

## BARCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

### **Minutes of a Meeting of Barcombe Parish Council held at the Sports Pavilion, Barcombe on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010 at 7.30 p.m.**

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**1535. Present:** Councillors A J MacGillivray, C M Arbenz, D J Lloyd, J C Cornwell, R Hepple, N Gant, N C Lear, D Skan and R A Williams.  
Also in attendance were 4 members of the public

**1536. To receive apologies for absence:** Received from Cllr J O Cornwell and District Councillor D Mitchell.

**1537. Confirmation and signature of the last Minutes of the Council:** The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009 as recorded by minutes 1456 to 1472 having previously been circulated were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**1538. Declarations of Interest:** Cllr N Gant, N C Lear and D Skan over minute 1545 and Cllr N C Lear over minute 1543(iii)(a)

**1539. Urgent Business Pursuant to Standing Order No.16:** There was none

**1540. Public Question Time:**

Alison Hutchins outlined her plans to hold a village clubs and societies day in the village hall on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2010. The idea has receiving strong support and it was agreed the parish council should have a stall. If successful, this could become an annual event. It should be a useful guide to what happens in the village for new residents and Cllr R Williams agreed to approach the Rector to see if the “welcome packs” for new residents might be revived. The event will be advertised in the next two editions of Barcombe News as well as posters. The parish council agreed the concept was an excellent idea.

Jim Skinner shared his plans to revive the “beating of the bounds” event, which again received the support of the parish council.

**1541. Questions from Councillors:** Cllr N Gant asked whether the parish council’s insurance, particularly public liability, covered the WAB project and those working on it. The Clerk will explore with the parish council’s insurers.

**1542. Report from Chairman:** The Chairman’s Report had been circulated in advance and is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes. In addition he reported on the January meeting of the ESALC Executive Committee at which there had been strong criticism of ESCC over their failure to grit adequately during the recent snow (including pavements where its responsibilities are best endeavours, not compulsory) and the poorly timed and publicised Waste and Minerals Strategy consultation. A special meeting of the Executive Committee is planned to discuss these issues with the Director and Lead Member, Transport and Environment, ESCC. He reported that grit bins can be purchased – the first load of grit is then provided but additional loads are £70 each to be paid for by parish councils.

### **1543. Reports of Committees:**

**(i) Transport and Highways:** : After being proposed by Cllr J C Cornwell, seconded by Cllr D Skan, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2010 as recorded by minutes 1479 to 1491 were adopted. **(a) Parking** – The Clerk has asked County Cllr R St Pierre for an update and a reply is awaited – it was reported she has been away so the Clerk was asked to remind her that a letter would be sent to Norman Baker, MP, unless a satisfactory reply was forthcoming within the next two weeks.

**(b) Strengthening Local Relationships and Highways** – It was reported that the next meeting is on 23<sup>rd</sup> February and responses from Matthew Lock will be followed up at that time.

**(c) Deans Meadow car parking** – District Councillor D Mitchell had advised the Chairman that the work would be carried out as designed provided the tenant can be persuaded to give up the land he rents from Lewes DC and the parish council's help would be enlisted to try and enable this. However, in view of the difficult personal circumstances of those involved it was agreed to put any progress on hold until these issues had been resolved. The Clerk would advise DC Mitchell accordingly.

**(d) Barcombe Mills car park – ESCC/EU grant funds for disabled access improvements** – The Clerk reported on a site meeting on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January with representatives from ESCC, the Environment Agency and Ringmer PC. ESCC have obtained grant funding for £10k to improve disabled access to footpaths; providing a proper surface on part of the BMCP would achieve this as would some changes to the stiles and access points to the riverside footpaths. Some measure of “local commitment” is required before the grant money is confirmed and a contribution of perhaps £500 from the parish council would probably be sufficient. ESCC need to confirm the project is viable by the end of January. It was agreed to support the concept provided i) plans were submitted to the parish council in advance for its approval ii) a maximum sum of £500 would be made available iii) Ringmer PC should be encouraged by ESCC to contribute a matching sum .

**(ii) Recreation Ground:** After being proposed by Cllr D J Lloyd, seconded by Cllr R Hepple, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2010 as recorded by minutes 1492 to 1505 were adopted.

