

NORTHIAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council
held via Zoom at 7.00 pm Thursday, 10th December 2020

- 1) **APOLOGIES:** The Chairman reported that Ray Harrington-Lowe remained unwell in hospital and Mrs Valerie Ades, Beckley Parish Council's Clerk, was standing in for him.
- 2) **PRESENT:** Cllrs T Biggs (TB), P Farmer (PF), J Harding (JH), D. Johnson (DJ), R Maltby (RM), D Pratt (DP), P Sargent (PS) Chairman, Sue Schlesinger (SS), A Wontner-Smith (AWS). **In attendance:** County Cllr Ms A Davies (AD) and District Cllrs T Ganly (TG) and M Mooney (MM), Mrs V. Ades (locum Clerk) and nine members of the public.
- 3) **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None declared
- 4) **ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS** - To consider such other items as the Chairman decides are urgent and due notice of which has been given to the Clerk by 9:00am on the day of the meeting: None.

PS said he would bring forward agenda item 10, Sherbourne Valley, as he felt members of the public were here to discuss it.

- 5) **REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: - Maximum of 15 mins.** A member of the public questioned the legality of the alleged intention that the new owner of the land, known as Sherbourne Valley, would open it to caravans/travellers, probably before Christmas. **TB** said as a recent planning permission to build a house on the land had been turned down by RDC because the planners considered access to the site was dangerous, surely the same rules would apply for its use for travellers with caravans. **TG** said no application had been presented by the owner and it was unlikely one would be. He said an injunction must be in place before travellers go on land, but little could be done to stop a landowner allowing travellers on his/her land or to stop travellers occupying a site they owned. He added the matter was in the hands of enforcement and their legal officers. **ST** asked why there appeared to be one set of rules which applied to the general public to build a house on a plot of land and another set of rules for its use by travellers. **TG** said RDR was required to provide six pitches; four have been provided at Bramble Farm and an application for two more pitches at the north of Bexhill is going before the planning committee next week; so, Rother will have met its requirement. It was agreed that Northiam PC and Beckley PC (two councillors were present) would each write letters to RDC and its legal department questioning why an injunction could not be put on the land and why the same rules regarding their previous decisions for turning down applications for residential properties due to the dangerous access to the site could not be applied here. **PS & Beckley PC.**

- 6) **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 8th October 2020** were approved, adopted and signed. November's meeting was cancelled.

7) **REPORTS BY PARISH, COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:**

PS said there was no November meeting due to the Clerk's on-going illness. Two bungalows on SFF are now occupied. Remembrance Sunday celebrations and the carol service took place, both with a good turn-out. **PS** will send a message to Rod. The telephone box in Dixter Road has been purchased for £1. Members unanimously agreed **PS** should sign the paperwork. He had spoken with a man at Donsmead, who had asked about the work done as part of the 106, which was putting in the small children's playground. A couple of items have been erected and also a litter bin which was not part of the agreement. **PS** will ask Rother if they intend emptying it. In the Clerk's absence **PS** is monitoring and dealing with all emails. The accounts are now on-line and whilst **PS** has been looking after them, the auditor can access and check them. **PS.**

TB referred to Wilderness Close saying the badger run area has been cut back, but requires more work for which the PC is responsible. **PS** said he would get O'Connor's to look at it. **PS.**

TB said the signs for Horns Cross junction need to be put in place. **AD** said she would look into it. **AD.**

DJ reported his recent experience when calling an ambulance on 999. He was told there would be a five-hour wait and it could be an ambulance from Ashford or Sittingbourne. **AD** advised a better response would be to call NHS 111. **AD** would investigate the matter and report back. **AD.**

JH couldn't attend the recent SSALC meeting but has circulated the minutes.

AD Daryll Gale has circulated an email warning about the increasing number of Covid-19 cases, especially in Hastings. Infection appears to be coming into the county from outside.

MM reported a fingerpost at the top of Beads Lane requires attention.

PS.

8) **PLANNING:**

- a) **RR/2020/1587/P** – Ivy Lodge, Main Street – New detached house. **Refused by planning.**
- b) **RR/2020/1585/T** - 12 High Park Close – Removal of lowest branches of two elms. **Decided by planning.**
- c) **RR/2020/1693/P** – Hop Barn Field, Beckley Road – New access road & track. Many objections had been submitted. Members agreed the entrance/exit to the site was not good, the road was very narrow and Highways were concerned. Members agreed the site was on a very narrow road and Highways were concerned. Members could not support the application and **refusal was unanimously recommended.**
- d) **RR/2020/1797/L** – Frewen College – Replacement of flat roof & copingstones. **Unanimously supported.**
- e) **RR/2020/1794/P** – Crockers Farm House – Building operations to convert barn. **Requires more information and discussion before comments to RDC.** **PS/TG.**
- f) **RR/2020/1861/L** – Cleve Cottage, Mill Corner – Removal of chimney. **Unanimously supported on condition it complies with listed building regulations.**
- g) **RR/2020/1911/P** – Oak Avenue TN31 6LX – Electricity network alterations. **Completed.**
- h) **RR/2020/1908/P** – Willow Brae, Station Road – 2 x first floor extensions. **Unanimously supported**
- i) **RR/2020/2111/P** – Glaziers, Dixter Lane – Loft conversion and exterior works. **Unanimously supported**
- j) **RR/2020/2120/P** – 10 Wilderness Gardens – Conversion of garage into study. **Unanimously supported**
- k) **RR/2020/2129/P** – Great Dixter – Extension to toilet block. **Unanimously supported.**
- l) **RR/2020/2175/P** – 19 Coplands Rise – Single floor front & rear extension. **Unanimously supported.**
- m) **RR/2020/2154/P** – 18 North Ridge – Works to silver birch tree. **Unanimously supported.**

9) **ALL PLANNING DECISIONS HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS:**

10) **OTHER PLANNING MATTERS:** Land at Sherbourne Valley. Discussed at item 5.

11) **VILLAGE MATTERS**

- a. **Fly tipping at surgery car park.** ESCC wanted the containers left until after the surgery changes were complete, but members said due to the fly tipping, which they felt was from people outside of Northiam, they requested TG to arrange for the containers be removed. **TG.**
- b. **Further approach by Mr & Mrs Bishop re: Land purchase / lease.** A letter of thanks had been received from the Bishop's for work done on the storm ditch. They had sent four proposals regarding the land they wished to purchase or rent. Members agreed to support the proposal for Mr & Mrs Bishop to purchase the strip of land within their building line, but said that the owners of the properties backing onto the other areas of field should be contacted to get their views on the Bishop's three other proposals.
- c. **Web site.** This is nearly ready for launching and **PS** asked if everyone would take a role in uploading the required work. He also asked the locum clerk, Mrs Ades, if she would consider doing some work on their site. **PS/Clerk to discuss.**
- d. **St Francis Fields (SFF) & CIC.** Work on the orchard is being carried out this week, with the hedging work attended to next week. The bungalows are rented out and CIC is dealing directly with the lawyer, when they will be talking next Wednesday to ensure there is an appropriate relationship between CIC and the PC.

12) **CORRESPONDENCE OTHER THAN THAT ALREADY CIRCULATED:** **PS** said everything received had been circulated.

13) **FINANCE:** **PS** said the Finance Sub-committee must talk to sort out the budget and precept in time for final figures for January's meeting on 14th.

14) **FINANCE, OTHER MATTERS:** **PS** said in the absence of the Clerk there would be no changes made to the current banking or accounts arrangements.

15) **CHEQUES FOR SIGNATURE:** Approved.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.