

STRENGTHENING LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS

East Dean & Friston Parish Council Liaison Meeting

14 October 2014 at 10.00am

In the Small Hall, East Dean Village Hall

Draft Minutes

1. **Apologies:** Cllr S Shing, Cllr S Fuller and Cllr T Bryant.
2. **Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 07 May 2014:**
 - **Footpath connecting the end of Old Willingdon Road to the mouth of Windmill Lane AND Friston bus stop and crossing** – these two issues were related. The parish council was in contact with South East Water who might contribute to some or all of these works in return for the grant of an easement across land which was part of Friston Green. ESCC had assessed the location for county funding for a crossing point and a build out from the bus layby on the south side of the A259, where cars could undertake, causing a hazard for pedestrians. The location did not meet the benchmark score (though match funding could be applied for). Subsequently an engineer had devised an alternative proposal on behalf of the parish, which would move the bus stop on the north side on the main road to a new site north of Friston Pond, accessible by crossing minor carriageways, and provide a pelican crossing with a central refuge on the main road. Mr Johnson advised that the scheme would be put through a safety audit by ESCC under the match funding scheme, even if the project were 100% externally funded. The parish should contact Sarah Valentine at ESCC. **ACTION: KL.**
 - **Yellow lines** – the parish had not moved up the list of places where additional lines were to be supplied. It was argued that the parish should not be displaced on the list, as there was a serious problem especially for Kier waste trucks squeezing through Upper Street outside the Thai restaurant, or being unable to access certain properties without reversing and a long diversion. In Lower Street at the junction with Gilberts Drive the problem was cars parking around the junction with loss of visibility.

- **Traffic control at Exceat Bridge** – the parish council continued to have an interest in permanent controls, but it was accepted that ESCC would not support this. Temporary controls were to have been provided by Eastbourne Borough Council during the 2014 Airborne event, but th4 Borough had reneged on its promise. The parish council requested support from ESCC in getting temporary controls applied in 2015. Mr Johnson advised that ESCC had no power to intervene.
- **Parish name signs** – ESCC would supply design and costing information for a new sign on the Jevington Road, to be paid for by the parish council, and would supply a new village sign on the A259 entering Friston, as agreed at the previous meeting. **ACTION: IJ.**
- **Safety of cyclists at Friston Hill** – the parish was unable to proceed with the scheme to route cyclists up The Twitten (Footpath 25) as the minimum width for dual use by cyclists and pedestrians was 1.8 metres, which could not be achieved on the upper half of the path. It was suggested that a sign should be placed on the highway verge to warn motorists of the likely hazard of finding slow cyclists round the bend on Friston Hill. Mr Johnson advised that highway signs had to be in a nationally approved format. He would investigate whether anything useful was available. **ACTION: IJ.**
- **Flooding on A259** – the A259 had recently flooded in the middle of the village because the gullies which should drain it to East Dean Pond were blocked. The Highway Steward had cleared two of the three gullies, but the third was completely choked. Details had been [passed to the ESCC drainage team. The two gullies on the corner of Friston Hill and Upper Street had disappeared under debris and also needed to be cleared. WDC’s street cleaning team had been asked to clear the area. **ACTION: ESCC/WDC.**

3. Rights of Way matters:

- **Maintenance of footpath signs in Friston Forest** – photographs of signs requiring attention had been supplied to ESCC and logged onto the maintenance list. The repairs would be done as an add-on to other works in the area, when possible.
- **Maintenance of the Twitten (Bridleway 25)** – the parish council had undertaken a clearance project with volunteer assistance, but requested that this path in particular should be scheduled to receive more than one cut per year by ESCC. The hedges were currently overgrown, especially at the lower end. ESCC requested that the landowner be approached. **ACTION: PH to contact the landowner.** However, at the top end of the path adjacent to the highway the hedge growth was very substantial and not easily tackled with hand tools. A request had been referred to the Highway Contact Centre to have this section cleared. **ACTION: ESCC.** There was no prospect of reverting to the

three cuts per year which had been provided by the old South Downs Joint Committee.

- **Frequency of strimming and hedge cutting along Rights of Way** – the parish council requested an update on ESCC's plans for frequency of cuts generally, and a discussion of the terms on which the parish council could participate in maintenance, with financial assistance from ESCC. Sophie Coleman advised that ESCC planned to trim every path once a year, and could consider extra cuts on request, but that if recurrent requests were received they would recommend setting up a volunteer scheme. There was no budget for sharing with parishes. Rachel Solomons of ESCC could provide training, advice, and possibly some hand tools. The SDNPA had a list of volunteers who could be called upon for this kind of work. ESCC would back up the parish council whenever hedge letters needed to be sent to landowners with responsibility for keeping paths clear.

