



## Minutes of the meeting of Rottingdean Parish Monday 3rd of February 2025

Present Cllr Nixon (Chair), Cllr Cherrie, Cllr Evans, Cllr Lawrence, Cllr Levins, Cllr Poole, Cllr Snow. C Hayes, Parish Clerk

Public Gallery; Jason and Annette, Jamie and Charly Jones, Pat Thompson, Ward Cllr Earthy

Questions from the public.

**Jason and Annette** asked for further information about the proposed extension of the Bund at the south end of St Aubyns Field and if work had now been completed on the artistic component. **Cllr Nixon** said the Bund had been put in place to prevent entry onto the field from unauthorised vehicles. Following a recent inspection Fairfax had agreed to fill a gap in the bund and extend it by a further 2.2 meters to the emergency vehicle access point that where two lockable posts were to be placed. A further visit was planned to ensure the work did not cause flooding once it is completed. **Cllr Nixon** said the work had been completed to compact the surface on the artistic component known as the 'Sweeps' but further work was required on closure of the gabions housing the decorative stones.

**Jamie and Charly Jones** raised concerns that a neighbour's rear terrace extension would overlook their property due to the terrain. They had seen revised plans that reduced the terrace extension by 60 cm but this would not address the issue. **Cllr Poole** said he had been informally approached by the architects for his opinion on the new plans, which he would review.

**Pat Thomson** noted that the metal litter bins at the Terraces were insufficient for the waste generated and called for more bins. She also inquired about the replacement of missing bricks on High Street and Vicarage Lane pavement, and requested better recycling facilities in the Village, like the former blister-pack box at St Margaret's Church. **Cllr Cherrie** said he would raise the bin issue with City Clean and follow up on the missing bricks that he had reported to BHCC 10 days ago. **Cllr Lawrence** suggested asking St

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Margaret's to reinstate the blister-pack box and said the Parish Council would consider recycling options at the St Aubyns site post-transfer.

**Action Cllr Cherrie** to ask City Clean for more bins for Rottingdean Terraces and follow up action on the missing pavement bricks in the High Street and Vicarage Lane with BHCC.

1) **Apologies for absence**

Ward Cllr Fishleigh and Cllr Lowery had sent apologies and Cllr Earthy had advised that he would be late for the meeting.

2) **Declarations of interest**

None

3) **Agreement of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> of January.** The minutes were agreed with the following amendment. Page 4, bullet 4, replace 'Chapel' with 'Pavilion'.

4) **Action Log.** The following updates were provided on the outstanding actions:

- a) **0109** Cllr Poole to continue seek CAG advice on about the Chapel Window Completed and listed planning application submitted. Closed
- b) **0210.** Cllr Evans to follow up the Friends of Beacon Hill (FoBH) notice board proposal. **Cllr Evans** said FoBH had said they were too busy to move forward with the project at the moment so he would work up a plan to offer to FoBH. Carried forward
- c) **0411.** Cllr Cherrie to liaise with the group of volunteers currently maintaining the pond path about the Parish Council proposal to discontinue to the pond path project. **Cllr Cherrie** said he had spoken to the volunteers who were happy to continue to maintain the path. He had reminded them not plant plants at the ponds edge. Cllr Evans and Cllr Cherrie had proposed the provision of a sign to remind people not to plant in the pond and to feed the ducks seed rather than bread, This was being taken forward by the Clerk. Closed
- d) **0101/0102.** Cllr Nixon to seek an update on the planting of the Wildflower meadow with Fairfax and to put Fairfax's architect in touch with Cllr Evans to support the development of the revised field planting scheme required by the planning department. Completed. Closed