**(a) Barcombe school building works and Sports Hall Management Committee** – the parish council's concerns over the flint wall and flat roof are well documented. Cllr C M Arbenz mentioned there was a site meeting on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January to consider matters, and ideally Cllr D J Lloyd should attend to put forward the views of the parish council. School Governor, Sheila Holden, offered to effect an invitation to the meeting for Cllr Lloyd. (subsequently, the school decided it was inappropriate for Cllr Lloyd to attend, but has invited School Governor Carwyn Hughes who knows the views of the parish council).

**(b) caretaker** – a potential applicant has made contact with the Clerk and is reviewing the role with the current job holder. It was agreed the Clerk and Cllr D J Lloyd should progress matter if the applicant wished to pursue her interest.

**(c) Wild About Barcombe:** Cllr N Gant reported that whilst the requirements of the Lottery bid were extremely complex there was no requirement to get three quotes from potential project managers

**(iii) Planning and Community Services:** After being proposed by Cllr C M Arbenz, seconded by Cllr N C Lear, the Minutes of the Planning Application Sub Committee held on 8th December 2009 and 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010 as recorded by minutes 1473 to 1478 and 1506 to 1511 respectively were adopted

After being proposed by Cllr N C Lear, seconded by Cllr R Williams, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010 as recorded by Minutes 1512 to 1525 were adopted.

**(a) Affordable housing** – the Chairman reported on correspondence involving Hastoe, Lewes DC and also local residents over the botched advertising and application process. It was agreed that the parish council's frustration and concerns should be made clear to both Hastoe and Lewes DC, where the positive feelings generated at the parish council meeting in November had dissipated as a result of what appears to be a total mishandling of the process to ensure local people have priority.

**(b) Village Action Plan:** It was agreed Cllrs A J MacGillivray and N Gant should meet to consider the proposed public event. Cllr Gant is also trying to summarise results for Barcombe News and also plans to put the full results on the parish council's web site and to include a blog and additional comments section. The cost would be £90 and it was agreed this was acceptable and could be taken from the Action Plan budget.

**(iv) Finance and General Purposes:** After being proposed by Cllr D J Lloyd, seconded by Cllr N C Lear, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010 as recorded by Minutes 1526 to 1534 were adopted.

Further to minute 1531 the Clerk reported that HSBC Bank had agreed to refund all the charges incurred.

**1544. Casual vacancy – co-option of parish council:** The Clerk reported that five people had expressed an interest; four had submitted personal statements in advance which had been circulated. Following the voting procedure laid down by Lewes DC Andrew Pearce was co-opted onto the parish council. The Clerk will arrange the formalities including the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Register of Interests. All candidates were thanked by the Chairman for showing their interest.

**1545. New village hall – funding support from parish council:** Further to the presentation made to PCS Committee by the new village hall treasurer there was a widespread discussion on the funding gap. This now stands at £213k, although if the application to Biffaward for £50k is successful then the shortfall will reduce to £163k. The Clerk had investigated the implications of the parish council taking a PWLB fixed rate loan of £100k over 25 years. Although dependent on the chosen loan structure, annual repayments of principle and interest would amount to approximately £8,000. This would mean the Precept rising by about one third for all households for the next 25 years, in addition to whatever other increases may be necessary to maintain the pavilion and recreation ground and meet other parish council aspirations and obligations. Parish councillors empathised with the difficulties facing the fundraising efforts and the fact that many costs incurred would be wasted if the project had to be postponed or abandoned at this late stage. It was agreed that any loan taken, whether for the £100k requested or for a more modest "final top up" amount, would only be entered into after a full parish consultation and "referendum".

There was no consensus amongst parish councillors over the merits of supporting the project with further financial help and it was agreed to keep the matter under review pending a decision from Biffaward which was expected within a few weeks.

**1546. Annual Report and Annual Parish Meeting:** The Chairman reminded committee chairmen that text for the Annual Report in time to meet the Barcombe News copy deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010. Cllrs A J MacGillvray and N Gant will consider a potential format after their Village Action Plan presentation meeting.

**1547. Correspondence:**

Lewes DC - Planning application LW/09/1023– advice of a notice of appeal to Sec of State had been received. The property is in Hamsey parish and the Clerk was asked to contact his opposite number to see if there was anything about which Barcombe should be concerned.

SALC – councillor training dates have been circulated and will be advised to new co-opted councillor

ESCC – Rights of Way Survey – a summary of results for the parish has been received and was noted. Whilst it gives a summary of the condition of footpaths, stiles, gates etc across the whole parish it does not give any detail as to which stiles, for example, are fine and which need repair – the Clerk was asked to pass the information to co-opted member of the Transport and Highways committee, John Smith.; a questionnaire will be issued to parish councils shortly to “steer the aims of the ROW Team over the next few years”.

