

# PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on  
Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion**

Present	Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Driver, Grant, Lewis, Skeet and Thomas	
In Attendance	Cllr Holden; C Levett, Clerk	
<b>Item</b>		<b>Action Responsibility</b>
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Cllrs Cruse, Dawlings and Warne.	
2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR	<p>Cllr Beveridge proposed Cllr Thomas as Chair of the Parish Council. This was seconded by Cllr Cochrane and unanimously agreed.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas proposed Cllr Lewis as Vice Chair of the Parish Council. This was seconded by Cllr Beveridge and unanimously agreed.</p>	
3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	Cllr Thomas declared an interest in Planning Application 21/00967/FULL Part Of Reed Wood, Mill Street and left the meeting for this discussion.	
4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The Parish Council minutes from the meeting held on 19 <sup>th</sup> April 2021 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
5. MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ITEMS	<p><u>a. Parish Councillor Responsibilities/Working Groups</u> The following was agreed -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resourcing : Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Skeet, Thomas</li> <li>• Planning (including Neighbourhood Development Plan). Dark sky readings : Cllrs Beveridge, Grant, Skeet, Thomas</li> <li>• Highways (including speedwatch, footpaths, parking, cycle paths) : Cllrs Beveridge, Cruse, Driver</li> <li>• Communications (including broadband, website, social media, magazine) : Cllrs Cochrane, Cruse, Driver</li> <li>• Village organisations (BVT, village hall, schools, church, shop etc) : Cllrs Cochrane, Lewis, Thomas</li> <li>• Environment and maintenance (village tidy, toilets, bus stops, wells, village signs, phone boxes, War Memorial, mowing/hedges, Christmas tree), survey of village assets : Cllrs Beveridge, Driver, Grant, Lewis</li> </ul> <p>The Clerk to produce Terms of Reference for the Groups.</p> <p><u>b. Parish Wells</u> 2 quotes have been received so far which had been circulated. Dolmen quoted £4,000 and Anthony Hicks quoted in the region of £30,000. KCR Ltd have been in touch but not yet quoted. The Clerk to contact Cranbrook and Ashford Roofing for a quote.</p> <p><u>c. Public Toilets</u> No response has yet been received from the electrician. The Clerk to contact other electricians.</p> <p><u>d. Village Sign</u> To be taken up by the Environment and Maintenance Group.</p> <p><u>e. Rural Broadband Consultation</u> The Department for Culture, Media &amp; Sport is consulting/calling for evidence on improving broadband connectivity to very hard to reach areas. Cllr Driver had drafted a response, which was circulated and agreed. Cllr Skeet raised concerns again about the broadband service received and Cllr Holden asked him to email details of the issues.</p> <p><u>f. Allotments Bequest</u> In February the executors advised that they were still waiting on legal advice and that the trustees would then have to discuss. The Clerk has chased again but had no response.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>CL/EMG</p> <p>CL/EMG</p> <p>EMG</p> <p>MS/ COMMS</p>

