



BUXTED

PARISH COUNCIL

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9 February 2021

MINUTES

Minutes of the REMOTE meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 9th February 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Blandford (Parish Council Chairman), Cllr Rose (Planning Chairman), Bolton (19.06), Cox, Coxon, Humphrey, Illingworth, Johnson (19:57), McQuarrie, Marshall and Roberts

Also present: ESCC Galley (19:18), Clerks Beccy Macklen and Claudine Feltham.

Public: Five members of the public were present.

01/02/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Moss.

02/02/21 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

All councillors declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Ionides Trust by virtue of the parish council being managing agents of the site.

Cllr. Rose declared a prejudicial interest in any matters relating to the land west of Church Road (Beechbrook Park due to having owned part of the application site

Cllr. Cox declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Buxted Allotments due to being an allotment holder.

Cllr. Illingworth declared a personal interest in any matters related to the St Margaret's and St Mary's Churches by virtue of being a member of the PCC.

03/02/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the REMOTE meeting held on 8th December 2020 were signed by Cllr Blandford as a correct record of the meeting. This was proposed by Cllr Coxon and seconded by Cllr Rose.

04/02/21 Planning applications considered:

Application: WD/2020/2689/F

Expiry date for response to WDC: 18th February 2021

Location: 16 BRITTS FARM ROAD, BUXTED, TN22 4LZ

Description: 1ST FLOOR TIMBER EXTENSION

Response from Buxted Parish Council to Wealden District Council: **no objections,**

recommend approval.

Application: [WD/2021/0074/F](#)

Expiry date for response to WDC: 17th February 2021

Location: FOWEY, FIVE ASH DOWN, UCKFIELD, TN22 3AP

Description: PROPOSED TWO STOREY SIDE EXTENSION

Response from Buxted Parish Council to Wealden District Council: **no objections, recommend approval.**

To consider any planning applications received after the publication of this agenda, where the details have been made public on the WDC website:

Application: [WD/2020/2641/F](#)

Expiry date for comments: 26 February 2021

Location: 59 GORDON ROAD, BUXTED, TN22 4LJ

Description: ERECTION OF TWO STOREY FRONT EXTENSION AND SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION.

Response from Buxted Parish Council to Wealden District Council: **no objections, recommend approval.**

05/02/21

Responses submitted to WDC:

Application: [WD/2020/0583/F](#)

Location: The Chantry, Spotted Cow Lane, Buxted

Description: Two storey side extension to house and quadruple garage

Response from Buxted Parish Council submitted to WDC: **No objection – recommend approval.** However, the Parish Council recognise that the proposed garage will be a large structure very close to the boundary of Bridge House. We would therefore request that a condition be attached to any approval that requires the garage and its usage be ancillary to the main dwelling house.

Application: [WD/2020/2402/F](#)

Location: Greystones Farm, Chillies Lane, High Hurstwood

Description: Conversion of an existing disused tennis court into a kitchen garden and swimming pool. Erection of pool house, garden store and greenhouse. Hard and soft landscaping to include a pergola, brick garden wall and fruit cages. An application for this work has already been submitted (application number [WD/2020/1113/F](#)) and approved on 14 August 2020. This application is for an alteration to that permission.

Response from Buxted Parish Council submitted to WDC: **No objection – recommend approval.**

Application: [WD/2020/2684/F](#)

Expiry date for response to WDC: 9 February 2021

Location: 46 MEAD LANE, BUXTED, TN22 4AS

Description: SINGLE STOREY CONSERVATORY TO THE REAR OF THE PROPERTY

Response from Buxted Parish Council submitted to WDC: no objections.

06/02/21

Update on applications previously considered by the parish council, and determined by the district council:

Application: [WD/2020/1144/F](#)

Description: conversion of existing bakehouse into habitable accommodation. Two storey

addition to main dwelling with first floor terrace and alterations to fenestration.

Location: Strawberry Hall, Cobdown Lane, Five Ash Down, Uckfield TN22 3AR

Update: **Withdrawn**

Application: WD/2020/2357/F

Description: erect a single storey, mono-pitch, timber, shiplap outbuilding.

