

## THE VILLAGES OF BIRLING GAP, CROWLINK, EAST DEAN AND FRISTON

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of electors held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015 in the Village Hall, Village Green Lane, East Dean, commencing at 6.00 pm with displays from village organisations. Business commenced at 7.00 pm**

*Meeting convened under Schedule 12, Part III of the Local Government Act 1972.*

**In the Chair:** Councillor S Fuller (Chair of the Parish Council).

**Present:** representatives of the Parish Council, the Residents' Association, the Church, the Village Hall Trust; village clubs and societies (eighteen of whom mounted displays); and approximately 100 other residents.

**In attendance:** Katrina Larkin (Parish Clerk) took the minutes.

**Apologies:** Anne Mudd.

1. **WELCOME:** The Chair of the Parish Council welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **MINUTES:** The minutes of the last Annual Village Meeting, held on 19 May 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the Parish Council.
3. **ANNUAL VILLAGE REPORT 2015:** A number of village organisations had published written reports of their activities in the past year, and these are available to view in the Annual Village Report 2015 [<http://www.parish-council.com/eastdeanandfristonparishcouncil/>] - see the online Library; copies can also be obtained from the parish clerk, [eastdeanclerk@btinternet.com](mailto:eastdeanclerk@btinternet.com)]. The following organisations also addressed the meeting: the Parish Council; the Residents' Association; the Parochial Church Council; the Village Hall Trust; OpenArt; Community Watch; Downland Heartstart; the East Dean Players; the Fruit, Vegetable and Flower Show; Micheldene W.I.; and the Royal British Legion.
4. **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION:** the following were discussed –
  - **Could there be temporary traffic lights at Exceat Bridge during Airbourne 2015?** The Parish Council strongly supported this idea and had campaigned for it for several years. In 2014 Eastbourne Borough Council had been supposed to pay for the police to direct traffic at the bridge at closure time on Saturday and Sunday nights, but had not done so. Cost was the key, estimated at £4,000 for the two nights. The Parish Council

would lobby again in 2015. Residents asked whether volunteers could be used, but it was explained that they could not: they would have no authority on the highway. **The meeting was asked to vote on the question whether the parish council should pay for a police presence at the Bridge during a future Airbourne event. The great majority of those present voted against.**

- **Could the East Dean (Downlands) Roads Company be represented at a future AVM?** – the Chair of the Parish Council agreed to convey this request to the Company. There was concern that residents' contributions towards maintenance costs might not be enough and that it was possible to avoid paying even the current £50 per year. An obligation to pay was included in the deeds to each property but it was not cost effective to pursue non-payers on an annual basis.
- **Would the current works to the gas main on the Downlands Estate include Summerdown Lane?** – No, the Gas Board did not consider it necessary. The Link and Sussex Gardens would not be done either. The operatives were agreed to have been considerate workers who should be thanked. The Residents' Association would do this.
- **When would superfast Broadband be fully operational?** - the answer to this question depended on a number of factors and differed from property to property. The installation of new cables would be complete in about 10 weeks but many households would still rely on old copper wiring between their property and the new cable; they might need to pay for this to be upgraded.

## **5. UPDATE ON LAND AT THE FRIDAYS**

Mr R Webb (Chair of the Residents' Association) reported that 14 parishioners including representatives of the Parish Council and the Association had attended the April meeting of the SDNPA Planning Committee in Midhurst, at which amendments to the original plans had been considered. They were dismayed that it was now being suggested by officers that the principle of development was accepted, by virtue of the deferral of a decision, voted on by the committee and carried by 5 votes to 4. This interpretation of the deferral was regarded as an abuse of due process, and formal protests had been made both by the Parish Council and the Association, who continued to maintain all their objections to the scheme. The membership of the SDNPA Planning Committee was about to be revised, and the parish was also pressing for all members to visit the site before discussing the application again.

The Rev D Baker objected to the fact that the field adjacent to The Rectory had apparently been put forward as an alternative site, without his knowledge. It was explained that this site had already been included by Wealden District Council in their original Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment some years previously, and was automatically carried over into the Park Authority's own recent SHLAA assessment, though this did not mean that it was actually earmarked for development. However, it was generally agreed that consultation and communication with the parish throughout the consideration of The Fridays development had been very poor.

A question was raised as to whether it was true that 98% of the parish was opposed to the development, as had been claimed. Residents were reminded that the parish council as a statutory consultee had held an Extraordinary Meeting to elicit the views of residents, and that the meeting had been overwhelmingly opposed to the application. The same was true of the very numerous comments now accumulated on the SDNPA website, although the figure of 98% could not be confirmed.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Councillor Fuller concluded the meeting by thanking all the participants.

*The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.*

Signed: ..... (Chair of the meeting)

Date: .....