

BETCHWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the **MEETING** of the **BETCHWORTH PARISH COUNCIL** held on **MONDAY 2nd December 2024**, commencing at 7.30pm in The Hamilton Room, Betchworth

Councillors (Cllrs) present:

Cllr Ed Winter (EW) Chairman
Cllr Alice Laidler (AL) Vice Chair
Cllr Ian Wilson (IW)
Cllr Graham Randall (GR)
Cllr Martin Higgins (MH)
Cllr Robert Ashdown (RA)
Cllr Mark Targett (MT)

Attending:

District Cllr Potter (PP)
District Cllr Budd (SB)

Apologies:

County Cllr Helyn Clack (HC)
District Cllr Keay (PK)

In attendance: Julie Vear (JV) Clerk & RFO

MOP: 1

Minute #	Agenda item	Who
289	1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from Cllrs Clack & Keay	
290	2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST No declarations of interest were received	
291	3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING The minutes of the meeting held on 4 th November 2024 were approved and signed	
292	4. OPEN FORUM Cllr Winter welcomed a MOP and councillors to the December meeting. The councillors introduced themselves and the MOP introduced himself and explained they were interested in the councillor vacancy and wanted to get a better understanding of the role.	
293	5. COMMUNITY POLICE REPORT The police report with incidents for November was displayed, discussed, and acknowledged with no action required.	

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	6.TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS, FLOODING AND FOOTPATHS	
294	Cllr Winter provided an update on Pebble Hill works. The full SCC report is expected and will be available with supporting documents on the website that covers all the priority initiatives but it was noted that there had been correspondence from residents and SCC over the new drain. Concerns had been raised by residents about the appropriateness of the sizing of the pipe and this had been raised back to SCC by the Parish Council and Cllr Clack. It was confirmed that inspectors had been on site on the 26 th & 27 th November to inspect the drain and it was working appropriately for the level of rainfall. Cllrs acknowledged the particularly challenging conditions across the county with flooding and road closures but will continue to liaise with Cllr Clack and SCC.	
295	Cllr Winter asked Cllrs if they would like to volunteer for covering Highways to pick up initiatives previously covered by Cllr Randall. Cllr Ashdown explained as he had previously supported Cllr Randall and would like to support but did have concerns over availability due to full time work commitments. The council were supportive and suggested that with the support of the clerk and other cllrs this could be achievable.	
296	Cllr Wilson raised that roles and responsibilities should be reviewed and agreed and updated on the website. The clerk took an action to put this on the agenda for a future meeting and request updated bios.	JV
297	The Clerk displayed the Footpaths report (available on the website under supporting files) and Cllr Laidler provided an update on the church farm footpath and Litter Pick	
298	Further to circulation to cllrs of the Thames Valley flood scheme newsletter (available under supporting files) Cllr Wilson provided an update. Betchworth was one of 17 schemes being considered earlier in the year but confirmation has been received that this will not be going ahead, letters to this effect have been received by residents.	
299	Councillor Winter provided an update on the Gatwick expansion inquiry. The Inspectors have delivered their report to the Secretary of State with a decision expected next year. GACC are continuing to lobby local MP's.	

<p>300</p> <p>301</p> <p>302</p> <p>303</p> <p>304</p>	<p>7. PLANNING</p> <p>Council acknowledged planning observations made by delegated authority since last meeting</p> <p>Ratification of Planning Observation(s) made by delegated authority since last meeting MO/2021/0019/7/NMA Link 7, Poland Meadow, Brockham, Betchworth, RH3 7FG Non-material amendment to allow increase in size of porch roof. BPC No Comment</p> <p>New Applications MO/2024/1822/PLAH Link North Lodge, Brockham Park, Middle Street, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7AL Raise the roof to create a first floor extension.</p> <p>Council understand the need for updating existing older residents for appropriate and modern living and are supportive of the application to achieve this but will comment that they expect planners to ensure appropriate designs and materials are used to ensure the residence is in keeping with its surroundings within the Park.</p> <p>MO/2024/1860/CAT Link 2 Fryleigh Cottages, Snowerhill Road, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7AF Sweet Gum (Liquidambar styraciflua) tree to be removed. No Comment</p> <p>Decisions MO/2024/1766/EBC Link The Quarry, 250 Pebble Hill, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7BY Upgrade to existing Pole Mounted Transformer (PMT) from 50KV to 200KV. BPC No Comment MVDC NO OBJECTION</p> <p>Appeal Decisions (0) Other Matters (0)</p>	<p>JV</p>
<p>305</p> <p>306</p> <p>307</p>	<p>8. AMENITIES</p> <p>It was acknowledged that the play equipment was checked.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that the defibrillators in the village were checked</p> <p>The Clerk displayed the quote from the contractor for the annual autumn maintenance of Goulburn Green, The Burial Ground and Allotments and explained it was within the 2024/25 budget. Council approved the works.</p>	

