



BUXTED

PARISH COUNCIL

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10th January 2023

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held in Five Ash Down Village Hall on Tuesday 10th January 2023 at 7.36p.m.

Prior to the opening of the meeting Robert Horn and Faustina Bayo from Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) made a presentation to the Parish Council advising how their organisation is able to assist the Parish Council on a new hall project which includes a parish-wide consultation and how a new hall charity could be formed.

Present: Cllrs. Blandford (Chairman), Humphrey, Marshall, Roberts, Rose and Wilson.
Also present: ESCC Cllr. Galley and Clerks Beccy Macklen and Claudine Feltham.

Public : 1

01/01/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Coxon, Johnson, Illingworth and McQuarrie.

02/01/23 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 (Beechbook Park due to having owned part of the application site)

03/01/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2022 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

04/01/23 ESCC/WDC REPORT

Cllr Galley referred to the proposed changes in the national planning framework and the Government consultation which expires in March 2023. The timing of the consultation means no new local plan will be published until after the elections in May. However, he believes the proposals are generally positive, and as the district has already secured permission for 8000 houses, it is hoped that any further development will be limited.

Reporting back from his role in ESCC Cllr Galley referred to the current state of the roads but reassured that Highways have been working very hard to address issues. An extra £5m has been spent on the roads this year, however the question remains, is this enough?

The local government financial settlement at ESCC has been more generous than expected, with approximately a 7% increase which should just about keep up with inflation. ESCC are therefore likely to opt for 3% rise in precept with a further 2% for adult social care. WDC are likely to look for a 3% precept rise which he does not feel is necessary, but is met with the reasoning that the rise is required due to services being under pressure because of inflation.

Cllr Rose questioned Cllr Galley's statement that 'planning inspectors will no longer be able to override sensible local decisions. He questioned who is responsible for deciding what is 'sensible'?

Cllr Rose also asked if there is ever a chance ESCC will ever go back to having its own workforce rather than sub-contracting, as the roads have not been the same since this work was outsourced. Cllr Galley suggested that the weather (climate change) is hugely responsible for the state of the roads, but this does need to be planned for in the future.

Cllr Blandford questioned if it is worth reporting potholes. Cllr Galley fully supported that all issues are reported to Highways, and it is not a waste of time. Cllr Roberts commented that the criteria for filling potholes seems very regimented and seem counter intuitive and not based on common sense.

05/01/23 **NEW HALL/READING ROOM – UPDATE**

New Hall – Having listened the AiRS representatives, members discussed how they would be able to assist the council and how best to engage with them. A lot has changed since the village hall was first consulted on and granted planning permission, so it is important to first go back the community to ascertain what is needed. It was agreed to first ask AiRS to provide the parish council with a breakdown in consultation costs in order to decide the extent of any parish wide, completely independent consultation. Clerk to refer back to AiRS for costs.

Reading Room - Following the previous meeting the clerk replied to the planning officer and queried the requirement to sign the pre-commencement decision document without prior knowledge of the officer's report. Members were particularly worried that signing the document would commit any developer to conditions that cannot be amended/deleted. We were advised that the change to the way pre-commencement conditions were handled came about in October 2018, where legislation changes from the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 meant that the LPA had to obtain written agreement to any, prior to issuing a decision. The application preceded this, which is why our formal approval was never sought. However, given that the decision has never been issued, the new rules still apply and cannot be changed. Delegated reports are not publicised prior to the decision being issued – this is not unusual. The only way reports are published in advance is in the instance where an application is going to Planning Committee – but even then, there is no opportunity to change it. We were reassured however that applications to change or even delete conditions can still be submitted following the issuing of a decision notice.

The clerk therefore advised members that this document does need to be signed in order for the formal approval to be issued but it should not compromise any request to amend conditions in the future if this is required. **Resolved to agree to the pre-commencement decision document.**

06/01/23 **OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

Mobile Phone Coverage: Nothing to report.

