

PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 16th November 2020, 7pm remote meeting via Zoom

Present	Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Cruse, Grant, Lewis, Skeet and Thomas	
In Attendance	Cllrs Dawlings, Holden and Warne; C Levett, Clerk.	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Cllr Driver.	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	No declarations of interest received.	
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The Parish Council minutes from the meeting held on 19 th October 2020 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
4. MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ITEMS	<p>a. Village Hall/Public Toilets/Community Office : BVT has received feedback, particularly from The Players, detailing some issues with the current proposal. A new cheaper and preferred proposal to locate the public toilets in the Community Office has been suggested. The architect has been asked to draw up a new plan. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to the new proposal in principle subject to plans and costs.</p> <p>b. Football Coaching on the Green : Cllr Cruse has contacted Sports Europe to advise that the Parish Council and the PCC cannot support a privately run business using the Green to generate profit, and has recommended contacting Benenden Village Hall about using the Recreation Ground.</p> <p>c. Land Bequest : Solicitors have advised that the gift of land on Walkhurst Road is not a straightforward one and the executors have sought advice on the best way of ensuring that the bequest expressed are met.</p>	
5. COVID 19/ BENENDEN ACTION TEAM	<p>After careful consideration, and supported by the continued levels of goodwill within the volunteer base, it has been agreed that there is a place for BAT going forward, and Ruth Clark and Guy Hagan are happy to continue to manage the process.</p> <p>BAT will continue supporting the village and its needs beyond Covid-19. The best results have come from indirect referrals. Needs of local people, identified by neighbours and friends, who in turn have reached out to BAT to help them.</p> <p>BAT will evolve by connecting a network throughout all areas of the village and its many groups, societies, trusts and institutions. Working together effectively helps to ensure no-one in the parish struggles unnecessarily.</p> <p>If anyone sees or hears of a situation they should email Ruth or Guy, and they will confidentially work towards a needs-based solution.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas thanked Guy and Ruth for all their work.</p>	
6. REPORTS BY COUNTY/ BOROUGH COUNCILLORS	<p>Cllr Warne :</p> <p>Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Regulation 14 Consultation Zoom sessions are being held.</p> <p>Planning Policy Group As a result of the intended government changes to planning, TWBC is focusing on finalising the revised Local Plan ahead of any reforms, and hopefully avoid any increase in housing allocation.</p> <p>Cllr Dawlings :</p> <p>Business support TWBC has embarked on support for businesses unable to trade during the second lockdown with funds from BEIS. There are two schemes. The first based on Rateable Values for Business Rates with grants payable in 3 bands - below £15k, £15k up to £51k and over</p>	

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These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, but a summary of discussion and decisions taken at the meeting.

	<p>£51k. The second, a Discretionary Scheme to businesses that do not pay Business Rates.</p> <p>Planning TWBC has objected very strongly to the Government's intended changes to planning and higher housing target - supported by Helen Grant and fellow Kent MPs. Evident opposition from Conservative MPs has prompted an MHCLG re-think of the algorithm for setting housing targets.</p> <p>TWBC's Planning Committee turned down an application for a multi-franchise car showroom on the edge of Tunbridge Wells. This multi-million-pound development would have provided 180 permanent jobs and some significant developers contributions for road infrastructure as well as business rates but was strongly opposed by residents in Pembury.