

BARCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Barcombe Parish Council held at the Sports Pavilion, Barcombe on Tuesday 29th May 2007 at 7.30 p.m.

85. Present: Councillors C M Arbenz, M J Austen, J O Cornwell, N Gant, R Hepple, N C Lear, A J MacGillivray, D Skan and R A Williams.

Also present were County Councillor R St.Pierre.

86. Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received from Cllrs J C Cornwell and D J Lloyd

87. Confirmation and signature of the Minutes of the Meetings held on 20th March and 8th May 2007: The Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on Tuesday 20th March and 8th May 2007 as recorded by minutes 2083 to 2098 and 1 to 20 respectively having previously been circulated were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman

88. Election of Vice – Chairman; On the proposal of Cllr N C Lear, seconded by Cllr D Skan, Cllr D J Lloyd was elected as Vice-Chairman(although absent from the meeting Cllr Lloyd had indicated a willingness to stand)

89. Declarations of Interest: see minute 94(iii) and minute 94(iii)(d)

90. Urgent Business pursuant to Standing Order No. 16: (i) Cllr Gant advised the meeting he had been asked by the Chair of Governors of Barcombe School whether he would serve on the Board of Governors as a representative of the Parish Council. It was agreed that the Governors should make a formal request to the Parish Council but once this was received it was agreed Cllr Gant should represent the Parish Council.

(ii) the Clerk reported that a letter of resignation from the caretaker, Mr D Ridley, had been received that evening. Mr Ridley would leave at the end of June. The Clerk was asked to acknowledge the letter, prepare an advert for a replacement to be published in Barcombe News and circulate details of the hours, pay, duties etc to members. Councillors will consider making a presentation to both the Ridleys at the July round of meetings in recognition of their long service.

91. Public Question Time: County Cllr R St.Pierre reported on her campaign to improve building facilities at the school. Some government funding would be available at the end of 2007 but whether Barcombe would qualify was very much open to doubt. She has been led to believe the parking scheme might be implemented in July, but again nothing was certain.

92. Questions from Councillors: Cllr N C Lear advised the meeting he couldn't attend the next meeting of RVRC – Cllr J O Cornwell will substitute. Councillors asked about the water gauge sign on the south side of Barcombe Mills Road , which appears to have been knocked down – the clerk was asked to report to Highways.

93. The Chairman's Report: The Chairman reported on his attendance at a Transport Issues meeting on 14th May. Two key issues were the lack of a bus station in Lewes and footway installations. The Transport and Highways Committee are asked to review the footway prioritisation in Barcombe. His full report is attached as appendix 1.

The Chairman reported that the latest Lewes DC Planning Handbook was available and was dedicated to the memory of John Fletcher, former Chairman of Ringmer PC and Lewes District Councillor.

Government proposals to change the planning system are available on the Communities

and Local Govt. web site. There is a White Paper plus 2 supplemental papers. One of these deals with technical specifications and the other looks at planning appeals. There is a 3 month consultation period and members of the Planning and Community Services Committee were urged to look at the papers before the July meetings so a formal response to the consultation can be prepared.

94. Reports of Committees:

(i) Transport and Highways Committee: After being proposed by Cllr R Williams and seconded by Cllr D Skan the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th May 2007 as recorded by Minutes numbered 21 to 32 were adopted.

Matters arising:

a) Highways works - minute 28(i) – the Clerk reported on conversations with Mr David Bailey of ESCC Highways. The carriageway to the north of Barcombe Bridge has been marked for repair, the drain at the top of Grantham Bank is being investigated with contractors and the timber mentioned in 28(ii) is to be investigated. Mr Bailey is contacting the bus company to see if they are likely to change the type of buses before working on the raised kerbs. The clerk was advised that verge and hedge cutting will be done as per the planned schedule, and the signage issues have been referred to the relevant team in the Highways Department

b) village bench – minute 28(v) - Cllr Williams reported that the culprit was consulting with her insurers. A suitable replacement bench has been identified

c) parking plans – minute 28(ii) - County Cllr R St.Pierre reported that the deletion of the Saturday parking restrictions would be dealt with at the same time as the new regulations were introduced

(ii) Recreation Ground Committee: After being proposed by Cllr M J Austen, seconded by Cllr R Hepple, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th May 2007 as recorded by Minutes 33 to 47 were adopted.

