

BEECH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Louisa Thomson
Telephone: 01420 562130 E-Mail: clerk@beechpc.com

Minutes of the Meeting Monday 15th May 2023

PARTICIPANTS : Councillor Graham Webb (Chairman) Members of the public
Councillor Tony Ransley
Councillor Kim Eakers
Councillor Alana Coombes
Councillor Ingrid McCormack
Louisa Thomson – Clerk to the Council

23.054 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Proposed Alana Coombes, Seconded Kim Eaker, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: That Councillor Graham Webb is elected as Chairman. Chairman Webb signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

23.055 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 17th April 2023, copies previously circulated, **Proposed as a true record by Alana Coombes, Seconded by Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED and signed by Chairman Graham Webb.**

23.056 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Tony Ransley declared an interest in planning item 14 i) 31386/001 - 30 Medstead Road, Beech

23.057 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public raised questions regarding planning item 26870/012 Land North of 24 Wellhouse Road, Beech.

- Query that the application was for access to the site only?
Graham Webb responded – the application is for access to the site only but the Parish Council if it chooses to can comment on this and the concept of six houses on the site.
- Is there an independent site access assessment?
Graham Webb responded – Hampshire Highways will be consulted and will comment on the access.
- Is there a difference between site access during construction and access for residential use?
Graham Webb responded – The nature of the traffic is different and should be addressed by EHDC and Hampshire Highways. Conditions may be implemented i.e. during construction.
- At the entrance to Medstead Road and Wellhouse Road there's a sign "unsuitable for HGV's", will this be taken into consideration?
Graham Webb responded – "Unsuitable for HGV's" doesn't mean HGV's can't get access.

Councillor Co-option

Beech Parish Council currently has one vacancy. **Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Kim Eakers, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:** that Ruth Duffin of Spring Stables, Medstead Road, Beech is co-opted to join the council. Ruth Duffin will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and attend the June meeting.

23.058 COUNCIL REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Council reviewed its internal control systems and procedures, Proposed Alana Coombes, Seconded Ingrid McCormack, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that they are current and fit for purpose.

- a) **Standing Orders**
- b) **Protocol for Reporting at Meetings** [Annex to Standing Order No. 3 (I)]
- c) **Complaints Procedure**
- d) **Publication Scheme**
- e) **Grant Awarding Policy & Procedure and Application Form**
- f) **Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Procedure**
- g) **Disciplinary and Grievance Policy**
- h) **Social Media Policy**
- i) **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Privacy Notices** – Graham Webb to update
- j) **AutoSpeedWatch Camera Policy**
- k) **Code of Conduct**

Copies to be loaded on to the Parish Council website detailing the review date and minute reference.

Financial Regulations and Risk Assessment to be reviewed at the June meeting following updates.

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- 23.059 ASSET REGISTER
Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Kim Eakers, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: the Asset Register is correct.
- 23.060 COUNCIL INSURANCE RENEWAL
Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Tony Ransley, UANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: to approve the council insurance renewal with Zurich once the list of assets has been updated providing the renewal isn't for more than £500.
- 23.061 INTERNAL AUDITOR
Nigel Sillick has confirmed he is willing to continue as Internal Auditor. **Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Nigel Sillick continues as Internal Auditor.
- 23.062 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE
Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Alana Coombes, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED the Council still meets the General Power of Competence prescribed criteria, being:
- a) Two thirds of the councillors have been elected; Beech has 6 out of 7 elected councillors.
 - b) The Clerk holds relevant professional qualifications: Beech Clerk has passed CiLCA.
 - c) The Clerk has completed relevant training in the exercise of GPC, unless training was included in (b) above: Beech Clerk has carried out HALC training in GPC and the CiLCA qualification includes GPC.
- 23.063 PLANNING
Council Considered two planning applications their comments to be forwarded to East Hampshire District Council.

Tony Ransley took no part in the discussion or decision for the next item.

- i) 31386/001 Fern Cottage, 30 Medstead Road, Beech NO OBJECTION
Proposed porch extension, solar panels to roof, new dormers to replace existing, cladding with render and timber boarding and insulation.
Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Ingrid McCormack, RESOLVED: Beech Parish Council has no objection to this application.

