

**COUNCIL**

21 December 2020

Minutes of the Council meeting held remotely on Monday 21 December 2020 at 6:30pm.

Present: Councillors B.J. Drayson (Chairman), J. Barnes (MBE), Mrs. M.L. Barnes, C.A. Bayliss, R.K. Bird, G.S. Browne, T.J.C. Byrne, J.J. Carroll, C.A. Clark, S.J. Coleman, Mrs V. Cook, P.C. Courtel, K.P. Dixon, Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams, S.J. Errington, K.M. Field, A.E. Ganly, P.J. Gray, K.M. Harmer, Mrs S. Hart, A.K. Jeeawon, J.M. Johnson, Mrs E.M. Kirby-Green, L.M. Langlands, C.A. Madeley, C.R. Maynard, A.S. Mier, M. Mooney, Rev. H.J. Norton, D.B. Oliver, P.N. Osborne, S.M. Prochak (MBE), G.F. Stevens, R.B. Thomas, H.L. Timpe and J. Vine-Hall.

Advisory Officers in attendance: Chief Executive, Assistant Director Resources and Democratic Services Manager.

Also Present: 7 members of the public via the YouTube live broadcast.

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C20/47.      **MINUTES**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the Council meetings held on 21 September and 5 October 2020 as correct records of the proceedings.

C20/48.      **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.H.F. Brewerton and G.C. Curtis.

C20/49.      **DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interest were made by Councillors in the Minutes as indicated below:

Barnes, J	Agenda Items 7 and 8 – Personal Interests in CB20/64 and CB20/73 as a non-executive Member of East Sussex County Council and Chairman of Etchingham Parish Council respectively.
Bayliss	Agenda Item 8 – Personal Interest in CB20/73 as a small business owner but confirmed she had not claimed a grant under the scheme.
Browne	Agenda Item 8 – Personal Interest in CB20/73 as an owner of a holiday let and eligible for a grant under the scheme.

Harmer	Agenda Item 8 – Personal Interest in CB20/73 as a small business owner and claimed a business grant under the scheme.
Maynard	Agenda Item 7 - Personal Interest in CB20/64 as an executive Member of East Sussex County Council.
Vine-Hall	Agenda Item 8 – Personal Interest in CB20/73 as a business owner and claimed a business grant under the scheme.

C20/50. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman announced that live events had continued to be few and far between, but he was pleased to say that he had been able to attend some in person since the last full Council meeting, as follows.

- 1) On 24 September he was invited to take part in a training session at Bexhill Bowling Club, as part of The Bowls England 'Let's Roll' initiative to attract new people to the sport. He was made to feel very welcome by Club Secretary John Bishop and after an hour's tuition from Coach Bob Budd, he stayed for another two hours to play in a triple's game. From Bowls England's point of view, they have had a minor success in that he had now joined Bexhill Bowling Club and his secret Santa wish list had a number of Bowls related items on it.
- 2) Sadly Lockdown 2 and the weather put paid to his planned Tennis tuition in Egerton Park although that was probably a bonus for the coach.
- 3) The Chairman was able to attend the annual Macmillan Coffee Morning held in one of the beach huts in Bexhill on Saturday 26 September – the socially distanced event against all odds was able to raise over £2,000.
- 4) On the 9 October we learned that Councillor Susan Prochak had joined Councillor John Barnes as a Member of the British Empire. Councillor Prochak received her MBE for services to the community in Robertsbridge and the Chairman congratulated her on behalf of the Council on this well-deserved recognition.
- 5) The Chairman was able to accept the Mayor of Bexhill's invitation to the installation of the 'Poppy Car' on Bexhill's Seafront on 19 October. Councillor Lynn Langlands' inspirational re-purposing of last summer's unused floral prop was to be applauded. It gave a real focal point for this year's acts of remembrance and gave the Royal British Legion an unexpected opportunity to collect donations towards its Poppy Appeal.
- 6) On Remembrance Sunday, the Chairman laid a poppy wreath on behalf of Rother District Council on the Bexhill War Memorial while the Vice Chairman, Councillor Harmer, laid a similar wreath

at the Little Common War Memorial.