Location: Quarry Cottage, Royal Oak Lane, High Hurstwood, Buxted, TN22 4AL

Update: **Approved**

Application: WD/2020/2438/F

Description: proposed rear single storey extension

Location: Sandrock Cottage, Budletts Lane, Coopers Green, Uckfield, TN22 3AE

Update: **Approved**

19:07hours – Cllr Rose finished chairing the planning part of the meeting, Cllr Blandford took over to Chair the parish council.

Cllr Illingworth joined the meeting at 19:09 hours

07/02/21

ESCC/WDC REPORT

Cllr Galley reported: ESCC Cabinet had met that morning and agreed to raise council tax by 3.5% which falls within the Government allowance without requiring a referendum. Cllr Galley had argued for a 1.5% increase but lost this argument. The Fire Authority are due to meet on Thursday and it is likely that its proportion of the council tax will be raised by 1.99%. However, the Fire Authority contribution is a small proportion of the household council tax (being less than 10%) with ESCC being the highest, followed by WDC which has chosen not to increase the council tax rate this year.

Coopers Green drainage – works have been carried out and Cllr. Galley is arranging a Zoom meeting with two local residents to discuss any further matters. Cllr. Humphrey has asked to be included in the meeting.

Cllr. Galley is conscious about the state of Limes Lane. The Steward and Cllr. Galley have visited but could not pin-point the exact problem so would request further information. Cllr. McQuarrie advised that at the top of the lane off A272 there is a burst water main causing issues further down the road. The main issue is the bottom of the road by KSV where there is a lot of flooding. The road is now being eroded back and there is a drop 3 to 4ft down into the stream. There is also a large hole at the top of Limes Lane.

Furthermore, the huge hole on the road from Coopers Green traffic lights to Budletts roundabout has reopened and is difficult to avoid. This has been fixed and it has washed opened again. The temporary fixes seem to be a complete waste of money as they keep refilling the same holes.

Cllr Cox reported that on Burnt Oak Road towards Hadlow Down the sides of the road have now disintegrated so far that it is now a single-track carriageway. This is typical of quite a few of the roads; the gullies have washed away leaving large drops either side of the road.

Cllr. Coxon reported that having driven north over the weekend, he would report that the roads in East Sussex are by far the worst he drove on. Cllr. Galley commented that he thinks that more money should be spend on roads, however most of the funding is directed towards social provision. With a low level of business rate income and a large proportion of older residents, pressure to spend funds on social care is a priority.

Between Buxted and FAD the pathway is starting to disappear again under debris. Is there anything we can do? At the last meeting, the PC agreed a contract with Countryman to cut the brambles and grass and the clerk would ask when the first

cut will be carried out and if the contractors are also able to uncover the pathway again. It was argued that this is supposed to be carried out by ESCC, but we tried for many years for this work to be carried out as per highway responsibility legislation, but it simply does not get done.

Members also referred to the correspondence received with regards the width of the pavement between Redbrook Lane and Toll Farm. The clerk advised that Highways had replied that they could not locate the site. The clerk has repeated the question.

Cllr Illingworth reported back from WDC that the Local Plan Direction of Travel consultation has now finished. The Local Plan Committee will be meeting to discuss the results of the consultation and consider the way forward and to start work on issues and options.

The joint waste contract has now been in place for a year and working far better than the previous contract.

08/02/21

CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS POLICY – FOLLOWING A RECOMMENDATION BY SSALC:

Following training attended by a parish councillor, a Vexatious Complaints Policy for Buxted Parish Council was drafted and circulated to all members for consideration. It was **agreed to adopt** the new policy. Proposed by Cllr. McQuarrie and seconded by Cllr. Roberts.

09/02/21

OUTSTANDING MATTERS

Mobile phone coverage: Nothing to report.