Public footpaths: Nothing to report

Trees: The clerk advised that all reports relating to PC owned trees have now been received and quotes will be sought for the works recommended. The invoices for the reports are in the payments list.

Road Safety: Claudine gave an update to a possible village gates project advising who has a definitive list of all works and forms that have need to be completed for each site. Most villages would want white wooden gateways, whereas Highways are now insisting on plastic that look like wood. Claudine will report back again following an SLR meeting at the end of the month.

Wealden Local Development Framework: As per update provided by Cllr Galley in minute 04/01/23 above.

Property issues:

- **The Dene, Uckfield** – At its meeting on December 21st Uckfield TC discussed the possible purchase of The Dene from Buxted PC and then subsequently submitted a bid of £5,001 to the parish council. Proposed by Cllr Marshal and seconded by Cllr Wilson the bid was **accepted** on the conditions that an overedge clause is included and Uckfield TC pay legal fees.

Communications Matters: Emergency Plan – the clerk advised that the consultant continues to work on the plan, but it would be chased as no communication has been received since mid-November. Following a Facebook post asking for volunteers for certain skill sets, no responses were received. The clerk would repost.

07/01/23 **CORRESPONDENCE**

No priority correspondence.

08/01/23 **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

None

09/01/23 **FINANCE**

- Payments:** On the proposal of Cllr. Roberts seconded by Cllr. Humphrey, payments totalling £5567.66 covered by cheque numbers 4962 and 4969 plus direct debits were approved.
- Bank reconciliations:** The clerk had circulated completed reconciliations for November which were signed
- Noted:** RBS reports: Ear marked reserves, Trial Balance, Receipts and Payments, Cash and Investment Reconciliation

10/01/23 **OTHER MEETINGS**

No other meetings

11/01/23 **MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr Blandford raised the subject of the Kings Coronation. The clerk would approach both the Scouts and Bonfire Society to find out if they have anything planned.

12/01/23 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

It was agreed meetings would start at 7pm from next month.

The meeting closed at 8.48p.m.

DATE RAISED	CASE NO	DESCRIPTION	OPEN/CLOSED RESOLUTION
21/01/2021 ONGOING	00539076	Blocked drain outside St Mary's Church, Church Road, Buxted	25/1 – passed to officer to investigate
17/02/2022 ONGOING		A272/Budletts Lane is deteriorating again and needs resurfacing. It is now becoming dangerous when vehicles are trying to avoid potholes are going onto the wrong side of the carriageway. Etchingwood Lane is absolutely dreadful Millwood Lane is getting terrible towards the timber yard.	Roy Galley visited each site with Highway Steward
28/03/22 ONGOING	00673252	Licence application to install a dog waste bin on highway verge in Five Ash Down	28/3 – application for licence submitted to ESCC – confirmation received and passed to Licencing department 28/6 – No response received from Licencing so a chasing email sent August 2022 – site meeting with ESCC to agree location of new bin. September 2022 – Location agreed with WDC. Clerk completing licencing forms for ESCC November 2022 – Costing being agreed at PC meeting and payment for licence being made 8/11 – costing agreed and cheques sent to ESCC for licences
15/12/2022 ONGOING	00757234	Reported broken grit bin in FAD (nr junction with A26)	21/12 – email received from Highways advising the area does not meet the criteria for improvements! Slightly confusing as it is a grit bin not an area. Clerk will respond and ask for more details.

10th January 2023 - Ionides Trust Update:

1. Bonfire site – does it still need work – the clerk received the following information from the Scout's Leader: "we replaced the turf at the start of December, but I would imagine it will take into the spring to fully recover. We found lift the turf to be a challenge because the grass was quite long." The moving of the table tennis table was also queried, but we have advised that it cannot be moved at the moment, and we would have to establish how/if it can be moved.

2. AGM Reminder following Planning & PC Meeting 7th February 2023

8.53pm