

BEPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mrs Rosalind Hart
Clerk: Mrs. Lorraine Grocott, BEM, BA Hons (Local Policy)
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MINUTES of BEPTON PARISH COUNCIL Thursday 14th March 2024, in The Park House Hotel, Bepton

Present: Mrs R Hart, Mr J Beckett, Mr J Beaumont, Mr B Tyrrell-Evans,
 Cllr Dr Kate O’Kelly (County Councillor),

183. Apologies – Mr P McCulloch, Mrs S Port

184. Casual Vacancy – Following the resignation of Mr Freeman CDC had been advised of the Casual Vacancy and the Vacancy had been advertised. There had been no request for an election and CDC advised that the Council could co-opt a local resident. Various names were suggested.

185. Declaration of Interests of Members – There were none.

186. Minutes the Meeting 1st February 2024 - Agreed and signed.

187. Public Participation – There was no public present.

188. Report from the County Councillor – Cllr Dr Kate O’Kelly – In brief.

a) Budget

The leadership had changed the wording in the Council Plan to protecting the environment rather than addressing the climate crisis. I proposed our amendment to include the climate change crisis. Our budget amendment included our priority topics, more support for mental health for young people, more funds for highway maintenance and ROW maintenance and more officer time for flood prevention, bus planning and active travel.

b) Health and Adult Social Care Committee – HASC

March meeting. We had an opportunity to scrutinise the St Richards Downgrade by CQC from Outstanding to Requires Improvement and review of the ambulance service.

The health leaders are working to decrease the backlog of waiting times for planned surgery. The ambulance service presented their improvement plans. They have made significant progress related to their Category 2 (heart attack and Stroke) emergency response times. The cancer referral to diagnosis times have improved.

c) Recycling changes following national guidance.

All Districts and Boroughs (D&Bs) in West Sussex collect metal, glass, plastic, paper, and card for recycling, so no change is expected to kerbside recycling collections. D&Bs will be required to introduce separate collections of food waste, with government funding allocated by March 2026.

189. Report from the District Councillor – Not present. There was no report.

190. Chairman’s Items – Mrs Hart

a) Neighbourhood Watch – Following the meeting on 1st February, Mr Freeman had presented a document for discussion on ways to disseminate information about local crime. Local crime continues to be low in Bepton. There are about 1/3 of households or 48 households who use the local WhatsApp group. It was agreed that 1) this is the primary way to keep residents in touch, 2) Information could be loaded onto the website and 3) Regular contact with our PCSO’s.

b) Speaker for the Annual Parish Assembly 9th May 2024 – Mr Freeman has offered to give a talk on Bepton in the Past.

c) Official Portrait to commemorate the accession of His Majesty King Charles. It was agreed to accept this offer of a free portrait. The Clerk to register our request.

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- d) Midhurst Community Hub – The top issue discussed at the Midhurst Community Forums in May and November 2023 was loneliness and isolation. Connecting to people is one of the “Five Steps to Wellbeing” recommended by MIND. Keeping “In Touch” is being set up as a telephone buddying service, whereby volunteer callers undertake to make 3 phone calls a week to people who would welcome a friendly chat. They are now recruiting volunteers. Anyone interested can email: admin@midhurstcommunityhub.co.uk. It was agreed to include an item in the next Newsletter.
- e) A N Other village celebration – Would the Council be willing to provide funding as it has done for the previous celebrations. Further information would be required before a decision was made.

191. Finance – Mrs Grocott a)

BEPTON PARISH COUNCIL	Statement of Accounts	Jan - Feb	2024	Nat West	Sort Code	Account No		
Balance brought forward	6.12.23		12304.22	Vou No.	61-14-22	50286099		
<u>Receipts</u>	HMRC VAT Reclaim 23-24		<u>360.47</u>	5				
			12664.69					
Less Payments Jan-Feb			<u>-2858.72</u>					
			9805.97					
<u>Payments for approval</u>	<u>Details</u>			Vou No	P/E/O	Vat	Net	Power
Park Hotel	Room hire		35.00	OL417	P	5.83	29.17	LGA 72
L Grocott	Sal£163.60;Exp£18.34 M.11		154.14	OL418	P		154.14	LGA 72
HMRC	PAYE M.11		27.80	OL419	P		27.80	LGA 72
L Grocott	Sal£163.60;Exp£18.34 M.12		154.14	OL420	P		154.14	LGA72
HMRC	PAYE M.12		27.80	OL421	P	5.83	<u>27.80</u>	LGA72
	Est Balance at Bank 14.3.24		9407.09			5.83	393.05	
	Less Ringfenced funds		<u>-2041.20</u>					
	Available funds		<u>7365.89</u>					
<u>Ringfenced funds:</u>								
Clerks Gratuity Fund			1963.20	(£1963.20x 0.037%x26 years service)				
Defibrillator funds			<u>78.00</u>	(£405 less 24.11.21	£247.80	Less £169.80	Bal£78	
			2041.20					

These payments were approved.

