cluster Meetings minuted and they share residents' concerns that the meetings are so informal. They also asked the Clerk to forward the results of the planning related section of the village survey to Chris Bending, Head of Policy and Economic Development at Wealden.

52. Finance

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

		£
101225	Champagne Trees – Grass Cutting	395.00
101226	A Stevens - Salary – September	460.06
101227	HMRC – PAYE	180.22
101228	A Stevens - Salary – October	460.26
101229	ESCC - Pension	329.96
101230	Cancelled	0.00
101231	Cuckmere Flood Forum – Grant	70.00
101232	Viking Signs – Dog Signs	46.90

ii: Councillors resolved to approve the accounts to 29th October 2021.

iii: Berwick Parish Council has now received the bequest, which is £5188.00 including interest.

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- iv: Councillors resolved to appoint HM Bookkeeping Services as their Payroll Administrator following the retirement of Mr Simon Goacher.
- v: Councillors resolved to continue with the existing verge cutting arrangements (Option 2) for 2022.
- vi: Councillors resolved the precept for 2022-2023 will stay at £14356.

53. Dog Mess

Councillors resolved to put 'no dog mess' signs at the Berwick Way and on the footpath which runs behind Berwick Station and Ludlay Drive.

54. Lighting at the Village Hall

Councillors resolved to ask the Village Hall if they will change their outdoor lights because they are causing problems for those who live opposite. They asked if either;

- i. The lights can be permanently switched off during the night, or;
- ii. The motion sensors can be adjusted or;
- iii. Dark skies lights can be fitted

Councillor Burrough said she will find out and report back.

55. Electric Charging Points

Councillors discussed whether or not to install car charging points in the Parish and agreed that, as most electric car owners are currently charging their cars at home and there is a charging point at Selmeston, they will defer the decision until all the current issues with electric cars have been resolved.

56. Questions from Parish Councillors

Councillor Burrough asked;

- For an update on planning application WD/2021/1777/F (Land to the west of Wick Street, Arlington). This application has now been Approved by Wealden District Council.
- If National Highways will put up signs warning drivers of the new road layout when they have finished. The Parish Council understands they will.

Councillor Smith asked the Parish Council to;

- Consider applying to nominate the village pubs as Assets of Community Value at its meeting.
- Ask residents whose properties border public paths to cut their hedges right back to their boundaries to make it easier for those with walking frames, wheelchairs and pushchairs to get past. The Clerk will put another article in the Village Magazine.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

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