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

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	<p><u>g. Dog Mess Bins</u> Cllr Lewis advised that there is an issue with dog mess being placed in the bins next to Iden Green Playground. The bin is often full and although regularly emptied by TWBC it is unsightly and smelly. It was agreed to investigate the possibility of having dog mess bins at Iden Green and Benenden Recreation Grounds. The Environment and Maintenance Group to follow up.</p> <p><u>h. KALC Community Awards</u> : The 2020 and 2021 certificates have now been received and will be presented once all Covid restrictions have been lifted.</p>	EMG/CL
6. REPORTS BY COUNTY/ BOROUGH COUNCILLORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Local Elections</b> : Cllr Holden won the Benenden and Cranbrook Borough Council ward and the KCC Cranbrook elections. The Borough Council is now hung with 24 conservatives and a total of 24 opposition councillors. How to overcome the stalemate is being discussed. Unfortunately there was a certain amount of misinformation and unpleasant posters circulated before the election. Cllr Holden will continue his lorry work with the County Council and will push forward the rural broadband issues.</li> <li>• <b>Covid Grants</b> : TWBC received 9,120 applications for grants totalling £50m. Benenden Village Hall received grants to the value of £20,000 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and a restart grant of £8,000 in the current year.</li> <li>• <b>Iden Green Playground</b> : The new playground is on course to be completed by the end of May.</li> <li>• <b>Cleveland Farm planning application</b> : Cllr Warne has still not had a satisfactory answer to her request to a call-in the application at Cleveland Farm, nor the justification for refusal of these requests, and continues to pursue the planning department on the matter.</li> </ul>	
7. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	No meetings have taken place to report on.	
8. NDP	<p>The submitted response to the examiner's comments had been circulated. The responses from other parties to the examiner are on Benenden's Neighbourhood Development Plan website.</p> <p>Cllr Skeet asked for clarification regarding land at the hospital site, as these appear to differ between Benenden NDP and TW Local Plan. Cllr Thomas confirmed that this has been discussed with TWBC and the two must be aligned.</p>	
9. PLANNING	<p><u>a. Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>21/00967/FULL Part Of Reed Wood, Mill Street.</b> Retention of a forestry building, retention of a mobile welfare unit in situ, retention of lean-to and proposed works to repair and maintain an existing access track (Part Retrospective). Cllr Thomas declared an interest and left the room. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The construction of the pole barn and installation of a mobile home on site was reported as a breach of planning and a retrospective application has been made.</li> <li>➤ A timber lean-to has been constructed at the front of the mobile home (referred to as a welfare unit for shelter, toilet and tea-making facilities).</li> <li>➤ Proposal to enclose 3 bays of the pole barn to accommodate sawmill machinery and tools for security, and the access track (lengthy and partly forming a PRow) will be improved by covering it in compacted aggregate which will be permeable.</li> <li>➤ As yet there is no comment from the Rural Planning Consultant and TWBC may not have requested it, but the indications are that forestry has been undertaken in this location in the form of coppicing over some years.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>The Parish Council unanimously agreed the following comment with a request for the following conditions</b> : BPC is supportive of rural industries and, should consent be granted, requests the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the welfare unit can only be used in connection with forestry operations and not for</li> </ol>	

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

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residential purposes.

2. Exterior lighting and light pollution from the enclosed part of the barn must be kept to an absolute minimum to protect wildlife habitat, the Dark Skies of the parish, and the intrinsically dark, rural, remote location of the site.

3. The work for the resurfacing of the access track with permeable aggregate must not impede access to the PRow WC316.

- **21/01082/FULL Pelham, Walkhurst Road.** Demolition of garage; proposed erection of ancillary building to be used as a workshop, home gym and living accommodation
  - Previous application 21/00142/FULL Extension to garage to provide workshop, home gym and living accommodation above — APPROVED with condition for ancillary use only.
  - Application proposes the demolition of the garage and a rebuild 1.5 storeys as existing, size and massing similar to the existing consent, but replacement will be an oak framed structure replacing the poor-quality garage.

**The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application** and requests condition to be imposed (as it was in the consent under 21/00142/FULL): the building shall be used for ancillary purposes only, in connection with the main dwelling, and not for any other purpose.

- **21/00313/FULL Barn Land Adjacent To Bankside, Dingledden.** Replace existing dilapidated timber framed building with new maintaining existing use (Part Retrospective)
  - Reported as a breach of planning law — no planning application was made to demolish the existing structure and replace with a new build.
  - The first application 20/00708/FULL was refused by TWBC on the grounds of size, scale, mass and bulk, AONB, contrary to various policies and that the proposal failed to justify that the proposed building would provide the intended use by virtue of its location somewhat divorced from the associated forestry business, plus the over fenestrated and domesticated design.
  - This application proposes to reduce the roof height from the as built 6.4m down to 5m (same height as the former building) and will reduce the height of the windows on the field side elevation.
  - Applicant states that the previous structure was in use for the last 30 years or more for minor logs preparation, log, general and wood storage and he wishes to continue its previous use.
  - There is a yard for forestry operations a short distance along the road and following thefts a motor home was installed for security.
  - Well screened by hedgerows and not offensive to the eye within the landscape.
  - The reduction in roof height is acceptable, but full justification has not been offered.

**The Parish Council unanimously agreed the following comment :** BPC acknowledges the proposal to reduce the roof height of the structure and the reduction in the window sizes on the field side elevation but remains concerned about the separate operations from the applicant's forestry yard along the road and the potential security issues that may arise on the site. Should TWBC grant consent to this revised proposal, request the following conditions:

1. Exterior lighting and light pollution from the windows of the building must be kept to an absolute minimum to protect wildlife habitat, the Dark Skies of the parish, and the intrinsically dark, rural location of the site. BPC would, in this case, prefer that no exterior lighting is installed.
2. If forestry operations cease on the site, the building must be removed.