- b) Letters of Thanks for Donations 2023-24 had been received by Midhurst Area Cycling, Bepton PCC, Air Ambulance Charity KSS, CAB, 4 Sight.
- c) VAT Refund 2023/24 – The sum of £360.47 has been reclaimed.
- d) Precept 2024/25 – The Council agreed a precept of £6738 for 2024/25 which is an increase of £140 / 2.1% increase on 2023-24. Note that the amount submitted to CDC for 2024/25 is £6598.
- e) Internal audit of accounts 2023/24 – Mr Buckler has agreed to carry out the audit.

192. Planning Report – Mr J Beckett**SDNP PLANNING RESPONSE TO APPLICATIONS: -****SDNP/24/00769/TCA**

Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Cypress tree. 2 Bepton Grange Bepton Road Bepton Midhurst West Sussex GU29 0HZ

Application in progress

SDNP/23/04187/HOUS

Two-storey side and rear extension, single storey rear extension, new roof, new front gable and associated alterations. Horringer Bepton Road Bepton West Sussex GU29 9RB

Approved

SDNP/23/04171/HOUS

Replacement garden room. Tyelands Cottage Severals Road Bepton West Sussex GU29 0LU

Approved

SDNP/23/03892/FUL

Installation of a temporary contractor's car park, storage area and work compound. Field North-West of Park House Hotel Bepton Road Bepton Midhurst West Sussex GU29 0JB

Approved

192. Planning Report continued

WSALC Training – Mr Beckett attended a planning training course in March entitled Making Effective Planning Representations. Councils must align their comments to respond to planning policies. They are the only body that responds on behalf of everyone in the parish.

193. SDNPA – online parish meeting 13th March

Various items were discussed including the increasing problem of dogs with sheep, how CIL is helping with funding for the Centurian Way and the Serpent Trail. The Local Plan review is progressing and will be online in due course. It should be out by January/February 2025 when it will be coming out to the parishes for consultation. Deer are becoming a nuisance in the Park. School teachers are now attending training on climate action. The Neighbourhood Plan will no longer be part of the planning process.

194. Website – Mr J Beaumont

The website has been updated with some useful local links including Flexbus96 bus, Midhurst Tandem bus, and the Midhurst Community Hub. There is a link to the Trussell Trust Foodbank.

195. Village Green – Mr Beaumont

The village green is thriving with some newly planted daffodils and crocuses which are out in bloom.

196. Environment matters/ Highways matters/ Rights of Way – Mr Beckett

- a) WSCC Highways issues along Bepton Road – Due to illness response has been slow.
- b) Bepton Down SSSI – The land is owned by the Cowdray Estate and has been supported by Bepton Down Conservation residents over the years. Contact has been made with the Cowdray Estate who had planned to cut the invasive scrub, Dogwood, Brambles etc. at the end of the summer 2023, however bad weather meant that the work was not completed. The Cowdray Estate farm manager has offered to contact SDNP to explore the avenue of voluntary clearing groups in 2024/25. After discussion the council agreed that whilst it supports the idea in principle it is beyond the remit of the council to become involved.

c) Report from MAC on various items

1. Stedham-Midhurst cycle way improvements – Work is going on along the West 272 Midhurst approach. As a result of a community highway scheme submitted by MAC, the narrow dual use path along the Woolbeding junction to the Half Moon pub is being widened and a speed restriction extended to the junction.
- 2) Jubilee Path and Midhurst Greenway update – WSCC recently held a stakeholders meeting, instigated by MAC. They will now put forward a revised scheme with the Jubilee Path being routed around the southern path of South Pond and linking to the Greenway via the Wharf. The new water meadow scheme proposed by the Cowdray estate incorporates the proposed Greenway which will eventually link to Easebourne.
- 3) Rother Valley Way – They are working closely with the Friends of Rother Valley Way (FoRVW). The new development at the old council depot site is being closely monitored by SDNPA in conjunction with FoRVW to ensure footpath and potential cycle way routes are protected for the future. As the Centurion Way continues to extend northwards, they are looking at ways in which the two long distance multi-purpose paths could connect through Bepton & Midhurst.

197. Date of next meeting – 9th May 2024, Annual Statutory Meeting at 6pm.

Followed by Annual Parish Assembly at 7.30pm in The Barn, Bepton Park Hotel.

Chairman:

These Minutes are unconfirmed until signed by the Chairman.