

PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 20th September 2021, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion

Present	Cllrs Cruse, Grant, Lewis, Driver and Thomas	
In Attendance	Cllr Warne; C Levett, Clerk; 7 parishioners.	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane and Dawlings.	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	No declarations of interest.	
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The Parish Council minutes from the meeting held on 19 July 2021 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
4. MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ITEMS	<p>a. <u>Parish Councillor Vacancy/Co-option</u> : Two applications were received for the Parish Councillor vacancy. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to co-opt Guy Hagan. The Clerk to action.</p> <p>b. <u>Allotment Bequest</u> : There has been continuing communication with the executors and the latest update received stated that solicitors were asked to draw up the transfers but this is currently held up by Land Registry as the land is not registered.</p>	CL
5. REPORTS BY COUNTY/ BOROUGH COUNCILLORS	<p>Written report received from Cllr Dawlings :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government</u> : On 2nd September, Robert Jenrick then Secretary of State at MHCLG, visited Tunbridge Wells. The visit went well especially discussion on using MHCLG's Towns Fund to help with regeneration and the criteria for those schemes for which TWBC does not presently qualify. Cllr Dawlings followed this up with a letter on the possibility of such funding. No reply has been received and Michael Gove has now been appointed in the role. Helen Grant has also been helping Cllr Dawlings get closer to the MHCLG. • <u>Finance</u> : The local economy seems to be coming out of the pandemic in better shape than expected - unemployment is down and there seem to be labour shortages driving up wages; Council Tax collections are above forecast. There are signs of the Council's income picking up, but it will not recover to pre-pandemic levels until office workers return to their offices and shoppers return. However, there will still be a budget shortfall of about £1.8 million next year and consideration is being given on how to address this. • <u>Garden Waste Collection</u> : The continued suspension of this service is regrettable but it has meant that other waste and recycling collections have continued, mostly satisfactorily, despite continued problems with shortage of HGV drivers and crew sickness. 44 crews are needed for waste and recycling collections in TWBC and TMBC plus 3 for garden waste and presently Urbaser, the Council's contractor, has just 22 drivers on books. The subscription for collection of garden waste is £52 a year and subscription periods are being extended so that residents will get the 26 collections they have subscribed for. • <u>Co-working in Town Hall</u> : Plans to utilise the surplus space for co-working is continuing. <p>Cllr Warne reported the following :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Planning</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ 5 year land supply : at 1st April 2021 the figure had been calculated as 4.93 years. This was challenged, and suggested it should be 4.06 years. TWBC agreed that one site proposed for 25 dwellings would not be deliverable within the 5 years due to a lengthy probate process, and the figure was adjusted to 4.89 years. ➢ Turnden : As previously reported this development in Cranbrook had been called in by the Secretary of State. This starts on 21st September and runs until 5th November. ➢ Brick Kiln Farm : Hill Residential, the site developer, has submitted a new reserved matters application. The developer is consulting widely with Cranbrook residents, Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council and the NDP group. ➢ NDP : Cranbrook and Sissinghurst NDP is almost ready for submission to TWBC. Much of the work required following the Regulation 14 stage has been completed. Cllr Warne congratulated 	

Chairman..... Date.....