Matters arising:

a) Playground – minute 41 – The Clerk reported he had prepared an application for a £10,000 grant from Awards For All. County Cllr R St.Pierre agreed to provide the appropriate reference. Cllr MacGillivray reported on a meeting with Andy Frost of Lewes DC. He is happy to draw up plans, but has little or no money available.

b) sports pavilion improvements – minute 43 – Cllr Gant has costings for new benches and will pass these through the next RGC.

c) nature reserve – it was agreed cllr D Skan would continue to attend committee meetings

(iii) Planning and Community Services Committee and Planning Sub-Committee:

After being proposed by Cllr N C Lear, seconded by Cllr R Williams, the Minutes of the Meetings held on 3rd April and 17th May 2007 as recorded by Minutes 2099 to 2104 and 48 to 67 respectively were approved. (N.B. Cllr M J Austen declared interest in 55(i) and did not speak or vote)

Matters arising:

a) Tin Tabernacle – minute 54 –the clerk has written as requested, as yet no reply received

b) Planning sub-committee – minute 55(iii) – the formation of this sub-committee was noted

c) Affordable housing update – minute 59 – the Clerk reported that the Housing Needs survey results had been received and were due to be discussed at a meeting of the Steering Group in June. The Council Chairman advised the meeting the report was still considered confidential to the steering group. After a discussion in which councillors pointed out the difficulty of supporting the concept of affordable housing without knowing whether they would support the potential sites and Cllr Lear emphasising the requirement to establish a definite “need” it was agreed that delays in making matters public were potentially damaging and the Chairman was asked to push the steering group

d) Affordable Housing – parish representatives to Chase project – minute 59(iii) – Given the large number of potential sites and the proximity of most councillors to one or more of these, which could cause potential conflicts of interest, it was agreed that Cllr R Williams would join the steering group given that her village centre location would not be affected by any potential sites.

e) Neighbourhood Watch – minute 61 – Cllr Hepple volunteered to co-ordinate a revived scheme and his offer was accepted by the Council.

(iv) Finance and General Purposes Committee: After being proposed by Cllrs J O Cornwell and R Hepple respectively, both seconded by Cllr M J Austen, the Minutes of the Meetings held on 3rd April and 17th May 2007 as recorded by minutes 2105 to 2111 and 68 to 84 respectively were approved.

Cllr Hepple's membership of the FGP Committee was noted.

Matters arising:

a) Model Code of Conduct – minute 74(i) – The Clerk reported that further information had been received from the Monitoring Officer on the new Model Code for Parish Councils. The MO has been asked to clarify concerns over “personal” interests – once guidance has been received the FGP Committee will make a recommendation to the full council

95. Parish Action Plan – report from Cllr Lear: This is attached as Appendix 2. It was agreed Cllr Lear will ask Mark McTaggart, Parish Action Plans adviser from AirS, to attend the July round of meetings, and the issue will be followed up via PCS Committee.

96. Emergency Planning: In the absence of Cllr Lloyd no report was available

97. Correspondence:

The clerk reported that planning permission for the youth shelter had been received and Viridor Credits had authorised the council to ask Monster Play to proceed.

ESCC have written asking for comment by 20th June on their Speed Management proposals. It was felt to be of such importance to express the Council's views that this paper will be circulated by the Clerk and discussed at a special meeting of the Transport and Highways Committee on Tuesday 12th June

The Airs Annual Review has been received and was passed to the Chairman.

98. Accounts for payment: There were no accounts for payment.

99. Outstanding action points: The Clerk is still waiting for Register of Members Interest forms to be completed by Cllrs J O Cornwell, J C Cornwell, CM Arbenz, R Williams and D Skan. New forms will be sent to those councillors who have mislaid the originals.

100. Date, time and place of next meeting; The next meeting will be held in the Sports Pavilion, Barcombe on Tuesday 24th May 2007 at 7.30 p.m.

101. Close of meeting: There being no further business to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55 p.m.

Barcombe Parish Council – 29th May 2007 – Appendix 1

**TRANSPORT ISSUES MEETING
Report of meeting held on 14 May 2007**

This group is a spin-off from RVRC, organised by Val Briggs, the RVRC Development Worker. Following the retirement of Cllr. Shirley James, this, the third six-monthly meeting of the group, was chaired by Tom Hawthorne, the new D.Cllr for Plumpton (and of RDH Buses). Those attending represent a wide range of organisations and individuals involved in transport across the board in the District,

of the PC's complaints over the handling of the end of the CountryLink bus project and through RVRC a subsequent meeting with ESCC Passenger Transport; I guess that I now wear a sort of "rail hat" through the Central Rail Corridor Project Board.