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- e) **0103.** Cllrs Lawrence and Poole to draft a note to the Planning Committee Chair to request a meeting to develop a common understanding of the interpretation of the Neighbourhood Plan policies. A meeting had been arranged for the 13<sup>th</sup> of February.  
Closed
- f) **0104.** Cllrs Lawrence and Poole to explore potential sites for a 5G mast in the village with providers. **Cllr Lawrence** attended a meeting where providers explained the necessity of the 5G tower for emergency services, identifying St Margaret's as the only suitable site. Providers plan to appeal BHCC's decision to refuse the application. If successful, **Cllr Lawrence** will discuss the matter with St Margaret's residents.  
Closed
- g) **1005.** Cllr Lawrence will follow up with BHCC on repairing the Kipling Gardens wall. The issue involves an insurance claim requiring a police incident number, which was pending. She would discuss it with the PSCO at the next Local Action Team meeting. Cllr Nixon said he would raise the matter with the BHCC, CEO on February 4th and suggested a possible Parish Council contribution if the repair costs were delaying an issue. Councillors generally supported this, contingent on clarifying the insurance situation and without waiving BHCC's responsibility for the repair. Carried forward.

**Cllr Nixon** asked about progress on an alternative quote for the pond maintenance given the recent rises in charges by the current contractor. The Clerk said that he was in the process of obtaining a further quote.

**Action.** Clerk to obtain a further quote for pond maintenance work.

## 5) **Matters Arising.**

None.

## 6) **Finance Update**

- a) **Payments and invoices.** The Clerk sought authorisation for the following payments

		VAT
HMRC January	£563.58	
C Hayes Salary January	£745.13	
C Hayes Comms (zoom + phone)	£12.99	£2.60
Room Hire (incl Main Hall for Mar 25 to Feb 26)	£630	
One Digital (Beacon Hill Nature Report)	£100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2051.70</b>	

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Authorisation was proposed by Cllr Levins, seconded by Cllr Poole and carried by unanimous vote.

- b) **January 2025 Accounts.** The accounts were presented and agreed. The Clerk also informed the meeting that a payment of £60.00 was made to SLS Electrical for electrical work on the Green for the Christmas tree lights during January, authorised under paragraph 7 of the financial regulations.
- c) **Bank balances** The Clerk advised Councillors that at the end of January the bank balances were:

Unity Trust Bank Current Account	£ 106.96
Unity Trust Bank Instant Access	£ 62,892.74
C&C savings account	£ 85,489.85
Cash at Bank	<b>£148,489.55</b>

- d) **Budget and Precept for 2025/26.** The Clerk took the meeting through the key points of the paper circulated outlining the budget and precept considerations for the Council for 2025/26.

- The estimated end-year bank balance for 2024/25 was £143,000, which with expected income would be sufficient to cover the budget for 2025/26 of £171,800 agreed by the Council and provide a reserve of £49,000.
- Precept income would naturally increase by £2725 in 2025/26 due to an increase in the number of households paying.
- There were external factors set out in the paper that Councillors may wish to consider in setting the precept including central government guidance, inflation projections, and recent precept changes in Rottingdean and other parishes.
- The Council had three options:
  - retain the same precept income and reduce the amount households pay,
  - retain the amount households pay with increased precept income of £2725
  - further increase precept income and ask households to pay more to boost the reserve.

The following points were made in discussion.

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- The current precept of £31.82 per annum was less than half of the average English Parish Council precepts in 2024/25
- Keeping the precept that households pay the same was the minimum the Parish Council should opt for.
- A modest increase of 3% or £1 more per Band D household would be reasonable to add to the reserves given the funding challenges facing BHCC.
- A small increase could be prudent but at the moment although there weren't concrete plans to spend more than budgeted.
- A 3% increase would allow the Parish Council to build up reserves to fund a contribution towards the cost of refurbishment of the High Street that was a real issue for residents
- It would be better to build up the reserve in small increments as plans developed rather than ask for a significant increase in any one year.
- In summing up **Cllr Nixon** said he agreed with the rationale for a small increase but would be more conformable if the Parish Council had specific costed plans for example for the High Street or Lower High Street Phase 1. He suggested the proposal should be put to a vote.
- **An increase of 3% per household was proposed by Cllr Levins, seconded by Cllr Lawrence and carried by unanimous vote.**

## 7) Major Projects

a) **St Aubyns** The following update was provided

i) Community Orchard. **Cllr Evans** provide the following update.

