

## BARCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of a Meeting of Barcombe Parish Council held at the Sports Pavilion, Barcombe on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at 7.30 p.m.

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**1094. Present:** Councillors A J MacGillivray, C M Arbenz, J C Cornwell, J O Cornwell, N Gant, D J Lloyd, R Hepple, D Skan and R A Williams.  
Also in attendance was County Councillor R St. Pierre

**1095. Apologies for absence:** Received from Cllrs N C Lear and M J Austen and PCSO Read

**1096. Confirmation and signature of the last Minutes of the Council:** The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2009 as recorded by minutes 1011 to 1027 having previously been circulated were confirmed as a true record, subject to the words “To receive” being deleted from minute 1012 and Councillor N C Lear being added to the working group in minute 1021(vi), and signed by the Chairman.

**1097. Declarations of Interest:** None were declared

**1098. Urgent Business Pursuant to Standing Order No.16:** There was none

**1099. Public Question Time:** County Cllr R St. Pierre reported on the following issues **(i)** A recent ESCC Transport Strategy seminar considered rural bus services and ESCC’s “zero base” strategy review. Community bus services may be the way forward but an enhanced “dial a ride” service does not meet the needs of all users, particularly those attending doctors appointments **(ii)** Spithurst Road meets the number of houses criteria for a 30 mph speed limit but the houses need to be visible from the road for this to be implemented **(iii)** The chairman of East Chiltington parish council would like to discuss of a “quiet lanes” initiative which would impose a mandatory 30 mph speed limit – the Clerk was asked to make contact and explore.

**1100. Questions from Councillors:** **(i)** in response to concerns expressed over potential kerbing work in Church Road County Cllr R St. Pierre will ascertain the precise detail of the work and report to the Cllr J C Cornwell **(ii)** Cllr D J Lloyd asked if kerbing would be a better long term solution than setts outside the Conservation Area – he will give a written report to County Cllr St. Pierre

**1101. Report from Chairman:** Reports on recent meetings of the Lewes District Association of Local Councils and Rural Voices, Rural Choices are attached as Appendix 1 and 2 respectively.  
The Chairman also said that at the parish council meeting in May he will have completed 10 years as Chairman and perhaps a change of Chairman would be in order.

**1102. Reports of Committees:**

**(i) Transport and Highways:** After being proposed by Cllr J C Cornwell, seconded by Cllr R Williams, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 as recorded by minutes 1035 to 1047 were adopted.

**Matters arising:**

**(a) cycling events** – Cllr D J Lloyd reported that the recent scout hiking event had clashed with a cycle race, but this was a coincidence. The clerk has received ESCC's programme of guided cycle rides for 2009 but none of the routes appear to include Barcombe.

**(b) Bevern Spring Vale Highways Project** – Cllr A J MacGillivray reported that SALC were recommending this issue should not be pursued at present given that other initiatives such as "Strengthening Local Communities" were going from strength to strength

**(c) Barcombe Mills Car Park** – six bags of aggregate have been ordered for repairs and the car park will probably open on Maundy Thursday. Two fencing rails need replacing and will be repaired in liaison with SOCS.

**(ii) Recreation Ground:** After being proposed by Cllr D J Lloyd, seconded by Cllr R Hepple, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 as recorded by minutes 1048 to 1061 were adopted.

**(a) playground** – the decking has been repaired and the painting will be done by a working party

**(b) Wild About Barcombe** – grant application will be submitted within the next week

**(iii) Planning and Community Services:**

After being proposed by Cllr C M Arbenz, seconded by Cllr D Skan, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009 as recorded by Minutes 1070 to 1082 were adopted.

After being proposed by Cllr C M Arbenz, seconded by Cllr R Williams, the Minutes of the Planning Application Sub Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> February and 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009 as recorded by Minutes 1028 to 1034 and 1062 to 1069 respectively were adopted

**Matters arising:**

**(a) Sports Hall floor** – Minutes of the Sports Hall Management Committee meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> March were circulated and will be considered at the next meeting of the PCS Committee. Cllr A J MacGillivray asked that the parish council representatives were fully aware of the detail and implications of the Management Agreement and any desired changes.

**(b) Affordable Housing** – Hedleys, the solicitors acting for the parish council, had agreed easements with Hastoe Housing Association and Bevern View in connection with the planned development at Deans Meadow. The document grants a right of way over the accessway and for the running of services through the area subject to a covenant by Hastoe and Bevern View to contribute to the cost of repair and making good. The parish council agrees not to obstruct the use of rights but does not take on any other obligations. On the proposal of Cllr A J MacGillivray, seconded by Cllr D J Lloyd, it was agreed without objection that the easements should be signed on behalf of the parish council by two councillors and witnessed by the Clerk.