Passenger Transport. Mark Evans (ESCC Passenger Transport) confirmed that funds had been agreed to continue the Newick/Barcombe 121/122 bus services for a further 3 years, despite the Lead Member's original recommendation of 3 months only.

The ESCC Review of Passenger Transport was well underway. The reasons behind the exercise were ESCC's budgetary problems and the need to have new policies to allow transport provision by less expensive but more efficient means. A major meeting on the Review was held at the end of April. The main relevant points came from the commercial operators who, whilst recognising the current financial constraints, were of the opinion that commercial bus operations in the county had reached a maximum; additional services could not be provided without subsidy. The operators felt that emphasis should be placed on the use of capital budgets for additional infrastructure (roads etc.) to improve services; however, analysis of their responses showed that the urban bus operators advocated such infrastructure, whereas the rural operators held that subsidies were required to maintain country bus routes. The operators also showed concern over the availability of concessionary fares as the level of funding returned to them was not commensurate with the number of such passengers they carried. Community transport had been discussed and the possibility of parish councils contributing to funding highlighted. The Transport Issues meeting found that this was not necessarily a solution as parish council budgets were also stretched and experiences of a cluster of councils funding a community transport bus developed problems due to lack of co-operation by some of the participants !

School Transport. The bus operators expressed general satisfaction with the new parking layout and timetable for buses taking pupils to Chailey School; some teething problems required to be discussed with individual operators. No such plans seemed to be envisaged to date for Ringmer School. The operators reported some dissatisfaction with schools issuing letters for use by pupils who had lost their bus passes and were awaiting replacements (cost £5).

Claire Morgan (ESCC School Travel Plans) reported that 70% of schools in the county would have Travel Plans in place by July 2007. Additional funds were becoming available for schemes such as Walking Buses.

Community Transport. Following an interest in such transport in the Lower Ouse Valley, Val Biggs and Mark McTavish (AirS) had explored the possibility of using community buses based in Newhaven but had run into difficulties regarding finance and, curiously, establishing the true need for such a service. Second-hand vehicles were available but external funding sources were difficult to find. It was agreed that any such schemes must be operated through the Community Transport organisation and funding identified. From his work as the Brighton & Hove Community Transport Manager Ed Bassford (Firle PC/RVRC) reported that solutions could be found, e.g. their fleet of 15 vehicles were used by a range of local groups who provided their own qualified drivers and often had access to external funding to cover the daily cost of £25-40 per bus.

Transport to health care facilities was a concern particularly to older people. Whilst it was recognised that such transport came under the responsibilities of Health Care, the relevant authorities used their funds for other purposes. Transport to health care facilities was a difficult area and not easy to sustain. The provision of dropped and raised kerbs was highly recommended to aid the elderly and disabled.

Youth Parliament Transport Campaign. Katrina Mather described the national campaign for young people to have free transport. Although such schemes exist in London and Isle of Wight, the government had rejected the Youth Parliament's plea on grounds of lack of funding. Discussion produced examples of various concessionary youth bus schemes in the South East and East Sussex which required a fee to paid; it was emphasised that "free" in this respect was something of a misnomer since such as central government had to bear the costs eventually. In general, youth activities were constrained by lack of transport facilities. Youth were also concerned over the implications stemming from the Bus Station situation in Lewes. With stops now being roadside there was a need for bus shelters; it was stated that some 30 years ago an agreement was made whereby responsibility for bus shelters in East Sussex was transferred from District to Parish/Town Councils.

Footpaths/Footways. Robert Marshall (ESCC Strategy Dept.) outlined the current situation regarding provision of footways. Funding was the main obstacle, e.g. the capital programme carried no funds for such and parish councils were looked upon to provide finance; in fact, any new footways in the county in recent years have been provided by parish councils. ESCC has a list of some 140 proposed schemes, 30 of which have not been assessed because of lack of funding. There appear to be no external sources of funding for such projects. The difficulties are shown by the three schemes prioritised by RVRC, viz. at St. Peters School, Chailey (not in top priority list approved by ESCC); Beechwood Lane, Hamsey (69/140; application by Hamsey PC rejected by ESCC Lead Member, Jan. 2007; Newick Green (at lower end of 140). [N.B. I have a copy of the list and the criteria used to assess proposed schemes. Two Barcombe roads are included – School Hill and School Path.]

Central Rail Corridor. I reported that the relevant Lewes and Wealden PCs now had representatives with observer status on the Project Board and that at the April Board meeting it was announced that Network Rail had indicated their desire both to be involved and to carry out the Feasibility Study on the re-opening of the Lewes-Uckfield link. Ed Bassford (as a former ESCC Transport Officer) commented that of the numerous studies carried out on re-opening this rail link the present was highly important because of the involvement of Network Rail.

