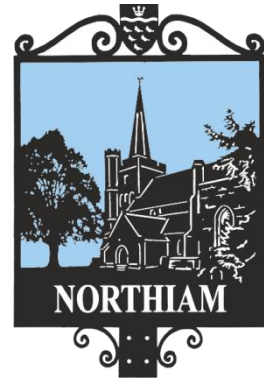


NORTHIAM PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Parish Council

Meeting held on Thursday 10th June 2021

at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Councillor Sue Schlesinger.
2. **ATTENDEES:** Councillors Jacqueline Harding (JH) Chair, Tony Biggs (TB) Vice-Chair, Penny Farmer (PF), Dean Johnson (DJ), Robert Maltby (RM), Anthony Wontner-Smith (AWS), County Cllr Mr Paul Redstone (PR), District Cllrs Tony Ganly (TG) and Martin Mooney (MM), Mrs R Smolska, Clerk, (BS) and twelve members of the public.
3. **ELECTIONS: appointment and allocations**
 - a. **Co-option of new Councillor:** – there were applications from Mr David Green and Mr Jon Streatfield. Both gave a brief verbal introduction including their suitability for the role. Mr David Green was proposed by RM and seconded by TB, members voted 2:6
Mr Jon Streatfield was proposed by AW-S and seconded by PF, members voted 4:6. Therefore Mr Jon Streatfield was co-opted as a new Parish Councillor.
4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None.
5. **REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: - Maximum of 15 mins.**
 - Conservation Chair, Sarah Giles mentioned that the Pop-up pub at Saint Francis Field was now registered. SG then mentioned the proposal of short-term letting one of the hub studios. She had previously circulated a paper to the SFF's Liaison Group which had support; and she asked members to approve this occupation of Unit 2, by a local resident for a period of 3 months. A licence fee of £60 per month would be provided to the new tenant. It was confirmed that the unit was watertight and secure and needed no money spent on preparing it for rental, this was **approved** unanimously.
 - Mr Ray Moon then spoke regarding planning application RR/2021/599/P Fernbank, explaining his property was adjacent to the west of Fernbank and his concerns about road safety and the increased traffic hazards this new vehicular access would cause. He noted that this had been refused by ESCC Highways in 2012 and that traffic had increased since then. Mr Moon also mentioned concern about damage to the tree, causing it to become unstable. He felt the application should be refused and altered as some works had already been undertaken.
6. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 13th May 2021:** These were approved and signed by the Chair.
7. **REPORTS BY PARISH, COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:** (County and District Reports are attached).

RM reported that he had been assisting with the pop-up pub and SG had done a great job. He also mentioned how to tackle residents overhanging trees/hedges and it was noted that there were polite notice cards in the Parish Office that could be given out where necessary, the clerk to check – **Action Clerk.**

TB reported that he had attended the PCSO Meeting on 27th May and that we had changed to the Eastern section of Rother, meaning our new PCSO is Zoe Burden. Reports of youths on bikes at Springfield and Copden rise were mentioned again and the PCSO asked to be notified of specific dates/times in order for them to turn up while the antisocial behaviour was taking place, apart from that there currently appears to be little trouble in the village. TB then mentioned that Amy Killick was advertising Kick-boxing sessions starting 21st June, clerk to check she has insurance and a risk assessment in place – **Action Clerk**

AW-S – nothing to report.

DJ – reported that he had completed the last 3 weeks of playground reports and these had been received by the clerk. The round-a-bout was in poor condition and needed to be assessed, whether to be repaired or replaced. PF would contact Gareth about this, asking him to visit the Parish office and discuss assessing this

with the clerk. PF also noted that a gate wasn't closing correctly and this would also be discussed with Gareth – **Action PF/Clerk**

PF – reported that Beacons Field gate was being held together by rope and needed a padlock, a locksmith would be required to look at this – **Action Clerk**. PF also mentioned the de-silting of workhouse pond and its drainage system, it was suggested that we get CCTV to check this and was agreed by members that the clerk would continue to investigate this matter – **Action Clerk**

JH – reported that in 2019 plans had been developing for a VE day celebration but due to Covid19, a situation beyond our control, this didn't take place. JH had therefore sent a letter to the marquee company and the entertainers asking for the deposits to be returned (£225.00 and £50.00 respectively). The deposits still haven't been returned (even though holding onto deposits was not mentioned within their terms and conditions) and while awaiting a reply, JH proposed that we organise another similar one-day celebration event during the Queens Platinum bank holiday, on Saturday 4th June 2022, with the venue and details to be arranged – this event was **agreed** by members in principle.

