



**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 5 January 2023 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 6.30 pm**

**Councillors present:** Cllr P Seeley (Chair), Cllr M Bustard, Cllr P Hill, Cllr M Keller, Cllr C Lees, Cllr H Milligan and Cllr S Thorogood

**In attendance:** District Cllr M Lunn (Item C.687); K Larkin (Parish Clerk), D Picknell (Admin Officer)

*There were no members of the public present*

**C.683 Acceptance of apologies for absence:** Cllr T Bryant, Cllr G Fowler, and County Cllr S Shing

**C.684 Declarations of Interests:** - None

**C.685 Minutes** – the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 1 December 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**C.686 Business in Progress**

The council received and took note of Report 7 on progress made since the meeting on 1 December 2022. The following items were actioned:

- a) Civility and Respect Pledge – all councillors and officers present signed the Pledge individually. Absent councillors would be requested to sign no later than the meeting on 2 February 2023. All non-councillor members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would be requested to sign at their meeting on 9 January 2023
- b) Bike racks in the village car park – members agreed in principle to support a request from a resident that bike racks be provided in the village car park [see also paragraph C.687(f) below]

RESOLVED - That the Progress Report be noted and action taken as discussed

**C.687 Report of the District Councillor**

District Cllr M Lunn reported on the following matters:

- a) Wealden Local Plan – the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities had in principle acknowledged that the housing formula to which Wealden had objected was indeed flawed in the local circumstances. There was therefore hope that housing developments already approved but not yet built should be deducted from the next housing allocation applied to the District by central government. However, the detailed revision of the policy

guidance had yet to be issued and it would not be possible to issue a fresh Local Plan based on it until after the forthcoming District elections (May 2023).

- b) Street cleaning – councillors asked which authority was responsible for street cleaning in the parish. Cllr Lunn replied that most was the responsibility of East Sussex Highways, but that there were exceptions which were the responsibility of Wealden District Council **ACTION: KL to request a map.**
- c) Cuckmere Haven – following the dredging of shingle the estuary was now draining more quickly after flooding, though flooding could not be prevented entirely owing to the saturation of the ground both on the flood plain and on the higher reaches of the river.
- d) New local office of the South Downs National Park Authority – Cllr Lunn confirmed that the new offices and visitor centre were complete. The new Exceat Bridge now had planning permission. Community Infrastructure Levy payments were being well administered and were reaching the parishes. Parish councillors reported a continuing concern that enforcement should be improved, and agreed to request an enforcement meeting at the new local office.
- e) Neglected property in Old Willingdon Road – Cllr Lunn had requested advice on remedial action from the Environmental Health legal team which Wealden shared with Rother. It was noted that Eastbourne Borough Council had recently issued a Section 215 order in respect of a similarly neglected property in their area **ACTION: PS/KL to investigate**
- f) Bike racks in the village car park – Cllr Lunn advised that the contractor installing the Electric Vehicle charging points would not be available to do this work, but that a request could be made to Wealden separately through the usual channels, and he would support it **ACTION: KL/ML**

RESOLVED - That the report of the District Councillor be noted and action taken as discussed

#### **C.688 Third Pass of the draft Budget and Precept for 2023/24**

The council took note of the report on Councillor Allowances from the Independent Remuneration Panel. The Panel's recommendations on very modest increases had been factored into the Third Pass of the draft Budget 2023/24. The council considered Reports 8 and 8a setting out the revised draft Budget and Precept 2023/24, and agreed that the precept should be reduced from £71,500 to £68,000, representing a reduction in real terms of 4.3% even before accounting for the effect of current inflation.

RESOLVED – That the precept for 2023/24 be set at £68,000, equivalent to £68.02 per Band D Household

#### **C.689 Village Sign**

The council took note of Report 9 seeking approval of the design recommended for the new Village Sign adjacent to the recreation ground. The design would be on the side of the sign visible on leaving the parish and looking towards the coast; the other side (entering the village) would simply carry the name of the parish. All images

would be done as artist's drawings (not Photoshop as in the mock-up), but all elements included in the draft would remain in some form. It was proposed that flowers should be added as a feature of the parish, and this was agreed. The Lead Member reported that the oak post had been purchased and that the artist had kindly offered to construct the actual sign at cost, using marine ply, and to waterproof it. This was agreed, with thanks to the artist, Peter Martin-Smith, and to Cllr Keller for his work on this project.

RESOLVED - That the design of the Village Sign be approved as discussed and the artist be invited to complete the production of it

#### **C.690 East Sussex Pension Fund draft Funding Strategy Statement**

The council considered Report 10 on the triennial revision of the FSS, having also seen the actual draft. It was noted that the contribution rate for employers over the next three years was proposed to be reduced by 0.9%. The council had no comments to make to the East Sussex Pensions Committee **ACTION: KL to report to the Committee**

#### **C.691 Payments and Receipts**

The council took note of Report 11 containing the schedule of payments for January 2023, including the disbursement of £7,000 Community Infrastructure Levy funds for projects at the recreation ground; and the schedule of receipts for December 2022. An additional payment of £53.18 was added to the schedule, for Christmas lights [*Note: the complete Payments Schedule is appended to these Minutes*].

