

# BERWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Berwick Parish Council held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 7.00pm

This meeting took place in Berwick Village Hall

Present: Councillors Winter, Carnie, Barham, Burrough and Smith  
Lynette Kemp (Clerk to the Council) and two members of the public were in attendance

19. Apologies for absence – Cllr Tom Mills, ESCC Cllr Nick Bennett, WDC Cllr Alison Wilson
20. Declarations of Interests – There were no declarations of interest or changes to the Register of Interests
21. It was RESOLVED there were no confidential items on the agenda.

The meeting was suspended to allow the following:-

22. The report from County Councillor Nick Bennett is attached to these minutes at Appendix 1.  
The report from District Councillor Alison Wilson is attached to these minutes at Appendix 2.
23. Public Questions  
A member of the public reported that the verge between the reservoir and pavement in Station Road is very overgrown and walkers are forced to walk in the road which is very dangerous. The Clerk was asked to contact East Sussex Highways regarding the verge. Another member of the public reported that the Berwick Way was very overgrown. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotations for cutting the grass along the Berwick Way, and to research who cut the hedges along the Berwick Way in the past and contact again. It was noted that the hedges will not be trimmed until after 31<sup>st</sup> August.

The meeting was then re-opened.

24. Signing of the Declaration of Office of Vice Chair  
The Vice Chair signed the Declaration of Office
25. Minutes of the previous meeting  
The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024, were read, approved and signed by the Chair.
26. Clerk's report on Matters Arising from those Minutes.

Contact has been made with Network Rail requesting pedestrian access across the railway line when it is closed to vehicles. The request will be made each time the line is closed to vehicles.

27. Planning

- i. WD2024/1392/RM  
CRANFORD INDUSTRIAL UNITS, STATION ROAD, BERWICK, BN26 6TF  
Following discussion it was RESOLVED that there was NO OBJECTION to this application.
- ii. SDNP/24/02680/HOUS  
COMP BARN, WINTON STREET, ALFRISTON, EAST SUSSEX, BN26 5UL  
Following discussion it was RESOLVED that there was NO OBJECTION to this application.
- iii. No further applications have been received since this agenda was published.
- iv. To note any decisions made by Wealden District Council or the South Downs National Park Authority since the last meeting  
WD/2024/0915/F 1 Coppice Cottages, Station Road, Berwick, BN26 6TG -  
REFUSED
- v. The South Downs Local Plan Review documents were noted. The Clerk will contact Cllr Mills

28. Speed Survey

The results of the speed survey carried out between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024 were circulated before the meeting. It was very concerning that a significant number of vehicles are exceeding the speed limit, with some vehicles travelling at 55mph. The railway crossing “skews” the average speed and does not tell the full story. It was suggested that if commercial vehicles are seen to be speeding contact should be made with the head office. Speedwatch will be investigated.  
It was RESOLVED that the results of past surveys would be compared at the next meeting, and actions agreed.

29. Wick Street Festival - 29<sup>th</sup> August to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024

Information received from the organisers of the festival were circulated before the meeting. Councillors had NO COMMENT

30. Replacement bench on the Berwick Way

Councillors reviewed the report regarding the above. Two quotations for installation of the replacement bench were received. Contractor A - £400 and Contractor B – £250. It was noted that both contractors advised that the seat is placed slightly further forward to ensure a stable surface and to fix suitable anchors.  
It was RESOLVED that Contractor B be appointed to carry out the works, a suitable bench made of recycled materials was approved. It was RESOLVED that another seat should be placed on the Berwick Way, sites to be reviewed. The works will be carried out after the hedge cutting in the autumn.

31. Water Level Management Board (WLMB)

A report from WLMB was circulated before the meeting and included the following points:

- The rain recorded in 2023 was 65% higher than the 20 year average. With the last 9 months (July 2023 – March 2024) being 90% higher than the 20 year average. This is very tough for everybody, farms, grassland, infrastructure and the community
- The exit of the river to the sea has been OK, however overtopping has occurred 15-20 times since October.
- Unimpeded flow of the Cuckmere to the sea is crucial.
- WLMB preference is for the Environment Agency to de-main and pass responsibility to WLMB.
- The community needs to support WLMB as the key organisation in getting sensible maintenance work done at the right time of year.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to support the work of the Water Level Management Board in principle.

32. Reports from outside bodies

- a) East Sussex ALC Ltd – nothing to report
- b) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – nothing to report, the recent AGM was postponed.
- c) Village Hall Committee – nothing to report
- d) Tree Warden - apologies received for absence and no report received
- e) Cuckmere Flood Forum – nothing to report
- f) Cuckmere Community Bus - Cllr Smith reported that the thank you party for drivers was being held this evening. Work has already begun on the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations. One new bus has been added to the fleet this year with another planned for later in the year.
- g) SDNPA – nothing to report
- h) Parish Cluster – nothing to report
- i) Working Group Against Overdevelopment - nothing to report

33. To receive updates on the following:

- a) Defibrillator risk assessment – contact to be made with Cllr Mills
- b) Playground inspections – it was RESOLVED that Wicksteed should be instructed to carry out the playground inspection
- c) Playground upgrade – nothing further to report

34. Parish Maintenance

a) Verges

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should contact East Sussex Highways regarding the overgrown verge between the reservoir and the pavement in Station Road.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should contact Firlie Estates regarding the overgrown verge at the exit from the village hall car park. The Clerk to contact the Tree Warden regarding the reports of reportable invasive non-native vegetation close to the village hall and also request that reports of the same reportable vegetation on the A27 are investigated.

It was noted that the Wildlife Area sign needs replacing close to The Pound.

Following discussion regarding an email from a member of the public regarding the poor state of the pond in the village, it was noted that the pond is the responsibility of Firle Estates.

b) The Berwick Way

Following reports of considerably overgrown grass along the Berwick Way it was RESOLVED that the Clerk should obtain quotations for grass cutting. Hedge cutting would take place after the summer restrictions.

35. Councillors' areas of responsibility

The following Councillor responsibilities were RESOLVED

Roads and Transport - Cllr Winter

Planning – a request will be made to Cllr Mills

Playground and Recreation Ground – Cllr Barham to contact Cllr Mills

Village Maintenance - All councillors

36. Finance

- a) It was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of payments since the last meeting (22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024)
- b) It was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliations for May and June.
- c) It was RESOLVED to approve the accounts to date
- d) It was RESOLVED to approve the following grants:
  - i. Citizens Advice Bureau £200
  - ii. Cuckmere Flood Forum £80
  - iii. The Vanguard Way Association £50The Clerk was asked to provide a list of grants awarded in the past for the next meeting.
- e) Pension provision for the Clerk  
It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should be enrolled in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

37. Questions from Parish Councillors

The Clerk was requested to contact the Firle Estate Manager with an invitation to a future meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm

**Date of the next meeting:** 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024