MM/TG - explained that the district report had been sent (as attached), there was nothing to add.

PR – had also circulated his county report (as attached).

8. PLANNING:

a) RR/2021/447/L – Great Dixter House and Gardens, White Barn, Dixter Lane, TN31 6PH

Addition of floor and wall linings and glazed screen to form meeting room at Eastern end of White Barn. **Members unanimously supported the application 6:0**

b) RR/2021/570/P – Thorndale, Main Street, Northiam, TN31 6LS

Erection of proposed garden office. Removal of existing fencing and replace with new wall. Re-location of existing double access gates. **Members unanimously supported the application 6:0**

RR/2021/599/P – Fernbank – Land adjacent to, Rye Road, Northiam TN31 6NJ

Relocation of vehicular access to the land and stop up existing vehicular access to the land. (Retrospective). **NPC are concerned that any vehicles, especially agricultural vehicles, using this proposed access would present a significant danger with regard to the traffic along Rye Road. Given that this application is almost identical to RR/2012/1973/P which was withdrawn. We feel that ESCC Highways should also be involved in this new consultation and have requested that they submit a report. NPC therefore feel that this application should be refused and have requested, via Cllr Ganley, that this application is 'called in'.**

c) RR/2021/1230/T 17 North Ridge, Northiam TN31 6PG

Reduction of Oak Tree. **Members unanimously supported the application 6:0**

9. ALL PLANNING DECISIONS HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS:

OTHER PLANNING MATTERS: PF noted that Newlands had been refused and the dormers appeared to have been taken out. PF also mentioned the situation at Northlands Farm and that a letter had gone out to the Service Manager, Strategy and Planning, at Rother District Council from Beckley Parish Council, a similar letter would be sent from Northiam Parish Council – **Action Clerk**

10. VILLAGE MATTERS

- a) Funding for School Crossing Patrol Northiam Primary School: JH had circulated information to Council members previously and explained that according to ESCC we did not fulfil the criteria to continue to fund the school lollypop lady, or for a permanent crossing. If we wished to continue with the lolly pop lady it would cost NPC £3,750 pa otherwise, she would be made redundant. Discussion took place further about this and also the possibility of purchasing a black cat radar system, which is portable and sharing it - and therefore costs - with 2 other local villages who had shown an interest. After further discussion members voted **unanimously 6:0** on funding the lollypop lady until the end of December 2021 and JH would email Keith and ask Darren and Paul at ESCC to look into future ways of continuing funding for this valuable service – **Action JH**
- b) Suitable date in July to meet with AIRS: It was agreed by members that AIRS (Action in rural Sussex) would be invited to join the July Parish meeting and give a 15-minute presentation on Community Led Housing and local housing needs – **Action clerk**

- c) Noticeboards: TB noted that the village noticeboards were over 12 years old and required some repair. It was **agreed** that PF would speak to Gareth and arrange for TB and Gareth to meet and discuss this – **Action PF/TB**
- d) Village Hall donation: This £1,500 donation which was an annual donation made by the PC on request from the NVHT, was unanimously supported by members 6:0

11. CORRESPONDENCE OTHER THAN THAT ALREADY CIRCULATED: None

12. FINANCE:

- a) To agree and sign off the AGAR (if returned by the Auditor): Due to the changeover of Clerk and Chair, the AGAR was not available for presentation.

13. FINANCE, OTHER MATTERS:

- a) Future arrangements for Petty Cash: The clerk explained that after visiting the mobile bank which had recently returned to the village, petty cash arrangements had been put in place.
- b) Migration of email accounts and disclaimer at the end of emails: After discussion, members **voted unanimously 6:0** that we would keep our current Northiam Village email accounts, it was our domain, and there was no reason to change this, but this could be revisited if required. Members also **agreed** that disclaimers would be added to each Councillor's address, which was an easy process to follow but David at CSI could be asked to assist with this if necessary.
- c) Cheques for signature: payments were **approved 6:0**

14. PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

- Jackie Broad (Saint Francis Field CIC) asked for someone to please use social media to advertise that NPC are funding the lollypop lady until the end of the year and her exact employment termination date. It was hoped that this may remind parents of the situation and assist with future funding for this valuable service.
- TB asked if David Green would apply for the second Councillor vacancy to be filled at the July Parish meeting, and this was affirmed. TB noted that St Francis Field won't generate any income for the next two years. TB asked Sarah Giles if residents should have been asked before the verges were planted with wild flowers, SG replied about the need for this to be seen in full before residents were then asked for their opinion and had something to compare.
- JH asked for anyone good with social media to help with Jackie request, SG offered to put an advert on social media and JH with the clerk would create the wording – **Action JH/Clerk**

The Meeting closed at 8.37pm

Reports, as written, from ESCC and RDC councillors are attached.