Cllr A J MacGillivray will be preparing a report for Barcombe News, hopefully with drawings and site plans. He also advised that Lewes DC were operating a new "Choice Based" allocation policy whereby people have to apply once dwellings become available and the most suitable applicant against set criteria will be

successful. It is not clear if this negates the role of the parish council in vetting allocations.

The Clerk was asked to contact District Councillor D Mitchell to see if the promised improvements to the Deans Meadow car park were to be undertaken.

**(c) Conservation Area** – a revised document is expected shortly from Lewes DC

**(iv) Finance and General Purposes:** After being proposed by Cllr Hepple, seconded by Cllr R Williams, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009 as recorded by Minutes 1083 to 1093 were adopted.

**(a) Financial Regulations** – it was agreed the parish council will adopt the revised Financial Regulations set out in minute 1088 and previously circulated to councillors.

**1103. Parish Plan:** The next meeting of the Action Group is scheduled for Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30 p.m. in the pavilion. Questionnaire documentation is nearly complete.

**1104. Annual Parish Meeting 2009:** Faustino Bayo of AirS Action Plan team will give a presentation on the 21<sup>st</sup> century sustainable village and the Action Plan questionnaire will be launched. The traditional format will then follow with refreshments provided by councillors and the Clerk.

**1105. Administration and accounts for Payment:** The following payments were approved:

S Hepple £367.25 – caretaking services 1/1/09 to 31/3/09

And for the 2009/10 year

Lewes District Council - £242.50 – rates for Barcombe Mills car park

SALC - £375.85 – subscription April 2009/10

**1106. Correspondence:**

AirS – Cllrs N C Lear and J C Cornwell will attend the East Sussex Rural Forum on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

AirS – Payout mobile unit – a request to find a different venue from the school was discussed. The Clerk was asked to ascertain more details.

Lewes DC – Cllr C M Arbenz will attend the next Planning Training event.

**1107. Outstanding Action Points:** The list has been updated

**1108. Date time and place of next meeting:** The Chairman announced the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in the Sports Pavilion Barcombe. The next meeting of the parish council will be held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in the Sports Pavilion, Barcombe.

**1109. Close of meeting:** There being no further business to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20 p.m.

## **Appendix 1 - LEWES DISTRICT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS Chairman's Report, February 2009**

LDALC Meeting October 2009. Minutes 3(5)3 (SE Regional Assembly/SNR) and 5 (NALC and NALC Review) were subjects given full consideration at the meetings of

the ESALC Executive (16 October 2008; 29 January 2009) and Joint Liaison Committee (1 December 2008). The essential points to be reported are included in the following.

SE Regional Assembly/Sub National Review (SNR). In reports from Michael Chater (one of our 3 representatives on SEERA and a SEERA Vice-Chairman) it was noted that the principal local authorities had grouped together and effectively excluded T/PCs from future representation; it was also noted that stakeholders had been abandoned. Significant difficulties exist in gaining the attention of leading members despite a very strong case having been made for our Sector. There had been correspondence with the new SEERA Chairman, Paul Carter of Kent CC, and an unhelpful attitude towards T/PCs in a reply from his predecessor, K. Mitchell of Oxfordshire CC. There is concern that the latter chose not to acknowledge that there are three T/PC representatives on SEERA, appointed by SERCAF, and any successor body would not have to deal directly with 1600 local councils as he had incorrectly stated. It was agreed that the Chairman of the Kent ALC should make a further approach to Paul Carter seeking to negate KM's argument. With the Business Secretary, Lord Mandelson, having taken the initiative "in-house" for consideration the SNR is an ongoing matter but little hope is held for a satisfactory outcome for T/PCs representation at regional level.

*Update Feb. 2009.* In November Government clarified its intentions in streamlining regional planning with the consequence that SEERA will close on 1 April 2009. A new Single Regional Strategy (SRS) will replace the current approach of the South East Plan and Regional Economic Strategy. In the South East a complex structure of Decision-Making, Advisory and Technical Support Boards and Groups has been proposed to finalise the SRS. Whilst Government wishes "stakeholders", i.e. business, faith, economic bodies and T/PCs, to be involved but the situation in the South East as regards our tier remains intransigent. At its February meeting our Regional Forum, SERCAF, decided to form a case for T/PC representation on the proposed Boards and Groups based on our democratic eligibility and contributions to regional activities during the past 10 years through SEERA. This case is to be widely circulated but particularly to the all powerful Principal Local Authority's Leaders' Board.

NALC and NALC Review. Continued criticism of NALC and the slow progress of its Review were highlighted at these meetings particularly when it was reported at ESALC that the Surrey ALC had given NALC six months to improve services and communications otherwise they would leave NALC. There had been a useful discussion on the NALC Review at the NALC AGM in October. A number of Review Group members had been able to meet informally at this meeting and prepare material for the brief for the consultants commissioned from SOLACE to further the Group's recommendations. The consultants had started their work in mid-November and submitted their report in mid-January; this document is currently being considered by the Review Group and appropriate NALC committees.