</p> <p>Budget TWBC have begun work on the 2021-22 budget. 2020-21 has been a difficult year. TWBC's income is substantially from fees and charges (budget £21.4 million). Revenues from car parks and planning and Licensing fees shrank in the first lockdown resulting in losses of £1 million a month in April and May. These losses narrowed to around £500k a month but the second lockdown will knock the hoped for narrowing to £250k a month by the 31 March year-end. For the current year, Government is helping with these losses - this in the ratio 75:25 after TWBC bear the first 5%. Losses of £250k a month continuing through 2021-22 would mean TWBC having to draw down on some £3 million of reserves in 2021-22 unless significant savings were made - and the Government is cautioning against making dramatic financial decisions. Other Councils' finances are much more stretched.</p> <p>Theatre and Leisure Centres Having worked to open these, they are now closed again. Ice-skating in Calverley Grounds, an attraction drawing footfall into Tunbridge Wells, is under threat too.</p> <p>Cranbrook Community Centre Monthly Board meeting on the planning of the Community Centre which is now proposed to incorporate the Library and 3 Doctors Surgeries. As in the previous iteration of this scheme the planned Community Centre will be on Wilkes Field (formally transferred to Cranbrook & Sissinghurst PC earlier this year) and the adjacent old Dental Surgery beside the Tanyard car park now acquired by C&S PC. TWBC has provided a Project Manager to assist with the planning and delivery of this project. A business plan is being worked on, revised plans to be drawn up and revised planning permission needed. Cllr Warne advised that the Clinical Commissioning Group has had difficulty encouraging younger GPs, and the Centre will be a medical centre rather than just a doctors' surgery. Cllr Holden supported the progress and hoped this could be made a viable proposition.</p> <p>Cllr Holden:</p> <p>Leisure Centres Concern expressed at how leisure centres can survive. Cllr Dawlings confirmed that Fusion had received a government loan.</p> <p>Planning County Councillors, Borough Councillors and Kent MPs have all written expressing concerns about the government white paper, and there is hope that this will be reviewed. There is still concern however regarding the proposed changes regarding the democratic input into planning.</p> <p>Plan Bee The Plan, to preserve and enhance habitat for pollinators, was successfully launched through an online conference which was oversubscribed.</p> <p>Budget The County Council is looking at an interim budget through the current crisis and how to cover the current gap in income. Some of this has been offset by government funding.</p> <p>School Footpath No further updates presently.</p> <p>Cllr Beveridge raised the subject of Benenden's Highways Improvement Plan, and a key proposal to give three roads in the parish Quiet Lane status. KCC used to encourage this but now advise this is no longer KCC policy. The Parish Council requested Cllr Holden's support with this issue. The Parish Council to write to Cllr Holden and raise formally.</p> <p>Tunbridge Wells Agreement : Following a recent review of Code of Conduct Complaints the Monitoring Officer has proposed a small amendment to the Tunbridge Wells Agreement,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">GB</p>
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	<p>affecting only section 7 of the Agreement – Standards and Governance. The Parish Council agreed to support this.</p> <p>However, concerns were raised regarding Section 4 Planning, and the Parish Council would like to receive notification and dialogue regarding any application if the Planning Officer’s opinion differs from the Parish Council’s. This was supported by Cllrs Dawlings and Warne. Cllr Thomas to write to TWBC and KALC.</p>	NT
7. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	Cllr Lewis attended the Parish Chairs meeting in November. Minutes to be circulated in due course.	
8. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN	<p>Accessibility Costs : It is required that the documents on the TWBC website comply with Accessibility regulations. The Parish Council was quoted £2,625 to carry out the relevant work and a grant application was made. This was rejected by Locality stating that this cost should be borne by the local planning authority. Cllr Thomas contacted TWBC but has had no response. Cllr Dawlings offered to follow up.</p>	TD
9. PLANNING	<p>a. Applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 02582 FULL 1 Bishopsdale Cottages , Bishopsden Road Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans); Condition 3 (External Materials) of 20/00402/FULL - Addition of window to north west elevation and alterations to materials shown on plans. A response to TWBC objecting to this application was unanimously agreed by the Parish Council. • 20 02962 FULL 8 Vere Meadows Proposed porch; garage conversion. 3-bed house with integral garage and is situated on the RHS, the last one before the attenuation pond in the corner. Built with a canopy over the front door — the proposal is to make a porch enclosure using materials that will match the existing. The integral garage is to be converted to an office at the front and a Playroom/TV room at the rear. The garage door will be replaced with a window to match the size and style of the kitchen window, with bi-fold doors inserted in the rear wall (to match the existing rear bi-folds) replacing the single width door exiting the garage to the rear garden. A straightforward change in the use of the available space. There are no grounds for objection. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application. • 20 03119 SUB Land adjacent Telephone Exchange, New Pond Road, Benenden — Submission of Details in Relation to Conditions 3 (External Materials) and 11 (Access Road Details) of 18/03941/FULL Access Road Works : no comment. External materials : red stock facing brick, red clay roof tiles, tile hanging — same as roof tiles, Windows white uPVC (picture not shown of windows), soffits and fascia uPVC white, rainwater goods uPVC black, front doors timber effect glazed doors (pictures of materials are shown in the details document). Comment – white uPVC against the brick and tile hanging will appear stark and bright and may cause the houses to stand out. Precedents are set with white window frames but if a more muted colour (grey or green) was used they would fade better into the environment, especially next to the Conservation Area. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to this comment. <p>b. Other Planning Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land off Hinksden Road : Reports of an occupied caravan have been reported to TWBC and Planning Enforcement have been made aware. Cllr Dawlings has endorsed the Parish Council communication with TWBC. Cllr Warne offered to follow this up. • Iden Green - Agricultural barn under construction. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to 	NW

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	<p>report this to TWBC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Regulation 14 Consultation : Parish Councillors have been asked to look at http://cranbrookandsissinghurstndp.co.uk/ Cllr Thomas has read through and advised that sites are not being allocated. There is little to comment on, but Cllr Grant will look at. 	<p>CL PG</p>																																																																																														
<p>10. HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT</p>	<p>a. Pavement Parking : Cllr Cruse has been monitoring pavement parking along The Street and has looked at a current consultation asking whether a change of existing pavement parking legislation should occur. Cllr Cruse had circulated various documents on how to tackle pavement parking. It was agreed that the initial course of action would be to leaflet those who park on the pavement.</p> <p>b. Highways Improvement Plan : Following the meeting held on 1st October, KCC has updated Benenden's HIP. The outcome is disappointing, and a number of items discussed have been omitted. Cllrs Beveridge and Driver to draft a response.</p>	<p>RC GB/PD</p>																																																																																														
<p>11. RESOURCING / FINANCE</p>	<p>a. Monthly Finance</p> <p>TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st October 2020</p> <p>Brought forward 97269.30</p> <p>Income</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="395 689 1426 757"> <thead> <tr> <th>Payee</th> <th>Reference</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>TOTAL 0.00</p> <p>Expenditure</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="261 846 1426 1236"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Supplier</th> <th>Reference</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>John Lewis</td> <td>Broadband</td> <td>9.75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>CF Corporate Finance Ltd</td> <td>Copier Lease</td> <td>180.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>C Levett</td> <td>Clerk's Salary</td> <td>947.32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Thompsett Landscaping</td> <td>Grounds Maintenance</td> <td>258.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>edf Energy</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td>38.47</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Tenterden Twilight</td> <td>Public Toilets August</td> <td>328.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Zoom Video Communications</td> <td>Remote Meetings</td> <td>14.39</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>TP Jones & Co</td> <td>Payroll Q2</td> <td>57.