308	Cllr Higgins proposed that some wood from the clearing was stacked appropriately within the burial ground to help with biodiversity at the site. Cllrs agreed that this was appropriate assuming a location could be agreed.	
309	The clerk explained that the expected permit request for a replacement headstone had not been received as expected and therefore there was nothing to discuss under this agenda item.	
310	The clerk displayed the request for disabled parking signage at the station. Cllrs agreed in principle and this will be taken forward as part of a larger initiative to review opportunities at the site.	
311	Cllr Ashdown raised as part of his handover with Cllr Randall, there was a request to consider an opportunity for some parking within proximity of the station. Council acknowledged this should be followed up and Cllr Laidler agreed to support Cllr Ashdown and Cllr Targett in documenting and reviewing the proposal.	
312	Cllr Winter updated Council on the great work of the 4B's biodiversity initiative and encouraged cllrs to read the recent newsletter if they had not done so already. Cllr Winter acknowledged a recent issue with work completed by the group on the Buckland Estate and as a member of the steering group took an action to feedback about the need to ensure process was followed to ensure the advice of the facilitation team was followed and the potential need, given the growing success of the group to formalise 4B's Biodiversity as a recognised entity.	EW
9. CLERKS UPDATE		
313	There were no questions or comments on the clerks report which can be located under supporting files on the website.	
314	The clerk provided an update on the SALC annual conference (slides from the day had been circulated to cllrs). SCC's approach to speed reduction across the county and the ongoing work on the sustainable surrey initiative were acknowledged. Cllrs also acknowledged advice from the police on protecting Cllr and Clerk identity and an action was taken by the clerk to follow up on options for a Parish postbox.	JV
315	The ongoing action log was acknowledged.	
316	District Cllrs and MOP left the meeting.	