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £14,446.14 be approved

#### **C.692 Reports**

- a) Chair of the Council – the Chair drew attention to the forthcoming general parish elections (May 2023) and requested that the timetable be published in the parish magazine in February, with further details in March. The Annual Village Meeting on 21 April 2023 could be used for hustings. All this was agreed.
- b) Planning Committee – the council took note of the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on 20 December 2022
- c) Finance – the council took note of the Budget Monitoring Report for Month 9, 2022/23 (Report Item 13c). The balance at the end of December 2022 was £84,852.95. The budget remained on track, no other income being expected during the year.
- d) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – the Chair of the Group reported that a planning consultant would attend the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to provide information and advice and answer questions. There would be a fee of £400 (including travel expenses) which would be within budget. A question had been raised as to whether recordings of the meeting, including personal recordings, should be published. The councillors agreed that they should not: it would be unlawful to publish without the 'informed consent' of every person present, and it would exceed the council's IT resources to attempt it

- e) Rights of Way and Highways – the Lead Member reported on the following matters: (i) a round of chipping would soon be done to keep footpaths walkable in the wet weather; (ii) a lamp post at the junction of Gilberts Drive and the A259 had been knocked over in an accident, but had already been replaced by East Sussex Highways. Members were most appreciative of this speedy action; (iii) Bollards to protect the verge at the junction of Gilberts Drive and the A259 – Cllr Hill reported that the parish council would need a digging licence from East Sussex Highways to make this installation, and it appeared that no funds would be forthcoming. There would probably be a fee for obtaining a licence; thereafter the bollards should be insured by ESCC as they would be on ESCC land. **ACTION: KL to add this to the February agenda for approval.** Members thanked Cllr Hill for his research.
- f) Tree Warden – The Warden reported on the following matters: (i) three saplings had been delivered for planting at the recreation ground, and would be dug in when the ground was not too wet; (ii) Trees at The Grange – a tree had come down into the village hall car park in recent storms, and the Warden had contacted The Grange to express concerns over safety: it was fortunate that no persons or cars had been hit. The trees on the common boundary had apparently been inspected in the summer, but it was agreed that the Warden should write on behalf of the council requesting a further inspection by a qualified person because of the continuing hazard and its insurance implications **ACTION: ST**
- g) Recreation Ground – the Chair reported that he and the Lead Member had met representatives of the Cricket Club on site to discuss the two current infrastructure projects (rainwater harvesting and the building of an access ramp to the pavilion). It had been mutually agreed that both projects could now commence, the funding being in place.
- h) Defibrillators – the Lead Member reported that following the success of the training session held in December, another session should be offered in February, and this was agreed **ACTION: DP**
- i) Downlands Estate Management – the Chair advised that he was researching the potential of a Community Interest Company to manage the Estate, and would welcome the advice of the Hon Solicitor **ACTION: KL to contact the Hon. Solicitor.** The next meeting of the interested organisations would be held on 17 January 2023.

RESOLVED - That the above Reports (a) to (i) be noted and action taken as discussed

### C.693 Correspondence

The council took note of a report by the clerk on correspondence received since the December meeting. It was noted that the official advice regarding the coronation of King Charles III on 6 May 2023 was that beacons should not be lit, but that the date of 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 should be saved as an occasion for lighting beacons to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day Landings. Members agreed that the parish council would not provide an event to mark the coronation, due to the date falling after the

-----

parish elections but before the declaration of results. It would be for the new council to appoint a Lead Member to organise future events.

RESOLVED - That the Correspondence report be noted

**C.694 Date of next meeting: Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 at 6.30 pm**

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.40 pm.*

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....

## APPENDIX

PAYEE	DETAILS	SUB TOTAL	VAT	TOTAL	REF.NO	DATE	NOTES
EDF Cricket Club	CIL funding: rain harvesting/access ramp	7,000.00	-	7,000.00	1948	05/12/2022	Paid
Eastbourne Networx	Support for Ukrainian refugees	1,000.00	-	1,000.00	1949	08/12/2022	Paid
PR Hill	Refund Leaffield bin	436.00	87.20	523.20	1950	09/12/2022	Paid
Cuckmere Buses	Extra support grant	500.00	-	500.00	1951	19/12/2022	Paid
Parish Magazine	Support grant	250.00	-	250.00	1952	19/12/2022	
EDF Flower Show	Support grant for equipment	325.00	-	325.00	1953	19/12/2022	Paid
Trad Oak & Timber Co	Oak beam for village sign	489.99	97.99	587.98	1954	19/12/2022	Paid
HMRC	PAYE/NICS - December 2022	671.36	-	671.36	1955	05/01/2023	
Village Hall Trust	Hall hires - December 2022	38.00	-	38.00	1956	05/01/2023	
LGPS	Pension contributions - Dec 2022	805.55	-	805.55	1957	05/01/2023	Includes contributions related to pay increments backdated to 1 April 2022
Wealden DC	Dog/litter bin emptying Q3	260.00	52.00	312.00	DD	28/12/2022	Paid
Business Stream	Pav water services	34.12	-	34.12	DD	13/01/2023	
Cuckmere Buses	Support grant	622.38	-	622.38	1958	05/01/2023	
K Larkin	Office costs/mileage - Dec 2022	38.78	-	38.78	1959	05/01/2023	
D Picknell	Office costs - December 2022	26.00	-	26.00	1960	05/01/2023	
K Larkin/D Picknell	Net salaries (aggregated) January 2023	1,658.59	-	1,658.59	1961/1962	28/01/2023	
P R Hill	Refund Xmas tree lights etc	53.18	-	53.18	1963	05/01/2023	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>14,208.95</b>	<b>237.19</b>	<b>14,446.14</b>			
<b>RECEIPTS</b>							
Barclays Bank	Bank interest - saver	8.00	-	8.00	BGC	05/12/2022	
Barclays Bank	Bank interest - defibrillators	0.76	-	0.76	BGC	05/12/2022	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8.76</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8.76</b>			