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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>Benenden on its successful examination outcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>TWBC Climate Emergency Advisory Panel</u> : This group, which Cllr Warne is part of, meets on 11th October to discuss TWBC’s Carbon Descent Plan and the commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030. • <u>Electoral Review Consultation</u> : Two thirds of respondents wanted the system to remain as it is (“by thirds”) and one third of respondents wanted the “all out” system. Across the borough the majority of parish councils wanted the current system to remain. Borough Councillors will vote on the matter in November. • <u>Outdoor Events</u> : A number of successful and well attended events have taken place in Cranbrook. 	
6. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	Cllr Thomas to attend the TW KALC Area meeting on 29 th September and the Parish Chairmen’s Group meeting on 5 th October.	
7. PLANNING	<p><u>a. Neighbourhood Development Plan</u> : The Plan passed the examination stage of the process. TWBC requested Parish Council permission to extend the statutory timescale of 5 weeks to issue their Decision Statement following the receipt of the final report from the examiner. This was agreed. The NDP group is working through the modifications needed and this is almost complete and the Plan can proceed to local referendum.</p> <p><u>b. Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 16th August 2021</u> : The minutes of the meeting were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.</p> <p><u>c. Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/02571/LBC 1 Corner Cottages Cranbrook Road. Listed Building Consent - Temporarily remove the existing brick floors in the dining room and lounge, dig out 270 mm of soil, place a concrete underlay of 100mm, a damp proof membrane, 50 mm of rigid insulation, underfloor heating pipes and 75 mm of screed, and then replace the bricks on top. the dining room bricks will be relaid in the currently existing stretcher bond, while the lounge will be re-laid in the currently present herringbone pattern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Listed building opposite Benenden School Lodge on the Cranbrook Road. ➢ Previous applications for the restoration of the property, all of which BPC has supported subject to the Conservation Officer’s opinion — all have been granted. ➢ Conservation Officer supports the reconstruction of the floor under the bricks (bricks are laid on bare earth and there is a damp problem). <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application subject to the works being to the satisfaction of the Conservation Officer.</p> • 21/02862/FULL Barnhill, Dingledden Farm Road. Single storey side extension; two new canopy porches; and new rooflight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Originally a barn, converted in 1880s into two small cottages. Applicants subsequently converted these into a 3 bedroom dwellings in 1967 and have lived there ever since. ➢ There is no downstairs cloakroom. ➢ Applicants have lived in the property for 54 years. Mr Williams in in his 90s and Mrs Williams is in her late 70s. ➢ Proposal is for single storey side extension to provide small utility room, cloakroom with shower, and small ground floor room which can be used as a bedroom but flexible for use by other/future occupants as study, family room or extension to existing kitchen. ➢ Proposed porches to front and new side entrance will make life easier for the occupants and visitors and front entrance will provide a more welcoming appearance to the cottage. ➢ Minimal impact on the site and the surroundings. ➢ No impact on the landscape/area. ➢ Side extension and porches will add to the character of the cottage. ➢ PRoW WC356 runs from Dingledden Lane to Dingledden Farm Road — not affected by proposal. 	

- Appears to comply with all relevant polices as the D&A Statement lists.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- **21/03012/FULL Little Nineveh, Nineveh Lane.** Erection of veranda to the front of the property and boot/utility room extension to the rear.
 - Planning statement attached giving relevant info along with photos of the property.
 - The boot room and utility room rear extension adds 13.5 sq.m to the property, all materials will match the existing.
 - Veranda to be built to the front of the property on the south elevation flat lead roof with hardwood painted supporting columns and oak floor.
 - The woodwork excluding the floor will be painted white.
 - No Listed Buildings in proximity that would be affected by this modest proposal. No impact on the landscape or character of the area.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- **21/03045/FULL and 21/03046/LBC Laurel House, The Street.** Demolition of existing garage and construction of matching garage in the same location.
 - Subject of a planning application (21/02098/LBC) in July for extensive internal and external works to repair the listed building. BPC supported the application subject to the works being satisfactory to the Conservation Officer — the application has not yet been determined.
 - From the heritage statement: Existing garage has a very high level of structural damage that makes repairing it unviable, very costly and would generate a temporary result of poor quality. Most damage is due to a series of very extensive cracks to the structural floor slab and the cause is likely to be root damage from the nearby silver birch. (The tree is to be replaced with a less invasive species under a previous planning application.) The walls are of masonry and timber frame; the cracks in the slab are affecting the entire structure of the garage and in time would lead to the total or partial collapse of the building. The proposal is to demolish the garage above and below ground and build a replacement garage with a more robust overall structure and upgraded doors and window.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application subject to the works being to the satisfaction of the Conservation Officer.

- **21/03083/FULL Forest Farm, Nineveh Lane.** Change of use of land from agricultural field to residential garden
 - Bungalow is currently the subject of an application for remodelling, removal of sheds and siting of a home office which BPC supported as the bungalow is in need of modernising and restoration. TWBC has not yet determined.
 - The garden of the bungalow is of an irregular shape and this proposal is to incorporate part of the adjoining field to extend the western and southern boundaries of the property. It makes sense to square off, not only the garden, but also the field.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- **21/02714/FULL Land Adjacent To Standen Street.** Material change of use of land to mixed use for agriculture, equestrian and to include stationing of caravans for residential occupation with associated operational development, additional hard standing, repositioned manure store (Part Retrospective)

Cllrs Beveridge, Grant and Thomas made a site visit.

- The site has consent under 20/02226/FULL for a barn/stable with storage and welfare and access track. BPC objected to this proposal on the grounds that there was no justifiable need for such a large building on land capable of supporting only 2-3 horses. There was no reference to a residential occupation of the site.