Public footpaths: Broken stiles - Some of the stiles and footpaths, where there is heavy footfall, are in a poor state given the increase in footfall and the extremely wet weather. It would be helpful if councillors, or any members of the public, can report broken stiles and other problems to the clerk, so this can be passed onto the correct authority. The clerk was asked to upload this information onto the parish website and to reiterate to the Ramblers Association representative who has recently contacted the council.

Trees:

Trees on driveway to Buxted Recreation Ground – consideration of quote: In October 2020, the chairman and clerk met with the owner of Classic Heroes along the access track to the recreation ground to discuss the large mature oak trees that are situated down the centre of the track.

We asked local tree surgeon to have an initial look at the trees and he suggested some emergency remedial work to one oak and that we should ask a tree consultant to carry out a full assessment of all the oaks.

This was carried out by Tim Laddiman of Broad Oak Tree Consultants in December 2020 resulting in recommendations for works.

Three quotes have been received which differ greatly in cost and were considered by members. It was agreed that Regency would be given the contract, but it would first be clarified that they carry appropriate insurance, they would clear the debris, and that we have written confirmation that if they damage the BT cable (or any other cables) they will be liable for the costs of repair/replacement. Proposed by Cllr. Bolton seconded by Cllr Coxon – **agreed**.

Road Safety: See minute 07/02/21 above.

Wealden Local Development Framework: Publication of the Local Plan - Direction of Travel Consultation Document - Due to time restraints, Buxted Parish Council responded to the consultation by 18 January. It was reported by WDC that approx. 1700 individual responses have been received from 340 respondents (both individuals and organisations). All responses will be summarised, and a report presented to WDC councillors in March.

Property issues:

Reading Room renovation survey – update: Following the December meeting the clerk contacted a local resident who is a building surveyor and who had offered to survey the building free of charge. This was carried out in January 2021 and the report was attached to the agenda and circulated to all members. It highlights a lot of remedial works that are required to ensure the structural soundness of the building for the long term. The first requirement would be to have a full Fire Assessment of the building. The clerk has obtained three quotes to date which our surveyor is more than happy to assess and make a recommendation.

Cllr. Roberts first wished to ascertain if the parish council wish to make structural changes to the building prior to going further with the project. The clerks confirmed that having spoken to a builder and the surveyor, it was not considered necessary to increase the size of the hall but to reconfigure and make better use of the space we already have.

It was therefore **agreed** that the hall working party would meeting online the following Wednesday and would invite the surveyor to join the meeting. The chairman has personally thanked the surveyor for such an excellent report which prioritises the order in which repairs needs to be done. We need to officially thank him and ask if he is prepared to work further with us. The report has been circulated to ‘stakeholders’ and the Buxted Players were quick off the mark to respond. The report has been made available, via the website, so anyone interested in the work needed to be done can be aware of the amount of work required.

Cllr. McQuarrie raised concerns with regards the contents of the survey and we should also look at architects that could assist with ideas and concepts for the best use and reconfiguration of the building.

Communications Matters: Website redevelopment update: The new parish council website is now fully up and running and can be viewed at:

<https://www.buxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

The clerk also updated that a telephone/broadband line has now been installed at the Reading Room, but not yet been tested.

10/02/21

CORRESPONDENCE

P1 Railway Line Parishes Committee: Request for a replacement for David Wells on the committee - no one at present.

11/02/21

FINANCE

- (i) to approve the payment list for January cheques numbered 4609 to 4619, total: £5888.04 + VAT and February 4620 to 4635 totalling £6484.69 + VAT. Proposed by Cllr. Rose seconded by Cllr. Roberts - **approved**.
- (ii) to approve the bank reconciliations for December 2020 and January 2021 – **approved** – Cllr. Roberts seconded Cllr. Illingworth
- (iii) to receive the RBS reports: EMR, Cash & Investment Reconciliation, Receipts, and payments to date - **noted**

- (iv) Accounts summary – circulated separately to councillors, to be attached to minutes – **noted**.
- (v) To note the Conclusion of the 2019-2020 external audit from PKF Littlejohn and any comments made - **noted**.