Tony Ransley rejoined the meeting.

Proposed Ingrid McCormack, Seconded Kim Eakers UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders so members of the public can speak.

Members of the public addressed council regarding the next application, Land North of 24 Wellhouse Road, Beech.

Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Alana Coombes, UNANAIMOUSLY RESOLVED to reinstate Standing Orders.

- ii) 26870/012 Land North of 24 Wellhouse Road, Beech OBJECT
Outline application (Some Matters Reserved) for 6 dwellings, access & associated parking (Access only to be considered)
Beech Parish Council objects to this outline application on the following grounds.

We object because the site is outside the Beech Settlement Policy Boundary and this development of market housing would contravene Beech Neighbourhood Plan Policy BPC02. We note, however, that the applicant argues that this policy should be disapplied, under national planning regulations, because:

- (a) EHDC cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites under its current Local Plan; and
- (b) The Beech Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have been adopted more than two years ago at the time this application is decided.

We hope that EHDC is able to refute the 5 year supply issue.

Then there is EHDC's SPD 'Housing Outside Settlement Boundaries' that states that housing outside settlement policy boundaries will only be permitted where all of the following apply:

- (i) "It meets a community need or realises community aspirations." In this case the Neighbourhood Plan (passed overwhelmingly at referendum as recently as May 2021) does not support this type of development outside the SPB. And, as presented, it does not deliver the need for two and three bedroom dwellings identified in Policy BPC08 – Housing Mix.
- (ii) "It reinforces a settlement's role and function." In this case the development would have little or no impact on a 220-house village with no services to support other than the existing village hall.

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- (iii) "It cannot be accommodated within the built-up area." In this case it is true that this development cannot be accommodated on available land within the SPB and that the site adjoins the SPB.
- (iv) "It has been identified in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan or has clear community support as demonstrated through a process which has been agreed by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Parish Council." In this case the Neighbourhood Plan does not support this type of development outside the SPB. There has been no other community consultation process, involving the Parish Council, on this planning application, nor is any proposed consultation mentioned by the applicant.

This outline application therefore fails to meet all of the criteria for permission as set out in the SPD.

We object to the application specifying that there would be six houses built on the site, and putting forward that all will be of four or five bedrooms.

In the event that this outline application is given permission, all matters of detail concerning the development (other than the access arrangements onto Wellhouse Road) will be reserved matters, the subject of a further planning application. All of those reserved matters will be required to comply with all of the policies of the Beech Neighbourhood Plan, other than Policy BPC02. In particular, the development will need to comply with Policy BPC06 – Development Setting and Scale – and Policy BPC07 – Building Design and Character. These policies set out requirements on such matters as:

- Buildings being consistent with those in the surrounding area;
- Views of new buildings on hillsides; and
- Impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residents.

It is quite possible that building six houses on the site, whether or not they have four or five bedrooms, is incompatible with meeting the requirements of these Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is therefore premature and inappropriate for the outline application to specify the building of six houses on the site. The number of houses should be a reserved matter, alongside their positioning, size and design.

There is also Policy BPC08 – Housing Mix, which seeks to include two or three bedroom houses in new developments in order to meet the identified need for smaller housing in the village. This application is for by far the largest number of houses in a new development since the Neighbourhood Plan was adopted (previous applications have been for a maximum of two new houses on a single existing plot). This is exactly the type of application for which the Plan states that Policy BPC08 should be taken into account.

We are aware of the concerns of neighbouring residents about the physical adequacy and safety of the vehicle access from Wellhouse Road to the actual construction site, in both the construction and post-construction phases, particularly for larger vehicles (including construction traffic). There were, apparently, difficulties in accessing the site for vehicles engaged in recent site clearance activities.