AJMacG

May 2007

Barcombe Parish Council – 29th May 2007 – appendix 2

Barcombe Parish Action Plan Report to Barcombe Parish Council

“The Parish Action Plan process is a way in which your community can establish what are the key priorities and actions for the future of your area. The process should involve consultation exercises with the entire community to ensure that everyone has a say and that the actions put forward are those considered important to the majority rather than the few.”

Taken from the Action in Rural Sussex website

As the first step in producing a new action plan for the parish, in January 2005 the Parish Council held a well-attended meeting to find the main concerns. Below in an appendix is a summary of the main issues that came out.

Some of the issues identified – (traffic; parking; access to health centre; public transport; policing; the Rec) have been very much on the council's agenda since then, but we made no more progress towards a formal action plan

A year ago, the then Planning & Environment Committee felt there was no pressing need for the action plan just then – or, some thought, at all! Anyway the last year of the old council was not felt to be an opportune time. Much has changed in the village since the last Action Plan in 1996 and it is generally reckoned that one needs a new one every ten years. My own feeling is that we should not neglect this but should pick it up as an urgent job for the new parish council. Nowadays an action plan is usually a dynamic document i.e. the constituent parts are intended to be constantly revised as needed. Mark McTaggart is the Action Plans Officer at AiRS (Action in Rural Sussex) who promotes and helps with action plans. See http://www.srcc.org.uk/projects/ap_pages/actionplans.htm for more information. I am hoping to get him to come and talk to us about what we might do next.

Nick Lear
29th May 2007

Appendix

Barcombe Parish Action Plan – ideas from Jan 2005 consultation

1. Development

Housing needs:

- *Limited expansion of village*
- *Affordable housing for local people*
- *Housing for elderly, including sheltered*

Infrastructure to be improved before any further development

Some suggested sites: Allotments School Path; Hillside; Pump House field; Sidehills; Old Barcombe or Barcombe Mills; Existing Village Hall

Employment:

- *Small business development/use of redundant farm buildings*

2. Education

Nursery and pre-school

Need for more under-two-years nursery provision; better environment for toddlers

Primary

- *Barcombe School important; concern over further expansion*
- *Provision of breakfast club*

3. Environment

Kerbs/footways.

- *Footways suggested for various routes: Mongers Mead link to Oak Tree to High Street; School Hill; Village Centre to Tin Tabernacle; Weald View to High Street*
- *Drop kerbs for elderly and young mothers etc*

Signage

Barcombe Cross to be signed as such. No new signage without consultation. Unease over present amount of signage. No unnecessary signage, not too much signage

4. Community Safety, Travel

Public Transport

Better advertising of bus timetable. Raised kerb at bus stop. More trains to stop at

Coakley Road

Police

More policing to combat speeding. Generally pleased with Police Community Support Officer (who was then Andy Ashe). Like return to village police officer.

Car parking

More off-street parking needed. High St. parking/yellow lines needs attention. (Five out of six groups wanted to remove yellow lines). Police presence.

Dogs

No dogs/dogs on leads in new fields adjoining Rec

Traffic

Traffic calming; reduce speed limits; extend speed limits.

5. Recreational and social facilities

Young people

Independently run youth club. Children's playground – need for refurbishment or replace altogether. Outside basketball court. Multi-use floodlit surface. Meeting place/Youth shelter (which has since been built)

Sport

Football: reinstate junior club. Tennis: better advertising of opportunities to play; floodlit courts. Bowls: Need for 6x6 rink

Unused land

Pumphouse field: create informal park with picnic tables and fitness trail. Possible site for e.g. housing. Tennis court field – create two-tier playing field

Recreation ground

Overuse – needs upgrading

Sports Hall

More information re availability and cost. Needs more use. Too small for adult use – needs extending.

Village Hall - existing

*Facilities appropriate to local need
Could existing hall be refurbished
Beware of loss of high street trade (in forecourt) for fundraisers*

Village Hall – new

*Projected hire costs? Who new users? Why no fire station incorporated?
Needs footpath from village.*

Footpaths

Single post way-marking and stiles where necessary

6. Shopping and allied services

Village shops

Retain excellent service. Barcombe Stores given particular praise

Health care facilities

Branch surgery closure deplored – seek reinstatement of surgery. Reinstatement of prescription service. Transport difficulties in reaching Health Centre. Use village hall for immunisation – eg flu jabs.