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Paul Leek</td> <td>NDP - Domain Renewal/Linux</td> <td>153.44</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>TOTAL 1986.97</p> <p>Reconciled with bank statement 037 31st October 2020 95282.33</p> <p>November 2020 Payments</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="261 1393 1426 1877"> <tbody> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>John Lewis</td> <td>Broadband</td> <td>10.06</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Thompsett Landscaping</td> <td>Grounds Maintenance</td> <td>258.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>edf Energy</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td>37.89</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Zoom Video Communications</td> <td>Remote Meetings</td> <td>14.39</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Castle Water</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td>100.04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Graham Beveridge</td> <td>Neighbourhood Plan/Adobe</td> <td>151.68</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>BT</td> <td>Office Telephone</td> <td>153.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>PKF Littlejohn LLP</td> <td>Audit</td> <td>360.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>C Levett</td> <td>Clerk's Salary</td> <td>947.32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>TW Counselling Service</td> <td>Donation</td> <td>100.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Citizens Advice TW&District</td> <td>Donation</td> <td>100.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>TWBC Rates</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td>104.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>TOTAL 2337.33</p> <p>b. Funding Request Citizens Advice Tunbridge Wells and District The Parish Council unanimously</p>	Payee	Reference	Amount					Supplier	Reference	Amount	DD	John Lewis	Broadband	9.75	DD	CF Corporate Finance Ltd	Copier Lease	180.00	BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	947.32	BACS	Thompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	258.00	BACS	edf Energy	Public Toilets	38.47	BACS	Tenterden Twilight	Public Toilets August	328.00	BACS	Zoom Video Communications	Remote Meetings	14.39	BACS	TP Jones & Co	Payroll Q2	57.60	BACS	Paul Leek	NDP - Domain Renewal/Linux	153.44	DD	John Lewis	Broadband	10.06	BACS	Thompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	258.00	BACS	edf Energy	Public Toilets	37.89	BACS	Zoom Video Communications	Remote Meetings	14.39	BACS	Castle Water	Public Toilets	100.04	BACS	Graham Beveridge	Neighbourhood Plan/Adobe	151.68	BACS	BT	Office Telephone	153.95	BACS	PKF Littlejohn LLP	Audit	360.00	BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	947.32	BACS	TW Counselling Service	Donation	100.00	BACS	Citizens Advice TW&District	Donation	100.00	BACS	TWBC Rates	Public Toilets	104.00	
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	<p>agreed to donate £100.</p> <p>c. Funding request from Tunbridge Wells Counselling Centre The Parish Council unanimously agreed to donate £100.</p> <p>d. Electric Vehicle Charging Points Parish Councillors have agreed to contributing £500 to the total cost of the installation of EVCP at Benenden Village Hall. BVT applied for KCC funding for EVCP. The draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (Policy T4, and Transport & Infrastructure “Projects”) promotes electric vehicle charging points, and at the village hall. KCC has asked if the parish would fund £1,000 of the costs, with KCC funding the rest. KCC advised it is likely that up to £4,000 per parish will be used for capital costs of installing charge points. BVT is willing to fund £500 of this. The supplier will make a site visit with KCC, and a legal agreement drawn up with BVT. It is hoped that installation of the charging points could start as early as January.</p> <p>e. Resourcing Committee Meeting This will take place on 1st December with a view to making a precept recommendation to the Parish Council at the meeting on 14th December.</p> <p>f. Audit 2019/20 The Clerk advised that the external auditor has completed the audit and in their opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and there are no matters giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. There are no other matters which they draw to the attention of the authority.</p>	
12. CORRESPONDENCE AND PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS	<p>a. Stiles/Accessible Walking Parishioner email : <i>I live in Iden Green and my wife has mobility issues meaning that whilst she can walk, climbing over stiles is not possible. I either have to lift her over or if she is on her own she has to avoid them. We very much enjoy walks around the village using the footpaths and there is one particular circular walk encompassing the village school, church yard, hilly fields, Moore wood and Strawberry Wood that is entirely gated the whole way except for two stiles at the bottom of Moore Wood near Woodcock Lane. It seems to me that there is a great opportunity to replace just these two stiles to the offer an accessible walk, which would benefit many people I am sure. It was agreed to contact PROW and ask that the suggestion is considered.</i></p> <p>b. Christmas Tree Hole Park Estate has kindly agreed to donate a 15-18ft Christmas tree for The Green. Thanks to Ruth Clark for her input. The Parish Council agreed that the tree should be put into the ground and secured with guy ropes. Cllr Beveridge to co-ordinate once the date of delivery of the tree is known. Cllr Lewis to research white solar powered lights.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>GB JL</p>
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Monday 14 th December 7pm, remote details to be confirmed.	
	The meeting closed at 9pm.	

Clerk to the Parish Council, 16th November 2020