Comments from external auditors PKF -
On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGARS is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Claudine also mentioned that due to increasing request, at the next meeting she would be proposing that some regular payments be moved to direct debits such as WDC bin emptying, internet at the Reading Room etc

12/02/21

OTHER MEETINGS

Parish Local Plan Cluster – the clerk attended the cluster meeting remotely. Notes were circulated to all councillors.

13/02/21

MEMBERS QUESTIONS – Cllr. Coxon still has the tree guards from Littlewood Lane in his garden. It would be nice to be able to plant a tree and use them.

Cllr. Rose mentioned the fencing at the Ionides site should probably be taken down as it is looking rather tatty and someone drove over it.

After May 7th we are being advised that Government policy on remote meetings will finish. We are awaiting further clarification as to whether this policy is to be amended.

It was also commented that if WDC wishes to use the RR for the Police and ESCC elections in May that it would be down to the electoral officers to ensure all safety measures are adhered to with regards to any COVID restrictions.

14/02/21

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Please note the table at the end of the agenda/minutes named ‘East Sussex County Council Matters’, information type suggested by a member of the public.

The meeting closed at 20:08 hours.

East Sussex County Council Ongoing Matters

DATE RAISED	CASE NO	DESCRIPTION	OPEN/CLOSED RESOLUTION
21/12/2020	00529461	Britts Farm Alleyway – access through difficult due to blocking by vegetation and fallen fence	21/12 – passed to officers
21/12/2020	00527587	Switching off streetlamps in Britts Farm alleyway, or at least switching off one on 24 hours	21/12 – passed to officers. 26/1 – still being discussed by officers
21/01/2021	00539076	Blocked drain outside St Mary’s Church, Church Road, Buxted	25/1 – passed to officer to investigate
27/01/2021	00541323	Width of pavement between St Raphaels and Toll Farm Triangle, Buxted	27/1 – passed to officers. 9/2 – officers could not identify location they need a better

SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 2021 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING		
Figures from RBS Summary Receipts and Payments report & EMR Report		
OPENING BALANCE 1ST APRIL 2020	£310,045.00	
INCOME TO 30TH DECEMBER 2020	£138,580	
EXPENDITURE TO 30TH DECEMBER 2020	£131,733	
BALANCE	£270,313	
CLOSING BALANCE ON ACCOUNTS		
CURRENT ACCOUNT	£127,704.16	
YOUTH COUNCIL ACCOUNT	£545.63	
BUSINESS RESERVE (HALL) ACCOUNT	£3.85	
BUSINESS RESERVE (PLAY) ACCOUNT	£51,123.17	
CAPITAL RESERVES	£137,513.77	
TOTAL	£316,890.58	
EAR MARKED RESERVES (EMR)	BALANCE	NOTE ANY EXPENDITURE FROM EMR
ELECTIONS	£3,131.25	NONE
STAFF	£1,500	NONE
PLAY AREAS - RENEWAL	£14,850	NONE
PLAY AREAS - MAINTENANCE	£5,420	NONE
TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT	£6,000	NONE
COMPUTER AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT	£2,500	NONE
LEGAL AND VALUATION FEES	£5,000	NONE
PARISH HALL DEVELOPMENT	£9,496.00	NONE
ALLOTMENT DEPOSITS	£1,160	NONE
REPAIRS & RENEWALS (READING ROOM)	£26,500	NONE
CIL FUNDS	£11,325	NONE
NEW HALL FUNDS	£0	NONE
PLAY EQUIPMENT OFF SITE	£51,122.74	NONE
TOTAL EMRS	£138,005.11	
GENERAL RESERVES	£178,885.47	

Ionides Trust Update:

1. Scout signing of the surrender (old lease) and car park licence – these documents have now been signed however the Scouts solicitor has requested further costs of £2,000 from the Ionides Trust. Documentation from June 2020 has been returned to our solicitor which clearly sets out that extra costs requested at that time would be agreed on the basis that this fully discharges any obligations the Ionides Trust have in relation to any further Scouts costs and expenses in the future. A response is awaited but currently another deafening silence and not sure what the status of the legality of the lease is under the circumstances.