*Update Feb. 2009.* In early January the Review Group endorsed the general thrust of the consultants' report, viz. its principles of a "one organisation" culture, complete inclusivity and undertaking joint activity and delivery, thus producing behavioural and cultural challenges to NALC as a single organisation. The Group also endorsed the consultants' recommendations that in order to start the process of achieving NALC and the County Associations working together on various fronts a special national

seminar be held in mid-March to address the proposals more thoroughly and commit all parties to co-operative working. The consultants stressed that in being inclusive citizen-focussed organisations T/PCs had a unique selling point to be given roles in Government's Community Empowerment Agenda but we had to move quickly to convince Ministers. In turn, NALC's Executive Committee accepted the proposals for the March Seminar.

ESALC Executive; 29 January 2009. Other matters dealt with included the following. *NALC funding from Government:* £750,000 had been received for local governance projects. Further funding is expected this year from DCLG.

*Community Payback Sentencing:* a presentation was given by the Probation Service on the availability of offenders given community service sentences working in supervised groups on local projects. Several member councils reported successful experiences with these groups. At present Newick, Barcombe, Chailey and Fletchling PCs are considering a joint scheme to tackle local rural projects.

*East Sussex Rural Partnership:* Cllr. Jackie Rowland (Kingston) will represent ESALC.

*Power of Well Being.* Guidelines were published in mid-February. This Power allows T/PCs to spend unlimited amounts for the benefit of the social, economic and environmental activities of their communities. Examples would be to acquire local pubs or shops under threat of closure. Eligibility conditions - two-thirds of councillors to have been elected; qualified Clerk trained in use of the new Power; minimum of 80% councillors trained in use new Power (SALC to provide training); publish a statement of intent.

Central Rail Corridor Board (Minute 3(4)). The Board held its last meeting on 17 October to consider the feedback from the public and others to the publication of the Network Rail Report on the reopening of the Uckfield-Lewes Rail Link and its own statement based on the conclusion that there was insufficient of a business case to warrant reopening. The Board concluded that all the comments could be dealt with satisfactorily and agreed to disband itself until such time as government criteria for transport schemes changed. Both Lewes and Wealden DCs intend to retain in their LDFs protection of the track bed from development from Uckfield to the Hamsey Loop. Significant discussion took place on the effects of resulting "blight" on Isfield, Barcombe Mills and Hamsey. There would be no change for the former two communities as such protection already existed in Local and County Plans but a statement for the LDF would be prepared for the situation in Hamsey where no definitive track location or protection has previously existed. The three PCs involved are to receive copies of the Minutes of the October CRCB meeting as confirmation of these decisions. But the project continues to receive attention; on 9 February the All Party Parliamentary Rail Group received presentations from ESCC and Network Rail on the project. *(Note: despite recent claims to the contrary, my role on CRCB was to represent with observer status the three Lewes District PCs affected by the project, viz. Barcombe, Hamsey, Ringmer, and not all the T/PCs in the district.)*

RVRC/LDALC Statement of Understanding (Minute 3(10)). This document was signed by the Chairmen of both organisations at the November 2008 meeting of RVRC.

T/P Conference, Plumpton, October 2008 (Minute 4). The feedback from SALC, Lewes DC and those attending indicated that the Conference was considered

worthwhile. A number of issues which arose are being followed up, e.g. the role of the rural areas in the District LDF (through RVRC) and the Sustainable Communities Act. Lewes DC has decided to adopt this Act and during its preparation for implementation the LDALC Chairman was invited to attend a DC working party to discuss the input by the Association.

Code of Practice with Lewes DC (Minute 5). Since the October meeting the Chairman and Vice-Chairman have collated the comments made by members and reviewed the document from both a town and a parish council point of view. These points were then used to amend a copy of the Code which was forwarded to the Chief Executive for his attention.

Other matters.

*Quality Council Status.* As well as being highlighted in the Winter SALC Bulletin, the current rather unsatisfactory level of applications for accreditation was the subject of discussion of the Joint Liaison Committee in December. At present only 22 councils in East Sussex have received QC accreditation, viz. 13 in Wealden, 4 in Rother and 5 in Lewes (Newhaven TC, Peacehaven TC, Seaford TC, Newick PC and Ringmer PC). District Associations are being asked to encourage unaccredited councils in their area to consider applying.

*Four Counties Forum.* The JLC was happy to endorse the formation of this group which aims to represent the strategic interests of the 650 T/PCs and PMs in East Sussex, Kent, Surrey and West Sussex and work together on issues of common interest. The FCF is not intended to be a substitute for SERCAF (South East Region County Associations Forum) but to work alongside it.