**1548. Accounts for payment:**

The following accounts were approved for payment:

Don Burtenshaw - £23.00 – fix gate spring in playground

KPS Contractors - £322.00 – picus test on BMCP oak tree

**1549. Outstanding action points:** The Clerk has prepared an informal list which will be refined and circulated shortly

**1550. Date time and place of next meeting:** The Chairman announced the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at 7.30 p.m. in the Sports Pavilion, Barcombe

**1551. Close of meeting:** There being no further business to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25 pm.

**Appendix 1 to minutes of Barcombe Parish Council dated 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010**

**Chairman’s Report January 2010**

Sustainable Communities Act: 2009 Proposals to Government to change legislation.

At the end of December the Local Government Association (LGA), acting as the “Selector” of proposals to be forwarded to Government for consideration, published its shortlist of topics from those submitted during last summer’s exercise. 301 proposals were submitted by 300 local authorities and of these 200 were shortlisted.

Three of the eight proposals made by Lewes DC are included in the shortlist. These are given below as described by the LGA, the original proposals being given in italics.

1. Empowering communities and supporting engagement. Involving communities in the local democratic process. To reform the provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to allow for secret ballots when deciding to move from a parish meeting structure to establishing a parish or town council.

*[A review of local government at parish level, review of areas that do not have a parish council, to look at the governance of those areas and the process of creating parish councils in those areas. Particular attention being given to the relevance of the Parish Meeting to the sustainable community of the 21<sup>st</sup>. century, where all citizens should have a basic level of statutory local representation which is fair inclusive and fit for purpose. The process of community governance review to require local discussion and a secret ballot in order to encourage full community participation.]*

2. Reforming the local government finance system. Increased flexibility over the council tax system. Councils should be able to set increased council tax rates for properties kept solely as second homes or used as holiday lets.

*[Local Authorities should be able to set a rate up to 200% of standard rate of council tax for houses kept solely as a second home by a single family and/or used as holiday lets]*

3. Tackling climate change locally. More support for local authorities to roll out renewables. That the Secretary of State develops a strategy to enable councils to promote local energy schemes and in particular review the requirements regarding private wire systems.

*[That The Secretary of State develops a strategy to enable Councils to promote local energy schemes and in particular review the requirements regarding private wire systems.]*

It is to be noted that of the lengthy proposal dealing with parish meetings (No. 1) only the secret ballot aspect in the last sentence of the original has been chosen.

Five of the Lewes proposals were not shortlisted. The comments from the LGA Panel suggested that some might be successful if re-submitted with more evidence or changed. Rother DC had one out of six ideas shortlisted whilst Wealden DC did not submit. Eight out of nine Brighton & Hove ideas were shortlisted. The next stage will be for the LGA to contact LDC to discuss the proposals and gather more information top aid in negotiating with Government. It is hoped that the 2009 SCA exercise will be completed finally by Easter 2010.

Low Carbon Community Challenge Bid. As Barcombe PC has a stake in this bid and as agreed at the January PCS copies of the relevant documents have been circulated to the PC.

Village Hall Public Event 9 January 2010. The good attendance was matched by discussion with residents on various topics, both directly and indirectly related to the new village hall. It was surprising perhaps that despite the information made public over some time a substantial number were unaware about the planning approval to convert the old hall into three small dwellings; the question of car parking for these was inevitably raised and answered appropriately. I was also approached on the possibility of the new hall encouraging housing development alongside; this aspect rather runs and runs and needs a short seminar on the Local Plan but one fears that not all are convinced by our answers.

Affordable Housing, Deans Meadow. Following our PCS meeting and making contact with Hastoe and LDC I have circulated the replies from both parties. The outcome has been to advertise all the rented properties together on 22 January in “Homemove” and for the PC to do local publicity. No mention of the shared ownership properties.

I have also found a page on the LDC web-site on “Rural Affordable Housing” which spells out the main points expected. But there is no reference to either Section 106 Agreements as such or that the principles of these override the Choice Based Lettings System. The view has been expressed that once our new dwellings are fully occupied an approach be made to LDC through either LDALC or RVRC over the inadequacies found in the handling of our scheme.

AJMacG  
Jan. 2010