	<p>➤ Formerly a green field comprising agricultural land located at the end of a significant rural lane in an isolated location outside the LBD, and within the AONB, the view on the approach to the end of Standen Street is now one of a developed site with gates, an access track of road plantings, and a large barn. The rural landscape and nature of the local environment is considerably altered from its previous aspect. With the addition of the mobile home, positioned in front of the barn, the first view into the site is of the mobile home. In a rural location a view of a barn/stable is expected, whilst the view of a mobile home is not.</p> <p>➤ The introduction of a mobile home, touring caravan, domestic paraphernalia and vehicle parking associated with residential occupation is visually intrusive and adversely affects the rural landscape, causing significant harm to the character and appearance of the countryside.</p> <p>➤ The proposal is contrary to the current Local Plan 2006 policies of LBD1, EN1, EN25 and H4 and policies 4, 5 and 14 of the Core Strategy 2010 and paras. 176 & 177 of the NPPF.</p> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to object to this application.</p> <p><u>d. Other Planning Matters</u></p> <p>i. <u>Wastewater works upgrade</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parish Council had contacted Trant on 24th August raising concerns expressed by the residents of Walkhurst Road, and shared by the Parish Council, about the proposed tree works, and the response received, 18th September, was circulated. • Trant had provided a copy of its survey with pictures of clearance required and had made some concessions. However, the Parish Council remains unhappy with the proposals and the impact on owners, and will request that smaller vehicles are used and request that the permission is sought of each property. • Cllr Thomas to draft a response. 	NT																																																				
8. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS & TRANSPORT	<p><u>a. Rural Speeding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parishioner who had made contact in April, which was followed up by Cllr Driver, regarding speeding and dangerous traffic had contacted the Parish Council again. • Cllr Driver wrote to Mathew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, expressing the concerns regarding rural speeding and requesting consideration and action to improve the situation. • The Parish Council discussed Speed Indicator Devices and action taken in other parishes. • Benenden's Speedwatch team submits details of all speeding recorded to the Kent Police Speedwatch Support Team. Cllr Driver to request details of how many letters have been sent to offenders, how many have been spoken to by the Police and how many have been cautioned. <p><u>b. Road Closure Signs</u></p> <p>Cllr Cruse advised that he has made a formal complaint to KCC Highways regarding roadworks/road closed/diversion signs and the conditions attached to these which are not adhered to.</p>	PD																																																				
9. RESOURCING/ FINANCE	<p><u>a. Monthly Finance</u></p> <p>TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st August 2021</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Brought forward</td> <td style="text-align: right;">81545.70</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Income</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Supplier</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Reference</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>John Lewis</td> <td>Broadband</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10.43</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>NEST</td> <td>Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">67.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>Corporate Finance</td> <td>Copier Lease</td> <td style="text-align: right;">180.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Fox Construction</td> <td>Village Sign</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1338.22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>C Levett</td> <td>Clerk's Salary</td> <td style="text-align: right;">909.18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Edf</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">41.06</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Tenterden Twilight</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">492.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Tompsett Landscaping</td> <td>Grounds Maintenance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">552.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>BT</td> <td>Office Phone</td> <td style="text-align: right;">126.15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>PKF Littlejohn LLP</td> <td>External Audit</td> <td style="text-align: right;">240.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Brought forward	81545.70	Income		TOTAL	0.00	Expenditure			Supplier	Reference	Amount	DD	John Lewis	Broadband	10.43	DD	NEST	Pension	67.80	DD	Corporate Finance	Copier Lease	180.00	BACS	Fox Construction	Village Sign	1338.22	BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	909.18	BACS	Edf	Public Toilets	41.06	BACS	Tenterden Twilight	Public Toilets	492.00	BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	552.00	BACS	BT	Office Phone	126.15	BACS	PKF Littlejohn LLP	External Audit	240.00	