- 7) It was brought home to the Chairman this year that it was all too easy to forget there were still many people whose lives had been directly affected by World War I. He was honoured to place a Cross on behalf of a shielding resident in his Ward at the War Memorial. The Cross was in memory of her Grandfather, RSM Nelson Victor Carter, an Eastbourne man, who was posthumously awarded the VC for conspicuous bravery on 30 June 1916. Quite a reality check having been lucky enough to grow up with both sets of his Grandparents.
- 8) At the end of October, the Chairman was able to attend the launch of The Bexhill Creative and the opening of a new outlet for Bexhill Artists in Little Common. He was glad to see that art was still happening despite COVID-19 and the recently begun installation of the sculptures along the 1066 Country Walk was very good news.
- 9) On 18 November a Virtual Civic Meeting was hosted by the Chairman of East Sussex County Council. This meeting was attended by many Chairs and Mayors as well as the Lord Lieutenant and High Sheriff. The Mayors of Battle, Bexhill and Rye attended and by some mysterious means Councillor Langlands and the Chairman were apparently volunteered to update the Group with their experiences of coming into office during the pandemic.
- 10) Following a grant from this Council, The Bexhill Environmental Group were able to complete the planting of 500 mixed trees on Bexhill Common over the last weekend of November. The Chairman was very surprised by how long it took him to plant just 17 trees but great to know that when he was long gone, they would still be there.
- 11) On 6 December, the Chairman was able to join with the other Members whose Wards cover Little Common on the roundabout, socially distanced of course, to switch on the Christmas Lights. The Chairman thanked all the towns, villages and individuals across Rother, who had managed to give little glimpses of normality with their fantastic Christmas Light Displays.
- 12) Last Wednesday, the Chairman was able to visit Up Grade Training in Bexhill and hear about the excellent work they were doing. They had just won The Sussex Sports Community Engagement Award. This family run company worked with young people who did not respond to traditional forms of education across East and West Sussex. Students were referred by local authorities and other agencies and basically, the self-discipline that comes with practising any martial art was used to aid learning. Up-Grade Training also stepped in to provide assistance to parents who found themselves home tutoring during lockdown and more recently COVID-19 Catch Up Classes. The Chairman wished them all the best for the future.

- 13) There was an updated Agenda Item 7 that had been emailed to all Members and published on the website.
- 14) The Chairman invited the Leader of the Council to say a few words regarding the current COVID-19 pandemic and move to Tier 4.
- 15) With sadness, the Chairman reported that former Councillor Jacqueline Potts who served on the Council between May 2015 and May 2019 had recently passed away. She had represented residents in the Old Town Ward. Councillors J. Barnes, Courtel, Gray and Maynard each paid personal tribute and offered their condolences to her family and friends.

C20/51. **REPORT OF THE CABINET ON MATTERS FOR DETERMINATION BY FULL COUNCIL**

1. It was moved by Councillor Oliver and seconded that the reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 2 November and 14 December 2020 as set out in the Agenda be approved and adopted.
2. The Chairman of the Council having called over the reports, no minutes were reserved for discussion.
3. On the Motion of the Chairman of the Council, duly seconded, the Council approved and adopted the following reports:

CB20/63 - Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2025/26  
 CB20/64 - Economic Recovery Action Plan  
 CB20/78 - Procurement Strategy  
 CB20/79 - Community Governance Order – The Parish Council of Bexhill-On-Sea

C20/52. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE ON DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET AS MATTERS OF URGENCY**

It was moved by Councillor Oliver and seconded that the report of the Chief Executive, detailing the executive decisions taken by Cabinet as matters of urgency at its meetings held on 5 and 9 October, 2 and 20 November 2020 be received.

CB20/69. **BURWASH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS TO THE REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION**

It was confirmed that the Council's response to the Regulation 16 consultation had been submitted within the timescales, following the deferment. The Local Ward Member was grateful for the deferment by Cabinet which enabled the dispute to be resolved.

CB20/73. **ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANTS (ARG) – DISCRETIONARY SCHEME**

Members requested that details of the number of grants given and what action had been taken as a result of this and other grant schemes due to the COVID-19 pandemic be reported in due course; this was agreed. Members paid tribute to the professionalism and efficiency of the small team of officers that had been responsible for processing the grant schemes and how this had assisted the eligible business community. It was noted that all applications received prior to the Christmas break would be processed.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received.

C20/53. **CABINET SPOKESPERSON / CHAMPION**

**RESOLVED:** That the appointment of Councillor Charles Clark as Cabinet Spokesperson / Champion for elderly people be received.

C20/54. **SEASONS GREETINGS**

The Chairman wished Members, Officers, Staff, their families and every resident and worker in Rother the best possible Christmas they could have under the circumstances and of course a much, much happier 2021.

The Chairman had no doubt that we would eventually overcome the virus and life would settle down into a new rhythm but in the meantime, it was for everyone to follow the official advice.

Merry Christmas and please stay safe.

**CHAIRMAN**

The meeting closed at 7:12pm.