



**Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at Madginford Hall,
Egremont Road on Tuesday 11th February 2025 at 7.30pm**

Present:	Cllr Val Springett (Vice Chair)	Cllr Jodie Pottage
	Cllr Richard Ash MBE	Cllr Martha Monday
	Cllr Pat Catt	Cllr Carolyn Smith
	Cllr Clive English	Cllr Denis Spooner
	Cllr Frank Jagger	Cllr Sean Turner
	Cllr Kapil Kaushik	

Also, in attendance were the Clerk Joanne Upton, the Deputy Clerk Amy Bush and two members of the public.

Vice Chair, Cllr Springett chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chairman

Reports from members of the public

There were no reports.

1. Declarations of intention to record.

The Deputy Clerk declared the meeting would be recorded for minuting purposes.

2. Apologies and absences.

Apologies were received and duly noted for Cllr's David Hall, Neil Francis and Chris Waters.

3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying.

There were none declared.

4. To elect a Chairperson

Cllr Springett reported that Cllr Hall has decided to step down from the Chair position due to personal reasons.

As there were no nominations or volunteers for the Chair role, it was agreed a Chair will be nominated for each meeting until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

5. To resolve to go into closed session and to exclude the press and public at item 14 (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 10 (xi) Contract Matters.

This was proposed by Cllr Springett and seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.

6. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the Full Council meeting 14th January 2025 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

7. Reports:

- a) Borough Councillors: There were no comments on the reports received from Cllr Springett and Cllr Spooner.
- b) Police: No report received. Cllr English suggested the office register for My Community Voice to keep updated on Police activity.

ACTION: Office

- c) Clerk: The Clerk advised the CPS will be working at the Holy Cross Church on Sunday 16th, Cllr Pottage agreed to meet them and a member of the Church.

The Clerk advised that Cllr Catt has stepped down from the Environment Committee and Cllr Springett from the Communications Committee.

- d) Chairman: Cllr Springett thanked Cllr Hall for his exceptional leadership since December 2022 and reported that Cllr Hall has now submitted the bid for the Shopper Bus funding.

8. Committee Meeting and Working Group Reports

a) Environment Committee:

Car park drainage: Cllr English proposed to go out to tender with Evans & Langford's original specification for soakaways in the verges. This was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour. The Council thanked Cllr Jagger for his work on this project.

ACTION: Clerk

Annual Tree Inspection: Cllr Springett proposed to accept the quote from Landscape Services for £1265.19, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with ten in favour and one abstention.

TPO Beech Tree on footpath from St Faiths to Roseacre Lane: Cllr English proposed to apply for planning permission to cut back the tree as proposed by the MBC tree specialist and then get three quotes for the works, this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

Cricket Club, safety during practice: Cllr Springett proposed to accept the proposal discussed with the Cricket Club, which includes permanent and portable signs and more advertising of when practice is taking place and the club updating their risk assessment and confirmation that practice is covered under the insurance. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with ten in favour and one against.

Cllr Smith reported that after seeking advice the Committee have decided to keep a monthly diary for a year to monitor the pond, including depth, ph balance, vegetation and wildlife. The filter will be filled in with large boulders and the fence will be temporarily repaired until a permanent solution is decided. It was agreed to investigate the cost of waders.

ACTION: Office

- b) Planning Committee: Cllr Ash reported that Cllr Monday is Vice Chair, and there were no planning applications to review at the January meeting.

CIL Payments: From the £8710.02 due to be received, Cllr Ash proposed £1000.00 is put towards the Rob Turner Art Project, £3855.01 towards the office extension project and £3855.01 towards costs for the pond. This was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

- c) Finance Working Group: Cllr Ash confirmed the Finance Working Group recommend approving all financial items under item 9.

Cllr English proposed to give delegated authority to the Clerk & Deputy Clerk to choose the office printer most suitable for office needs. This was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: Office

- d) Reports from members of the Council for outside bodies: Cllr Ash reported that the last KALC meeting had been cancelled.

9. Finance (Accounts and Audit Regulation 2011/817)

- a) Resolution to approve/ratify quotations or payments:

MBC preapplication advice: Cllr Springett proposed to ratify the cost of £185 for the preapplication advice for the Beech Tree on the footpath from St Faiths to Roseacre Lane. This was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.

- b) Grants and Donations: Busy Bees: Cllr Ash proposed to grant the requested £1150.00 towards a new bug rug and storage. This was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

Cllr Springett noted that BPC should review our policy and have criteria for approving grant amounts as the Council are already over budget for this year.

- c) Authorise February payments: Cllr Springett proposed to accept the payments, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
- d) Finance reports: Cllr Springett proposed to accept the reports this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
- e) Balance of accounts: The balances of account were duly noted.
- f) VAT Q3 2024: The VAT return was duly noted.

10. Community Warden

The Clerk reported that our previous Community Warden is happy to return to Bearsted for 3 days per week, these will be Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Cllr Springett proposed to ratify the decision to employ the Community Warden for 3 days per week at a cost of £27,000 per year with a review in 12 months' time. This was seconded by Cllr Monday and resolved with ten in favour and one against.

11. Conservation Area

Cllr Jagger raised concerns about the field in the Bearsted Woodland Trust that is proposed to be removed from the Conservation Area. Cllr English and Cllr Spooner explained that the Conservation Area Management Plan is designed to protect assets on the land. Being in the conservation area does not prevent building on the land, it only holds any building to higher standards and criteria. As there are no assets on the land there is nothing to write into the management plan. Cllr Springett proposed to support the new Conservation Area Management Plan but Cllr's Springett and English to investigate other ways to protect the land. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: Cllr's Springett / English

12. Leases

The Council discussed the current wording in the lease regarding the 6 free taster sessions, which is acceptable providing, the detail of the process to book these is included in the constitution. The wording from the Club for this is acceptable, just needs a telephone number adding. Cllr's Hall and Springett to meet with the Club Chair and Outset to finalise the wording on two concerns raised by the Club. The Lease currently states all correspondence from the Club to the Parish Council must be by letter, the club would like this to include emails. The wording around future rent fees also needs to be agreed and amended. Cllr's Jagger and English will sign the lease once the above has been finalised.

Cllr Springett proposed to accept the above, which was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: Cllr's Hall/Springett/Jagger/English

13. Devolution

Cllr English advised that Kent was not included in the first round of Councils to be included in the Devolution process. Councils have to submit an informal application by the 21st March and a formal application by the 25th November. The County Elections will go ahead in May but this will delay the Community Governance Review until after the elections.

Cllr English will provide some wording to the office to add to the website to keep residents informed.

Members of the public left the meeting at 21:11hrs

14. The Council moved to closed session and excluded the press and public, Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 10 (xi) Contract Matters.

Closed session.

15. Future Agenda Items

Policies

Standard items

16. Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 11th March 2025

There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 21.24 hrs

Signed..... Date.....