

## SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH MEETING

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**THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING for the PARISH of SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE was held at ROBERTSBRIDGE HALL, STATION ROAD, ROBERTSBRIDGE MONDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2017 at 7.15 pm**

**Presiding:** Cllr Sean O'Hara, Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council

**Present:**            **Electors:**            64            **Press:**            None

**Elected Representatives:**

*Parish Council:* Jemima Bolton; Nick Brown; Ruth Hardy; Stephen Hardy; Sean O'Hara; Roger Palamarczuk; Anne Wells;

*Rother District Council:* Cllr Sue Prochak; Cllr Graham Browne

*East Sussex County Council:* Cllr Angharad Davies

**Also in attendance:** Karen Ripley, Parish Clerk; Angie Goodwin, Asst. Clerk; Peter Pattenden, Village Steward & his wife Susan

**Apologies** were received from Cllr Nick Greenfield (Chair of S&RPC); Cllr Gillian Smith; Salehurst C of E Primary School; Robertsbridge Allotment and Gardening Association (Julia Gooding); Robertsbridge Children's Services

**The following groups & organisations had tables or displays:** Robertsbridge Community College Living Garden project, Archaeological Society, Community 1st Responders, Community Church, Community Association, Helping Hands, Robertsbridge Bonfire Society, Junior Football team, Guides & Brownies, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Women's Institute, Rother Valley Railway.

***The Vice-Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the local organisations for their displays, and the W.I. for once again kindly organising the refreshments this evening.***

- 1. MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016** – (available on the Parish Council website since June 2016) were approved and signed.
- 2. REPORT FROM THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL SEAN O'HARA** – copy attached.
- 3. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR ANGHARAD DAVIES** – attached. Cllr Davies also reported the following items not contained in the written report:
  - The Government grant (to ESCC) for 17/18 of £27m is down from £124m 6 years ago. Reductions in spending of £70-£90m are needed by 2019.
  - Further improvements to the Bexhill to Hastings Greenway are planned, including car parking at the ends and better park access.
  - 16/17 was the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of an investment plan in road improvements. The 17/18 budget has extra for roads and pavements. There are increased funds available under the Community Match initiative, to get certain projects done.
  - There is a new area-based approach under the Costain CH2M contract (for Highways) – we still have Jon Copp as our Highways Steward. Danielle Georgeson is the single point of contact.
  - There is now a single point of contact for Health & Social Care: Health & Social Care Connect (0300 678 0101). It receives 8000-9000 enquiries a month. Several GP practices have federated; more probably will.

- The country is to be divided into 44 areas to achieve a Transformation and Sustainability Plan, to get rid of the deficit and improve efficiency of health and social care services.
- Difficulties with insufficient capacity in the independent sector, home care staff recruitment and a shortage of nursing care creates delays in transferring some older patients from hospital into the community.

**4. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR SUE PROCHAK – copy attached.**

**5. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR GRAHAM BROWNE –** Cllr Prochak has covered the main points – parking problems will need looking at in more depth. Glad to hear we have a Steward now.

**6. QUESTIONS / LOCAL MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Grove Farm** – a resident asked whether there was any news on development proposals. Cllr Stephen Hardy replied that Croudace surrendered their ‘option’ (from landowner Exeter College) to develop it when RDC indicated their second application would be rejected. It seems likely however that another agent is now interested. It is hoped our Neighbourhood Plan will be in place before any further applications reach submission stage.

**War Memorial Wreaths** – a resident asked how long these would remain here following Remembrance Day. Although the Cenotaph remove theirs after just 2 weeks, there is no general rule, and many areas like to leave the wreaths for some time. Our local British Legion would like them left until Easter. The Clerk will look into more secure fixings, as some come loose in severe weather.

**Village Gateways** – the PC confirmed that this project is intended in financial year 17/18. Peter, the new Village Steward, can help with progressing this.

**Newsletter** – a resident asked about the frequency of these – they are roughly quarterly when time and sufficient content permits. Unfortunately there has been a longer gap lately.