	<p>10. COMMUNITY AND COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p>317 Councillor Winter acknowledged the hard work and success of the litter pick as updated in Councillor Laidler's update and extended thanks to all those involved. A Parish Council BBQ was proposed for the spring litter pick.</p> <p>318 Councillor Winter thanked volunteers for ensuring the poppies were displayed around the village for remembrance Sunday</p> <p>319 The clerk provided an update on the applications to date for the councillor vacancy. Applications will close end of December so Council can meet with potential applicants in January.</p> <p>320 The clerk provided an update on the status of the website as the backend software is now a whole version out of date making administration difficult and risking a future upgrade becoming impossible or more difficult and costly. Council approved some of the 2024/25 budget to improve the website to upgrade the infrastructure and review hosting to improve speed.</p> <p>321 Councillor Winter raised the consultation closure for the Dorking plan and encouraged councillors to complete the survey raising concerns around some of the proposals for road closures and design/appropriateness of some of the proposals.</p>																																					
	<p>11. FINANCE</p> <p>322 The following amounts were approved by council for payment in November:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>IB00727</td> <td>HSBC Monthly Bank Charge</td> <td>£5.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00728</td> <td>Julie Vear - Salary & regular expenses</td> <td>£1272.68</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00729</td> <td>Julie Vear – Project Expenses</td> <td>£1020.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00730</td> <td>HMRC – NI & Tax</td> <td>£360.29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00731</td> <td>Hamilton Room December Mtg</td> <td>£20.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00732</td> <td>Employer Pension</td> <td>£66.08</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00733</td> <td>Josh Flynn Gardening Services</td> <td>£856.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00734</td> <td>Hope Nursery</td> <td>£320.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00735</td> <td>Betchworth Village Store</td> <td>£58.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00736</td> <td>C Hamilton Landscapes</td> <td>£250.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00737</td> <td>Mulberry Local Authority</td> <td>£260.46</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IB00738</td> <td>Tesco Mobile</td> <td>£82.85</td> </tr> </table> <p>323 Council acknowledged receipt of £370.64 (£300 burial ground £70.64 interest).</p> <p>324 The Chair provided an update from the finance meeting 28th November where the draft 2025/26 was presented by the clerk and</p>	IB00727	HSBC Monthly Bank Charge	£5.00	IB00728	Julie Vear - Salary & regular expenses	£1272.68	IB00729	Julie Vear – Project Expenses	£1020.40	IB00730	HMRC – NI & Tax	£360.29	IB00731	Hamilton Room December Mtg	£20.00	IB00732	Employer Pension	£66.08	IB00733	Josh Flynn Gardening Services	£856.50	IB00734	Hope Nursery	£320.00	IB00735	Betchworth Village Store	£58.30	IB00736	C Hamilton Landscapes	£250.00	IB00737	Mulberry Local Authority	£260.46	IB00738	Tesco Mobile	£82.85	
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	<p>reviewed by the group. A further meeting for the group is booked for the 12th January to finalise the 2025/26 budget for sign off at full council at the January meeting. The agenda for the finance meeting also covered a mid-year review of the 2024/25 budget which showed council to be on track. The clerk shared a paper with recommendations from the finance group to move funds from projects that were not going ahead (either in the current year due to scheduling or because the project was not considered feasible by Council). Movement of funds allows provision for planned footpath and facilities improvements. Council approved the recommendations and the clerk took an action to update the budgets appropriately.</p>	
325	<p>Council approved updates to the bank mandates to reflect the current membership .</p>	JV
326	<p>Council approved application for a bank debit card to cover payments where a bank transfer is not possible and a card is required. Council acknowledged this would improve audit and tracking of payments as they would show as a direct payment to suppliers like Microsoft direct from the payment account.</p>	JV
327		
328	<p>Council acknowledged bank reconciliations were completed by Cllr Laidler up until October.</p>	
329	<p>Council acknowledged an update to the asset register to reflect the purchase of BPC branded HiViz jackets for volunteer activities.</p>	
330	<p>Council acknowledged completion of the interim audit by Mulberry on 21st November and receipt of the audit report which highlighted the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and the systems and procedures in place are fit for purpose.</p>	
331	<p>Council approved the clerks salary and regular expenses (webhosting and phone) can be paid on the 1st of the month by delegated authority.</p>	JV
	<p>12. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING AND FOR INCLUSION ON A FURTHER AGENDA</p>	
332	<p>No urgent matters were noted for discretion of the chair</p>	
	<p>13. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS (Closed to Public & Press)</p>	
333	<p>Further to receipt of tenders for improvements to the Church Farm footpath, Council took an action to review the site and explore options with contractors based on findings.</p>	AL

<p>334</p>	<p>14. MEETING DATES to acknowledge and note</p> <p>The following dates were acknowledged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Parish Meeting – Monday 13th January • SCC Highways Focus Group – 3rd December – Clerk • MVDC Clerks Meeting Pipbrook – 4th December - Clerk • SLCC Clerks Forum – 19th December – Clerk • Clerks holiday w/c 30th December 1wk – Clerk • Finance Budget Mtg – 8th January Finance Group • Clerk Forum - Tuesday 21st January 2025 - Clerk • Councillors Forum - Wednesday 22nd January 2025 - Cllrs 	
<p>335</p>	<p>PARISH MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Cllr Winter to provide a litter pick update</p>	
<p>336</p>	<p>MEETING CLOSED AT 9.06pm</p>	
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