4. Community Highway MatchScheme: - the parish council requested further information as to ESCC's plans for the frequency of verge cutting in the next financial year. The parish council would like to participate in service delivery, with a financial contribution from ESCC. The quality of service provided by ESCC's contractor in Upper Street was poor as a mowing machine was being used on an area where strimming was needed because of the terrain. The grass verge outside The Fridays was also an issue. The village was the gateway to the National Park and wished to be well presented. It was suggested that these problem areas be added to the schedule for the parish council's mowing contract, with a budget contribution from ESCC. The highways department intended to keep to the current pattern of 2 rural cuts and 6 urban cuts in 2015/16. However, any proposal from the parish to take on part of the work should be referred to Annabel Harvey at ESCC. It was agreed that the parish would investigate the possibility of taking over all verge cutting in the parish. **ACTION:**
KL to contact AH.

5. Community Speed Watch: - ESCC had collected traffic survey data in the centre of the village from 10 – 17 September 2014. This initiative was warmly welcomed in the parish. The results showed that the average speed over 24 hours was 32 mph westbound and 31 mph eastbound, with only 15% of drivers exceeding 40-41 miles per hour. These were significant findings.

6. Speed limit of 30 mph on A259: in the light of item 5 above it was agreed that no further action was required. The parish thanked ESCC for the valuable data provided by the survey in 5 above.

- 7. Top dressing on A259:** there had been a complaint about the noise caused by the top dressing of some road surfaces in the villager, and a request that when further resurfacing was done the 'whisper top' surface should be used. The Highway Steward explained that top dressing was much the best treatment available and would continue to be used. It would bed down over time and noise levels would be reduced.
- 8. Drainage to Upper Street/Friston Hill:** the Highway Steward had scheduled maintenance works which were long overdue, and had asked Wealden District Council to do the sweeping, which was their responsibility, as a matter of urgency. If this were not done the Clerk should let him know. **ACTION: KL.**
- 9. Elm Disease:** Antony Becvar of the ESCC Environment Team had emailed the Clerk with advisory information on the treatment of Elm disease and a note of works carried out or planned in the parish. The parish council was concerned that the delays from February to the summer before seven trees were removed from Upper Street had contributed to the loss of four more. The parish was now monitoring the situation, and had registered at www.ulmusmaritime.org which had been set up to protect the heritage of Sussex elms, as the area was the last bastion of the species in the country. A disease-resistant strain of elms had been bred and saplings could be supplied for replanting wherever suitable sites could be identified.
- 10. Parish council flag poles:** the parish council was contemplating installing two flag poles, ideally at the recreation ground, or possibly one at the recreation ground and one at Friston Pond. ESCC Highways representatives advised that flagpoles were very unlikely to pass a safety audit if located anywhere on a highway verge, but that if they are situated away from the highway then they would only be subject to ordinary planning permission, depending on the height of the pole and the size of the proposed flags.
- 11. Weight of vehicles on Downlands Estate roads:** during a recent building project some very large vehicles had accessed The Close, where the road was single track and very fragile. Bearing in mind that roads on the Downlands Estate were maintained entirely at the expense of residents, the parish council had obtained information showing how road damage increased exponentially as vehicle size increased. Advice was requested on whether signs could be put up at the Estate entrances limiting the size of vehicles that could enter. Mr Johnson advised that it would be legitimate to put up signs saying 'unsuitable for heavy vehicles', but that any such vehicles on the Estate would only be there out of necessity, for delivery or construction purposes, as there was no through road. This could not be prevented. The notices would therefore be pointless. However, the SDNPA might be able to help through the planning process.

12. Construction & Planned Maintenance

Contact: Simon Marchant, Team Manager 0345 6080193

Road No	Location from - to	Work Type	Traffic Management	Start date	Duration	Finish Date
No planned works						

13. Any other business:

- Coaches blocking the Jevington Road - ESCC had received a complaint about this from a resident. They asked whether the parish council regarded it as a problem. No issues had been raised in the parish, but it was agreed to check with Cllr Fuller as the route was used by the Cuckmere Bus Company.
ACTION: KL/SF.
- Broken bollard – ESCC had replaced the bollard at the junction of gilberts Drive and the A259.
- Speed roundel on Gilberts Drive – a roundel had been provided on the road surface near the recreation ground.
- Verge trimming and ditch clearing near Shepherds Cottage – these problems had been sorted out.

The parish representatives thanked ESCC for tackling these matters.

14. **Date and time of next meeting: - Tuesday 21st April 2015 at 10.00 am** (venue to be advised, but East Dean Village Hall would be used if available).