- The community orchard planting plans were well underway, and volunteers had been invited via social media to sign up with Brighton Permaculture Trust (BPT) to help with planting the fruit trees on February 13th and 20th.
- A revised site plan showing the planting scheme was waiting final sign-off from the BHCC planning team and City Parks planned to plant the shelter trees in early March.
- The planting of shrubs to protect the trees would be discussed with BPT and advice provided to the next Council meeting
- The wild flower meadow was to be planted in the next two weeks - weather permitting.

**Action.** **Cllr Evans** to provide advice to the March Council meeting about the planting of shrubs to protect the fruit trees.

ii) Chapel and Pavilion. **Cllrs Cherrie and Poole** provided the following update

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- An inspection of the Pavilion was planned for the 27<sup>th</sup> of February at which time the poor condition of the Chapel window sills would be raised with Fairfax
- Work would continue on the window protection when BHCC had responded to the listed planning application submitted by the Clerk.
- Opening Event: **Cllr Lawrence** announced plans for an event to open the Field on 28th June. She had reached out to voluntary and community groups for support and ideas, aiming to involve local schools and the alumni, and provide building tours. A proposal would be prepared for the next Council meeting.

**Action: Cllr Lawrence** to provide a proposal for a St Aubyns opening event to the March Council meeting.

8) **Planning**. **Cllr Poole** provided the following update on applications considered in January

**BH2024/03138. 14 Nevill Road Rottingdean Brighton BN2 7HG.**

Application for Approval of Details reserved by Conditions 3 (Car Parking Layout), 4 (Cycle Parking) and 5 (Refuse and Recycling) of application BH2024/02164.

**No objection**

**BH2025/00063. 48 Dean Court Road Rottingdean Brighton BN2 7DJ.** Erection of single storey side and rear extension, revised fenestration and solar panels to rear.

**No objection**

9) **Advisory Group Meeting Updates**

a) **Strategy and Communications**. **Cllr Nixon** provided the following update.

- Cllr Nixon and the Clerk were to meet with the BHCC, CEO on 4<sup>th</sup> of February to discuss progress on the High Street plan, repair of the pavement on Marine Drive, notification of road works and repair of Kipling Garden wall.
- A date for the Clerk's appraisal had been set and Cllr Nixon would be seeking feedback from all Councillors.
- Cllr Nixon and the Clerk had accepted an invitation to visit residents near Longhill school to discuss their ongoing concerns about the application by the school for a 5G pitch.
- The Clerk had been investigating the use of 'Survey Monkey' to conduct the Village Survey. The Clerk said that for an annual payment of £100 the software offered the ability to conduct a number of surveys during the year and provide a

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wide range of analysis of the data collected. With Councillors approval, SCAG would develop a survey to put to Councillors. **This was agreed.**

- b) **Village and Community. Cllr Lawrence** said the PARC charity had obtained funding for a number of youth activities during the Easter holidays. The Group would be supporting the PARC events which could potentially include activity on St Aubyns Field.
- c) **Natural Environment. Cllr Evans** said that the undercliff safety report authored by a number of community groups was now with BHCC to consider and the Parish Council stood ready to support measures suggested for Rottingdean Beach,
- d) **Built Environment. Cllr Cherrie** provided the following update.
  - Cllr Cherrie was working with a contractor on the repair of the pond barrier. A steel fabricator was being consulted about replacement of some of the posts.
  - The poor state of repair of the north end of the Twitten had been reported to BHCC.

**The meeting closed at 21.18. The next meeting is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March**

***Chris Hayes, Parish Clerk***

***March 2025***

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Date