

BARCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning and Community Services Committee held at the Sports Pavilion, Barcombe on Thursday 10th September 2009 at 7.00 p.m.

1343. Present: Councillors N C Lear, C M Arbenz, J O Cornwell, D J Lloyd, A J MacGillivray, D Skan and R Williams. Three members of the public were also in attendance

1344. Apologies for absence: None received

1345. Confirmation and Signature of the Minutes of the Last Meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2009 were approved at the Parish Council meeting on 21st July 2009.

1346. Declarations of Interest: Cllr NC Lear re minute 1350 and Cllr R Williams re minute 1353.

1347. Urgent Business pursuant to Standing Order No. 16: There was none.

1348. Village Action Plan: Cllr N Gant is working on the results analysis and the Clerk was asked him to provide a progress report at the next full parish council meeting.

1349. Sustainable Communities Act: The Clerk had circulated in advance an e mail from Mr S Shaw of the Local Works action group. After a report on the issue from Cllr A J MacGillivray it was agreed the Clerk will write to local M.P., Norman Baker, asking him to vote in favour of the Sustainable Communities Act Amendment Bill and also express the parish council's concerns that the parish/town council tier of local government was excluded from the original Act.

1350. Affordable housing: At this point the Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow members of the public to speak. It seems young people with impeccable local credentials may not qualify for accommodation in the new scheme because of the way Lewes DC is implementing its Choice Based Letting policy. There are potentially too many applicants for the one bedroom properties and couples without children are apparently unable to apply for two bedroom units. Should they have a family in the future it is likely to be difficult to switch to the two bedroom unit for which they would then be eligible.

The chairman then reconvened the meeting. It was agreed that the parish council would strive to avoid a scenario where the intended beneficiaries of the new development did not qualify for housing. It was agreed i) that as a matter of urgency Cllr A J MacGillivray will contact Hastoe and make them aware of the parish council's concerns and seek their advice as to what might be done to exercise some leverage over Lewes DC ii) a letter be sent to Norman Baker, MP, to make him aware of this difficult situation iii) a copy of this be sent to District Councillor D. Mitchell.

The Clerk reported he had still not had a reply from Lewes DC to his letter expressing concern at the apparent exclusion of local parish councils from the consultation

process regarding the introduction of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme. He will chase.

1351. Lewes District council planning policy: Nothing to report at the present time.

1352. Rural Voices, Rural Choices: Cllr Lear reported on a poorly attended meeting earlier in the week. The Chair of RVRC is seeking to select eight appropriate “volunteers” who can keep the organisation ticking over and perhaps co-ordinate feedback on issues of mutual interest. However, the outcome might be that RVRC simply fades away.

1353. Village halls update: An advert has been placed seeking offers from developers for the existing site whose planning permission expires in October. A new planning application will be required. It was reported that the Charity Trustees will monitor the sale to ensure “best value”, but because any purchaser will not be able to obtain vacant possession until the new village hall is functioning it is perhaps most likely that the disposal will form part of a financial package with the builder of the new village hall.

It was reported by Cllr D Skan that applications for grants from three bodies – Viridor, Biffaward and G Weston Trust – had been submitted.

1354. Anchor Inn – footpath issues: Cllr N C Lear has heard nothing further from ESCC and he will pursue.

1355. Correspondence:

Lewes District Council – Standards Committee – Guidelines have been issued to parish councils to cover the position where it is asked to comment on a planning application and it is not possible to schedule a meeting. In these circumstances the Clerk (not the Chairman) will contact councillors by telephone, record their views and recommendations and these will be noted at the next meeting. The Clerk will pass any recommendation to the District Council advising that it was made by telephone consultation and not at a meeting. Personal interests will be noted; views of those with a prejudicial interest shall not be taken into account. The guidelines were noted

Lewes District Council/ BT – adopt a red phone booth initiative: The Clerk reported that BT is consulting via Lewes DC (views required by 31st October) on the future of red phone boxes. There are two in Barcombe. Local councils can apply to “adopt” the structure for the cost of £1. If this course of action is followed BT remove the telephony equipment and the box is left for community use. There was no obvious appetite for the scheme, but an article would be included in Barcombe News to see if there might be ideas and support within the parish.

Lewes District Council – Town and Parish Council’s Conference. The clerk reported that this is being held on Wednesday 21st October 2009 at Plumpton college from 9.25 am to 3.15 pm. It was agreed that Cllrs A J MacGillivray and J O Cornwall would attend, the clerk being away on holiday. The Clerk was asked to ensure the housing allocation policy was on the agenda.

Environment Agency – Flooding: The clerk reported that flood Safety Exhibitions were being held throughout the county. The local venue was the Civic Centre in Uckfield on 25th September 2009, between 1 pm to 7 pm

SALC – An invitation to attend a training day for councillors who might wish to sit on the new National Park Authority has been received. The Clerk was asked to seek

clarification as to whether representatives from parishes outside the boundary of the Park were eligible to participate.

Hastoe – Cllr A J MacGillivray reported that the postal address of the new development would be 7 – 12 The Willows, Barcombe.

1356. Outstanding Action Points: These were covered in the agenda items

1357. Close of Meeting: There being no further business to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15 p.m.