*NALC Chairman.* At the December 2008 NALC National Council meeting Cllr. Michael Chater (West Sussex) was elected Chairman of NALC for the forthcoming year.

*SALC Meeting with Chief Constable.* Members are asked to note the accompanying report which describes the background to and process for these useful meetings.

A.J. MacGillivray  
January 2009  
February 2009 update

## **Appendix 2 - RURAL VOICES RURAL CHOICES**

### **Report of Meeting held in Ringmer, 9 March 2009**

The meeting was poorly attended as only 8 PCs sent representatives.

Ringmer Reservoir Action Group. John Kay of Ringmer PC described the location and implications of South East Water's proposals to create a storage reservoir on Plaskets Farm. There were numerous deficiencies and objections to the proposals. The farm contained numerous species of wildlife and was on an SSSI. The reservoir would have few retaining walls built as the intention was simply to flood the valley. Water would be abstracted from the River Ouse. Most of the area would be flooded to a depth of 2 metres causing concerns over the effect of evaporation. The Broyle area of Ringmer was lower than that of the surface of the water in the reservoir. Local District and County Councillors were confident that S.E. Water would not proceed with the scheme but the company was owned by Australian Hedge Funds who favoured investment in water reservoirs because of the income obtained through rates levied on water users.

Policing. PC Adam Rose presented a report on behalf of Lewes Police. Numerous personnel changes had occurred. Sgt. McDonald has been transferred to Newhaven. PC Vitler is now an Acting Sgt. Two Rural Specialist PCs are now in post, viz A. Rose and D. Goudie. Much of the Lewes Police efforts have been spent recently dealing with a gang of youngsters causing havoc in the town. PCSOs: of the four Lewes Town Officers one is suspended and a second on light duties causing rural PCSOs to be involved in town matters. *(It is to be noted that currently 2 PCSOs have been allocated to Chailey, Plumpton and East Chiltington (total population 4500), a situation to be compared with Newick, Barcombe and Hamsey who with a total population of 4200 have but one Officer.)* However, two additional PCSOs are to join the Lewes District, one for the Town, 2 for the rural parishes *(will Barcombe, Newick, Hamsey benefit from this ?)*. Speeding continues to be a rural concern. PC Rose is now trained to use the hand speed gun and will target problem areas once they are identified - however, this is a Road Policing Unit responsibility so local Officers can only monitor speeds on 30mph roads. PCSOs and Special Constables are also trained and will be contacting their communities about locations to use. The RPU is to target anti-social driving sites in Ditchling, Wivelsfield and Chailey (21 March) and Lewes (24 March). Lewes District crime figures show that the current reduction in overall crime is 6% short of the District target. However, a number of areas are being targeted by the Response and Local Teams, e.g. break-ins to rural outbuildings for which an unmarked police car has been allocated to patrol the area.

AirS Sustainable Tool-kit. Teresa Gittins (AirS) presented the current version of this document which she had had printed on a short run. This was enthusiastically received by those present. Further work is required to make it into a full tool-kit, e.g. addition of advice and information contacts. Funding was being sought from/via Brighton Univ., Lewes DC, SEEDA. It was felt that the District and County Councils should contribute; they themselves seemed unable to organise such a project as they had to cope with ever changing Government criteria and demands for carbon reduction levels etc.

At the suggestion of the RVRC administrator, Carina, the Sustainability Sub-Group would probably take on the task of re-writing the rural section of the District Sustainable Community Strategy.

Katie Wride had submitted a response to the ESCC Strategy on Cycling .

Update on Taxi Scheme. A report had been received from Kingston PC on this local transport initiative in Kingston, Iford and Swanborough. The real benefit, e.g. in alternatives to private transport use, would emerge from a proper evaluation of those residents who used the service.

Outstanding Health Questions. A written reply had been received from the PCT on the Newick Pharmacy, transport to hospitals, hospital parking charges, Haywards Heath hospital provision (decision on maternity services suspended till review of existing decisions completed).

Future of RVRC. The Chairman led discussion on the future of the partnership. Attendances at meetings had been falling and it was possible that the present format had reached the end of its life. Above all, however, was the withdrawal of the “second homes” money which had funded the RVRC Development Worker, a key figure in the work of the partnership; Val Biggs had now moved to a new post in ESCC. No mention was made of any other funding source. AirS is of the distinct opinion that whilst “rural choices” might have to be dropped there was a need to retain “rural voices” including representation on the full Lewes LSP; an input to the Community Strategy was necessary but it was doubted if parish councils were fully acquaint with the purpose and contents of this document (LDALC would receive a presentation on the Strategy from the new Lewes LSP Chairman on 23 March). The June meeting of RVRC would be devoted largely to this topic.

As BPC has been a regular attender at RVRC and received several benefits, I suggest that we discuss this topic in the May round of meetings before RVRC meets in June.

AJMacG  
March 2009