*There was a break for refreshments, an opportunity to view the information provided by the various clubs and groups, and to chat informally.*

**7. REPORTS FROM LOCAL GROUPS / ORGANISATIONS -** no written reports were received. Verbal reports were given by the following groups:

**a. Robertsbridge Community College Living Garden project** – this project for the benefit of students and the wider community has been made possible through a grant and the support of Friends of Hope Charity, Great Dixter and The Darvell Community. Students will learn to grow produce, supply more affordable fresh produce to the school canteen and even be entrepreneurial and sell some to the community hopefully. Around an acre of school grounds is being transformed into growing areas and poly tunnels. Parents and local adults with DBS clearance can volunteer to help out or even teach.

**b. Community Church** – Nigel Lockwood reported that around 30 people attend the Thursday morning coffee mornings in Robertsbridge Hall (previously held at The Hub in the High St). The church holds its Sunday morning service at the Youth Centre hall. Christian books are available at the regular market in Robertsbridge Hall.

**c. Robertsbridge Bonfire Society** – Roger Palamarczuk described the annual bonfire event: some 500 people representing about 20 bonfire societies take part in the procession, which requires 1000 torches. The event attracts around 2000 visitors into the village. Digital projection is now employed for the effigy. Fundraising has already started for the next one,

as £10,000 is needed – considerable insurance and safety costs are involved as well as fireworks. The Bonfire Society will be happy to provide and run the bar for anyone’s events such as weddings and parties (they keep the profits as a fundraising activity).

**d. Robertsbridge Club** – Roger Palamarczuk reported that the club is undergoing a program of extensive refurbishment (funded by bar revenue), and is developing into more of a social club, with many activities and clubs now held there. Day lets should be on offer soon, and private events can be held there. New members welcome (drinks are cheaper for members!).

**e. Women's Institute** - they are having a “Bargains Galore” sale (good-quality clothes & bric-a-brac) on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April at 9:30-12 noon.

## 8. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Chairman of the Steering Group Cllr Stephen Hardy summarised the last 2 years’ progress of the NP. Much more has been considered than simply ‘where will the new houses go?’. The questionnaire response 18 months ago was unprecedented at 66%, and since then lots more feedback has been received during two major consultations. That there were 7 applications for two councillor vacancies several months ago suggests increased community interest in the PC’s activities such as the NP. Regrettably the referendum on the NP has not been possible yet, mainly due to unavoidable delays within RDC; it is now hoped for around September 2017. At this stage the NP is not considered finalised – changes could be imposed.

## 9. NOTICES – the Clerk gave the following notices:

- 27<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup> Apr: RAP Literary Festival
- 4<sup>th</sup> May: ESCC Elections
- 21<sup>st</sup> May: RBS Boot Fair
- 18<sup>th</sup> June: Summer Event: ‘Rio in Robertsbridge’
- 25<sup>th</sup> June: RBS Boot Fair
- 1<sup>st</sup> July: Salehurst C of E School Summer Fete
- 23<sup>rd</sup> July: RBS Boot Fair
- 20<sup>th</sup> August: RBS Boot Fair
- 18<sup>th</sup> Nov: Robertsbridge Bonfire
- 1<sup>st</sup> Dec: Christmas Capers

## 10. AOB –

- a. Sue Stokoe said Age UK really could do with some more volunteers to help with the Monday Lunch Club.
- b. Annette Hawkins (the new vicar for the United Benefice of Salehurst, Hurst Green and Robertsbridge) invited people to a ‘Teddy Bear Zip-Wire’ from the tower on 20<sup>th</sup> May, and a party to celebrate the new Benefice at the 11am service on 25<sup>th</sup> June. There will be extended church opening over Easter. When the Church is locked, a key can be obtained from Salehurst Halt. Annette is available to chat to in the Club on 1st and 3rd Thursdays from 9.30-11.30am.

**The meeting closed at 9:16pm**

**Chairman.....**

**Date.....**