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	<p>TOTAL 3956.84</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reconciled with bank statement 052 31st August 2021 77588.86</p> <p>Approved payments for September 2021</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">DD</td> <td style="width: 30%;">John Lewis</td> <td style="width: 30%;">Broadband</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: right;">10.43</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>NEST</td> <td>Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">67.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Fox Construction</td> <td>Village Sign</td> <td style="text-align: right;">573.52</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>C Levett</td> <td>Clerk's Salary</td> <td style="text-align: right;">909.18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Edf</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">40.53</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Tenterden Twilight</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td style="text-align: right;">615.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Tompsett Landscaping</td> <td>Grounds Maintenance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">258.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>HMRC</td> <td>Employer Contributions Q2</td> <td style="text-align: right;">157.59</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2632.05</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>b. Completion of External Audit Review</u> : The external auditor has signed off the 2020/21 accounts and confirms that all is in accordance with Proper Practices; no matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met; no matters affecting their opinion which they draw to the attention of the Parish Council.</p>	DD	John Lewis	Broadband	10.43	DD	NEST	Pension	67.80	BACS	Fox Construction	Village Sign	573.52	BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	909.18	BACS	Edf	Public Toilets	40.53	BACS	Tenterden Twilight	Public Toilets	615.00	BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	258.00	BACS	HMRC	Employer Contributions Q2	157.59	TOTAL			2632.05	
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<p>10. ENVIRONMENT & MAINTENANCE</p>	<p><u>a. Beacon Field - Wild Flower Meadow</u> : Cllr Driver reported :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having obtained advice from Bumblebee Conservation, half of Beacon Field was cut on 21st August and the arisings raked by volunteers. • Green hay from an existing wildflower meadow at the Rare Breeds Centre was collected and strewn across the raked area along with additional material from meadows at Great Dixter. • Cllr Driver subsequently cut and bagged all the down from the thistles bordering the west side of the field (although some of that seed had already dispersed). There is still a substantial crop of thistles seeding over the uncut portion of the field. It was agreed that this should be cut at the end of the month. • Bumblebee Conservation has also offered to supply 100g of Yellow Rattle seed to be sown later in the Autumn. As a sign of commitment to the project the Parish Council unanimously agreed to purchase 200g of Yellow Rattle seed (approximately £100). <p><u>b. Parish Wells</u> : Cllr Beveridge had reported :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Graham Stevens of Anthony Hicks Ltd and stone mason on site and concluded that the best long-term solution to the repairs to the Benenden Well structure would be to cut the existing corner posts of the structure about 100-150mm above their current bottom level (in order to remove infested timber) and install new stone plinths which are approximately 100-150mm taller than the existing ones. • Graham Stevens revised the quote accordingly. • The existing stone plinths are cracking because there are steel pins locating the posts onto the plinths and these pins have rusted and expanded. To not replicate this in the future and to reduce the amount of post removal to a minimum, stainless steel pins would be inserted through the timber and into new stone plinths. The timber structure would need to be supported to remove the existing plinths. • The Stone Mason has priced to replicate the existing plinths in terms of the relief detailing and chamfering which would be a requirement of any Listed Building consent. • The works and structural repairs are a major investment, approximately £30,000. • Of the two quotes received regarding the repairs to the two Well structures, Anthony Hicks was the most detailed and comprehensive and Graham Stevens has a better grasp of the work that is required to each structure. <p>It was unanimously agreed that the work should take place. Cllr Grant to look into a grant from English Heritage and Cllr Lewis to look into a grant from the Wolfson Foundation.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">PG JL</p>																																				
<p>11. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS/ COMMUNITY</p>	<p><u>a. Benenden Almshouse Charities Appointment of Trustees</u> : Benenden Almshouse Charities advised that Trustees Blair Bulland and Colin Hayman are due to retire as in 2021 and both have confirmed</p>																																					

	<p>they are willing to serve as trustees for a further term of 4 years. Trustees have been looking to appoint an additional trustee with a background in finance and have appointed Colin Willis in this role. As required, the Parish Council agreed to the reappointment of Mr Bulland and Mr Hayman and to the new appointment of Mr Willis.</p> <p>b. Public Toilets :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Clerk had circulated a full report on antisocial behaviour occurring again in the men’s toilets. • It is hoped that there will be increased patrols by the police. • The police recommend that residents are encouraged to report any suspicious behaviour. The Clerk to action. • The police recommend that CCTV cameras are installed. • Cllr Driver had looked into the cost of installing CCTV and this will be about £500. • The Clerk to clarify with the police who will view any footage. 	<p>CL</p> <p>CL</p>
12. COMMUNICATIONS	Nothing to report.	
13. CORRESPONDENCE/ PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS	No items.	
14. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION	Items to be followed up by the working groups.	
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Parish Council Meeting Monday 18 th October 2021 7pm, Quinlan Centre, Benenden Hospital	
	The meeting closed at 9pm	

C Levett, Clerk to the Parish Council, 20th September 2021