- **21/00766/FULL The Garden House, Standen Street.** Demolition of existing single garage; erection of detached 3 bay garage with room above; first floor rear extension with internal alterations changes to fenestration
  - The Garden House is set back from the lane and well screened by trees and barely visible.

- The proposal would cause 'less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed buildings'.
- Currently a 3/4 bed property, part 2 storey, part single storey to rear with cat slide roof.
- Proposal: extend single storey part to 2 storey, 5/6 bed property.
- Demolish existing single garage and replace with 3 bay oak framed garage (1 bay enclosed as store/garage). External staircase to roof space storage. More in keeping with the area than the present single garage.
- Proposal will involve removal of 4 trees from the intended driveway/hardstanding. One of which is leaning, one is a planted christmas tree which has been lopped to accommodate power lines, and 2 are ornamental and not good specimens. Screening from the lane is unaffected.

**The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.**

- **21/01038/TPO Oak – fell. 12 Vere Meadows.**
- This TPO was made in 2016 and covers 6 trees within the development site, 5 of which run along the boundary with Pelham and the 6th is on the road frontage towards Yew Tree House. All the trees are within the ownership of Wedgewood Homes (Management Company).
- The owners of no. 12 have made an application for a rear extension to the house; this will leave them with a smaller garden and this oak tree will give significant shade to the property/garden. The tree expert has decreed that there is a 'fruiting body' undermining the roots and the structural integrity of the tree.
- The TPO application for the felling has been made by Wedgewood Homes having received a request from no. 12. The application states the following: 'The homeowners at 12 Vere Meadows are proposing a rear garden extension and have commissioned a report into the existing Oak tree to the rear of their property. The owners have served the report on the Residents Management Company advising that the tree requires felling on safety grounds. If the tree is to be felled we would prefer to see the lower stem of the tree left to an agreed height.'
- The tree consultant's report suggests that it should be felled or heavily pollarded to circa 5m habitat stub.
- Some dead wood is visible in the canopy, but this could be removed in lopping/pollarding. It looks worthy of preservation as far as is possible. Pollarding may increase its stability and more evenly distribute the weight of the limbs.

It is incumbent on him as TWBC's Tree Officer to protect and retain trees, especially those with a TPO (which is made by TWBC) and make an independent assessment on the condition of the tree and, based on his findings, give his opinion.

From the TWBC website: 'The purpose of a TPO is not to impede tree management or insist on tree retention in all circumstances, but rather to prevent undue removal or poor management of valuable trees, or to ensure replacement of a valuable tree which must be removed.'

**The Parish Council unanimously agreed to strongly object** to the felling of the tree and request that alternative protective strategies are taken to preserve the tree, such as reduction in the limbs and height to reduce loading, rebalancing the weight and increasing stability. Request that the Tree Officer considers options in favour of the retention of as much of the tree as possible, rather than simply reducing it to a 5m-high pollarded stub.

b. Other Planning Matters

**Local Plan Consultation** : Cllr Grant had drafted a response which had been circulated along with TWBC Regulation 19 Consultation Benenden section and a comparison between the Regulation