Should EHDC deem the access arrangements to be adequate, it will be imperative that any permission includes conditions stating that all construction traffic should be able to enter and leave the actual construction site in forward gear, and that all unloading and storage of materials and construction-related activities should take place within the actual construction site. There should be no unloading of vehicles, or parking of construction vehicles or the vehicles of construction site staff, on Wellhouse Road, Medstead Road or any other private land or access roads other than within the construction site. This is because Wellhouse Road and Medstead Road are narrow country roads with no footways, which must remain passable at all times by normal residential vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

23.064 PARISH COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Alana Coombes, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: to adopt the proposed objectives for 2023/2024 as detailed in Appendix A.

23.065 ROAD SAFETY WORKING GROUP

- i) **Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Tony Ransley, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:** having reviewed the Beech Road Safety Working Group report, Appendix B, the comments should be sent to Hampshire Highways.
- ii) Off Road Footway report included in Appendix B. Graham Webb updated, waiting to see if applications for funding are approved.

23.066 AUTOSPEEDWATCH CAMERA AND SPEED INDICATOR SIGN (SID)

Tony Ransley reported – waiting for East Hampshire District Council election / cabinet results. Trying to get Hampshire County Council to use the existing infrastructure to educate speeders.

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- 23.067 BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS - Bridleway 713, Medstead Road to Recreation Ground
Graham Webb reported on a meeting with Alton Ramblers and Hampshire Countryside Services. It's recommended a handrail is installed by the side of the bridleway to aid pedestrians. The handrail materials would cost £765 plus VAT and would be installed by Alton Ramblers under the supervision of Hampshire Countryside Services with the aid of volunteers.
- 23.068 INTERNET BANKING
Proposed Tony Ransley, Seconded Kim Eakers, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:
- i) To stay with HSBC for internet banking.
 - ii) Every councillor is set up as a secondary user.
 - iii) All users have the same limits of £15,000.
 - iv) Changes to the Financial Regulations for internet banking to specify payments are input by one person, usually the clerk, and checked and approved by one councillor.
 - v) Payments will be approved at the monthly parish council meeting and the authorising councillor assigned.
- 23.069 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2022/23
- a) Council confirmed receipt of the Annual Internal Audit Report carried out by Nigel Sillick.
 - b) Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 – Council completed the Annual Governance Statement. **Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Alana Coombes, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** it is signed by Chairman Graham Webb and Clerk Louisa Thomson.
 - c) Accounting Statements 2022/23 – The Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2023 were presented to council for approval. **Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Ingrid McCormack and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Accounting Statements 2022/23 are approved, and were then signed by Chairman Graham Webb, Clerk Louisa Thomson signed before presenting to Council.
 - d) Exercise of Public Rights notice PKF Littlejohn suggested dates 19th June 2023 to 28th July 2023.
- 23.070 ACCOUNTS 2023/24
Proposed Kim Eakers, Seconded Alana Coombes and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following payments are approved:
- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| a) Clerk's Salary (May 2023) | £799.99 |
| b) Clerk's Expenses (May 2023) | £43.17 |
| c) Hampshire Pension Fund (Clerk's pension – May 2023) | £223.46 |
| d) DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd – Monthly Payroll processing | £36.36 |
| e) Beech Village Hall and Recreation Ground | £23.29 |
| f) Zurich Municipal | (Approved up to £500.00) |
| g) Hampshire Association of Local Councils – HR Subscription | £198.00 |
- 23.071 MEETING DATES
- a) **Proposed Alana Coombes, Seconded Kim Eakers, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**, the following proposed dates for Council meetings for 2023/2024 were approved and will be published. (These dates may be subject to change.)
- | <u>2023</u> | | <u>2024</u> | |
|-------------|--|--|------------------|
| June | 19 th | January | 15 th |
| July | 17 th | February | 19 th |
| August | 21 ST (if required) | Annual Parish Meeting plus Council meeting | |
| September | 25 th | March | 18 th |
| October | 23 rd | April | 22 nd |
| November | 20 th | Annual Council Meeting | |
| December | Meeting to be scheduled, if required.* | May | 20 th |
- b) Confirmed the date of the next scheduled Council meeting as Monday, 19th June 2023 at 7pm with public question time at 6.45pm.

CLOSURE OF MEETING - Chairman thanked all present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.05 pm.

signed:
Chairman Beech Parish Council
date: 19th June 2023