

Berwick Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Berwick Parish Council held at the Berwick Village Hall, on Thursday 26th November 2015 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs B. Smith (Chairman), K Winter, V Burrough, S Carnie and C Bird.
District Councillor P Ede, Rosemary Barton (Tree Warden), Alison Stevens (Clerk) and one member of the public were also present.

Minutes

- BP.01.11.15 Apologies:** No apologies for absence were received.
- BP.02.11.15 Declarations of Interest and changes to the Register of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest nor were there any changes to the Register of Interest.
- BP.03.11.15 County Councillor Report:** There was no report from the County Councillor on this occasion.
- BP.04.11.15 District Councillor Report:** District Councillor Ede said that;
- Wealden District Council is proposing to change its wards to keep up with recent population changes. Under the new proposals, Berwick will group with Arlington, Chalvington, Laughton, Upper Dicker, Deanland, Selveston and Alciston.
 - the consultation period is now under way for the new Wealden Local Plan.
- BP.05.11.15 Sussex Police:** There was no report from the Police on this occasion but it was noted that Berwick has two new PCSO's - PCSO Parrish Claxton and PCSO Sarah Choppin.
- BP.06.11.15 Public Question Time:** There were no questions from the public on this occasion.
- BP.07.11.15 Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting held on 24th September 2015 and matters arising from the minutes:**
The minutes of the meeting were reviewed. The minutes were then signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting by the Chairman.
- It was noted that the tree outside Crossways on the C39 is causing an obstruction and still needs cutting back. The Clerk will report this to Highways again.
- BP.08.11.15 Planning Applications:** There were no planning applications to comment on on this occasion.
- BP.09.11.15 Reports:**
- Berwick Playing Field – Councillor Bird said he made enquiries to find out if the the Wealden Community Small Grants Fund can be used to provide more facilities on the playing field and found that this fund is not available to Parish Councils. He suggested looking at what other grants are available.
- Highways and Transport – Councillor Smith reported that the last dip on the C39,

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which is on the way to Drusillas, still floods and is dangerous. The Clerk will report this to Highways.

Councillor Smith also reported that there had recently been an accident in the village which was caused partly by the uneven surface of the railway crossing. The Clerk will report this to Network Rail.

Tree Warden – Mrs Barton announced her resignation as Tree Warden to Berwick Parish Council. Councillor Smith thanked Mrs Barton for all her help and time in carrying out the role so successfully over the years. Anyone who would like to volunteer to be the Tree Warden is asked to contact Mrs Barton for more details.

BP.10.11.15 Reports by Councillors from Outside Bodies:

Wealden District Association of Local Council – The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th October for Councillors had been distributed for everyone to read. Acting Chief Superintendent May had attended the WDALC meeting and updated everyone on the changes at Sussex Police, officers from Wealden District Council introduced the new Local Plan and Councillor Wilcox from Maresfield Parish Council gave a presentation about speeding.

Village Hall Committee – Councillor Winter said the Village Hall Trustees would like to spend their share of the Solar Farm money on new heating for the hall. The Parish Council has sent them a Unilateral Undertaking for signing and hopes to hear back from them soon. Once received, the Clerk will send this form to Wealden District Council on their behalf.

Parish Emergency Officer – This item is to be removed from future agendas as the Parish Council does not have a Parish Emergency Officer.

Police Local Action Team – There was no report from the Police Action Team Meeting on this occasion. This item is to be removed from the agenda until the meetings are reinstated.

Berwick Solar Farm Community Fund Meeting – This was covered under the Village Hall item.

BP.11.11.15 Playparks Inspections:

All the work recommended in the Wicksteed Annual Inspection Report have now been carried out.

Councillor Carnie entered the meeting and apologised for being late.

BP.12.11.15 Finance: Members approved the following payments made since the last meeting;

Cheque 100945	G Pocock – Maintenance	£ 944.68
Cheque 100944	Wicksteed – Playground Repairs	£ 418.61
Cheque 100945	A Stevens – Salary - September/ October	
Cheque 100946	A Stevens – Salary – November	

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Cheque 100947 Village Hall – Hall hire £ 42.00

Approval of Accounts to date:

Members approved the accounts to 30th September 2015.

External Audit Requirements:

The external auditor who was previously appointed by the government/audit commission is being appointed through the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) from 2017. Parish Councils with an income of less than £6.5m can appoint their own but they will have a pretty rigorous assessment criteria to meet.

Berwick Parish Council **resolved** to use an External Auditor appointed through NALC and the SLCC.

Precept Requirements 2016-2017:

Councillors carefully considered the budget figures circulated by the Clerk, made some reductions in spending and **resolved** that the precept for 2016-2017 will be £13000.00. This is to help bring the precept in line with expenditure.

- BP.13.11.15 New Local Plan, Issues, Options and Recommendations:** In the case of the parish of Berwick the new plan requires the construction of 26 dwellings between now and 2037, of which 11 have already been granted permission at Station Farm, leaving 15 dwellings to build by 2037.

Councillors **resolved** to accept the proposals for this parish but ask that the dwellings comprise of bungalows and low cost housing to meet the requirements of this village.

- BP.14.11.15 Boundary Review:** The Boundary Commission is inviting Town and Parish Councils to formulate a formal response to the electoral review of East Sussex and the five District Councils.

Berwick Parish Council considered the review and supports the proposal from Wealden District Council to group with Arlington, Chalvington, Laughton, Upper Dicker, Deanland, Selmeston and Alciston. They appreciate that all of Berwick will remain in one ward.

- BP.15.11.15 Community Wardens:** Sussex Police has to reduce its budget by a further £59m over four years from 2016 and, as a result, policing in Sussex will have to change. The role of the PCSO will change, they will now work in a problem solving way and their numbers will be reduced. Sussex Police is therefore asking Parish and Town Councils to consider employing Community Wardens if they would like a uniformed presence in their communities.

Community Wardens will cost parishes and towns approximately £28,000, not including any transport costs. They will have no powers of arrest but they can issue fixed penalty notices for problems such as dog fouling, fly posting, littering etc. They will not have the powers to deal with speeding or parking.

Berwick Parish Council **resolved** not to employ a Community Warden either wholly or partly with other parishes because they do not feel Berwick can justify

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such expenditure.

BP.16.11.15 Questions from Members: Councillor Burrough asked if the Parish Council has received any news about the Solar Farm proposed at Wick Street yet. It has not.

Councillor Burrough also reported that the road sign, which was damaged in an accident, at the junction with Station Road and Lower Wick Street has yet to be repaired and the hedge still needs cutting on Ludlay Coppice.

Councillor Smith asked hedge to be cut back at the entrance to the Village Hall.

Councillor Smith asked for hedge cutting at Berwick Way to be an agenda item for the January meeting if it has not been cut by then.

BP.17.11.15 Close of Meeting; The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.45pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Signed: _____

Dated: **30th November 2015**