	<p>18 response and proposed Regulation 19 response. Cllr Skeet suggested the inclusion of a request for a masterplan for the hospital site. It was agreed that the term 'comprehensive proposals' referred to in the Local Plan should be formally queried.</p>																																											
<p>10. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS &amp; TRANSPORT</p>	<p><b>a. Iden Green Road</b> : The Iden Green Road resurfacing work was carried out but the central white line was reinstated. KCC Highways and the contractors have apologised for this error and are seeking a permanent solution.</p> <p><b>b. Mill Street</b> : A parishioner has raised concerns about traffic speeds along Mill Street. Cllr Driver has spoken to him.</p> <p><b>c. Walkhurst Road Footpaths</b> OS ref TQ816334 and TQ8165133397/WC350 and WC351</p> <p>Cllrs Driver and Cruse (and a number of parishioners) had contacted KCC and the Ramblers Association Don't Lose Your Way Team with the concerns previously raised. Full details of all communication had been circulated.</p> <p>KCC PRow advised that the footpath is not on current maps and an application must be made for it to be reinstated. This process can take a number of years and requires quite a lot of evidence.</p> <p>Cllr Cruse will continue to gather as much information as possible and set about filling in the required application for reinstatement of a PRow.</p> <p><b>d. Pullington Cottages Parking</b> : A parishioner has reported dangerous parking (3 vehicles) at the junction of Pullington Cottages, blocking the sight of the road where there is a blind bend and the primary school opposite. The PCSO has been made aware.</p>	<p>RC</p>																																										
<p>11. RESOURCING/ FINANCE</p>	<p>a. <u>Monthly Finance</u></p> <p><b>TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st April 2021</b></p> <p>Brought forward 73208.37</p> <p><b>Income</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="379 1182 1390 1256"> <thead> <tr> <th>Payee</th> <th>Reference</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>TWBC</td> <td>Precept</td> <td>19825.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>TOTAL 19825.00</b></p> <p><b>Expenditure</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="261 1346 1390 1771"> <thead> <tr> <th>Supplier</th> <th>Reference</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>DD John Lewis</td> <td>Broadband</td> <td>9.92</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD Nest</td> <td>Pension</td> <td>474.53</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS C Levett</td> <td>Clerk's Salary</td> <td>638.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS edf</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td>42.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Zoom Video Communications</td> <td>Remote Meetings</td> <td>14.39</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Tenterden Twilight</td> <td>Public Toilets</td> <td>447.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Tompsett Landscaping</td> <td>Grounds Maintenance</td> <td>129.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS Arnold Cole Trust</td> <td>Rental Income</td> <td>505.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS KALC</td> <td>Annual Subscription</td> <td>844.66</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS TP Jones &amp; Co</td> <td>Payroll Q4</td> <td>57.60</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>TOTAL 3162.93</b></p> <p>Reconciled with bank statement 045 31st March 2021 <b>89870.44</b></p> <p>May 2021 Payments were approved :</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="261 1928 1390 1966"> <tbody> <tr> <td>DD John Lewis</td> <td>Broadband</td> <td>9.92</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Payee	Reference	Amount	TWBC	Precept	19825.00	Supplier	Reference	Amount	DD John Lewis	Broadband	9.92	DD Nest	Pension	474.53	BACS C Levett	Clerk's Salary	638.00	BACS edf	Public Toilets	42.23	BACS Zoom Video Communications	Remote Meetings	14.39	BACS Tenterden Twilight	Public Toilets	447.60	BACS Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	129.00	BACS Arnold Cole Trust	Rental Income	505.00	BACS KALC	Annual Subscription	844.66	BACS TP Jones & Co	Payroll Q4	57.60	DD John Lewis	Broadband	9.92	
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	DD	NEST	Pension	67.80		
	BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	909.18		
	BACS	Edf	Public Toilets	47.72		
	BACS	Zoom Video Communications	Remote Meetings	14.39		
	BACS	Tenterden Twilight	Public Toilets	447.60		
	BACS	D Buckett	Audit	300.00		
	BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	258.00		
	BACS	BT	Office Telephone	127.30		
	BACS	TWBC	Rates - Public Toilets	52.32		
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2234.23</b>		
	b. 2020-21 Audit :					
	<p>The internal audit to 31st March 2021 has been completed. The internal audit report, bank reconciliation, explanation of variances and year-end unaudited accounts had been circulated. The action points from the internal audit report were noted and to be actioned by the Clerk. These included :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Plan - December 2020 version to be uploaded onto the website.</li> <li>• Policies and Procedures – date of approval and minute reference to be added to front page of the documents.</li> <li>• Budget – proposed budget 2021-22 was presented to the Resourcing Committee and full Parish Council but not minuted as approved.</li> <li>• Website accessibility compliance – needs to be more prominent.</li> <li>• It was also noted that two Parish Councillors are not currently using their Parish Council email address.</li> </ul> <p>i. <b>Annual Governance Statement</b> : The Parish Council considered and unanimously agreed the Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>ii. <b>Annual Accounting Statements</b> : The Parish Council considered and unanimously agreed the Annual Accounting Statements.</p>					CL
12. CORRESPONDENCE/ PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS	a. <u>Use Of Weedkiller in Standen Street</u> : A parishioner raised concerns regarding the use of weedkiller along the grass verge on the approach to Chapel Cottage in Standen Street. She had previously contacted TWBC and asked why they have used weedkiller and was reassured that this was a mistake and would not happen again. The Clerk to respond that the Parish Council has not given any authorisation for the use of weedkiller on verges and ask for further information.				CL	
13. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village Tidy : it was agreed that this would take place on the morning of Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June. Cllr Skeet advised that the fencing around the hospital site regularly blows down in high winds and creates a lot of debris. The Clerk to find out contact for property maintenance at Benenden Hospital.</li> </ul>				CL/JL CL	
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Parish Council meeting Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> June 2021 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion.					
	The meeting closed at 9.10pm					

Clerk to the Parish Council, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021