ESCC Report, June 2021

Cllr Paul Redstone, Email: Cllr.Paul.Redstone@eastsussex.gov.uk

I am of course very pleased to have been elected to represent Northern Rother and hope to give at least a good a service as Councillor Angharad Davies. This report is a little shorter than normal as the new council has only just had its first meeting and I am, of course, still getting up to speed.

Council Organisation

The new county council is made up of 27 Conservative, 11 Liberal Democrat, 5 Labour, 4 Green and 3 independent councillors. At a short and minimal council meeting this morning (due to pandemic restrictions) Keith Glazier was re-elected as leader and announced a largely unchanged cabinet. He also announced that priorities include recovery from COVID and making ESCC carbon neutral as quickly as possible.

COVID update

As of 20th May, East Sussex has the lowest rate amongst upper tier authorities of 12 cases per 100,000 population putting us at the bottom of the list of 149 such authorities, which is of course very good. However, there is concern about the potential escalation of rates due to new variants.

As regards vaccinations, on 14th May, the latest date for which I have figures, nearly 1.5 million jabs had been given to people across Sussex (both East and West), approximately 950,000 people having had their first dose and 500,000 both doses. East Sussex has about 39% of the population across the two counties. Vaccinations are currently being offered to people aged 32 and over. 90% of priority groups 1 to 9 have had their first dose and 47% their second dose.

Despite case numbers being so low it is vital that we all remain alert to pick up early signs of infection. We should also consider regular testing using lateral flow tests, particular as people return to work and socialise. These are free and can be picked up from many supermarkets and chemists or ordered to be delivered by post.

Cases

I already have a number of cases where I am supporting parish councils, organisations and residents. Please let me know if you have any issue where I may be able to help. Even if it falls outside my area of influence, I would like to be kept informed and will work closely with district councillors and organisations as appropriate. My contact details are available on the web and shown above.

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report, June 2021

CORONAVIRUS NEWS AND GUIDANCE

Hugs & Pubs

People in England are now able to enjoy indoor hospitality, travel abroad and meet friends and family indoors as the country proceeds to step three of the Government's roadmap for lifting pandemic-related restrictions. Pubs, cafes and restaurants in Wales will also be open indoors. It comes as the UK's COVID alert level was lowered from four to three, meaning coronavirus is in "general circulation" but that transmission isn't "high or rising exponentially". More than 38 million people have received a first dose and over 20 million a second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Meanwhile, the country remains on track for the lifting of all pandemic-related restrictions on the 21st June.

PLANNING "NOT THE BARRIER TO HOUSE-BUILDING"

Planning is not the barrier to house-building, with more than 1.1 million homes granted permission over the past decade still not built, the LGA has said in response to planning reforms set out in the Queen's Speech. A new Planning Bill would see local areas stripped of their power to assess building applications case-by-case.

Cllr David Renard, LGA Planning Spokesman said councils need powers to incentivise developers to get building, adding: "Councils want to work with government to reform and strengthen our planning system, ensuring it is locally-led, and that communities are able to shape their local areas, have their say on new developments in their neighbourhoods and see they are supported by the right infrastructure."

MPs support greater freedoms for councils

Eight in 10 MPs say councils should have more financial freedoms and powers to build homes in their area and almost three quarters (72 per cent) say they should have more control over local taxes, according to exclusive LGA polling by Savanta ComRes. Four in five Peers and 58 per cent of MPs also agree that councils should be given greater powers and funding to drive employment and training schemes in their areas. The LGA is calling on government to bring forward "turbo-charged" proposals for devolution that give all councils the power to meet the challenges and opportunities facing their communities over the coming decade. LGA Chairman Cllr James Jamieson said: "Bringing power and resources closer to all of us is the key for all our communities to thrive".

Councillors Martin Mooney & Tony Ganly

DRAFT