



East Dean & Friston Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 02 November 2023 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 7.30 pm

Councillors present: Cllr P Seeley (Chair), Cllr T Bryant (Vice Chair), Cllr M Bustard, Cllr G Fowler, Cllr C Lees, Cllr D White, Cllr P Hill and Cllr G Street

In attendance: County Cllr S Shing; District Cllr D Greaves (item C.843 - 848); S Adeniji (Parish Clerk)

There was one member of the public present

Public Session

Nothing raised

The Chair closed the Public Session and opened the meeting

C.843 Acceptance of apologies for absence: Cllr H Milligan

C.844 Declarations of Interests: - None

C.845 Minutes of the parish council meeting held on 5 October 2023 – The following alterations were proposed to the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 5 October 2023. Minute C.832 Repairs to 7 Acacia trees on Michel Dene Road and Lonicera hedging, to delete the sentence “removing the hedges is the responsibility of the Roads company”.

The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 5 October 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

C.846 Report of the Member of Parliament

The council took note of a written report from Maria Caulfield MP on general constituency matters.

C.847 Report of the County Councillor

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Cllr Shing reported on the following matters:

- a) At the last full Council meeting of ESCC, it was noted that there is an overspend on Children's services, he is concerned about the effect on the budget for 2024/25.
- b) He has written to Highway suggesting using wild grass seeds where appropriate.
- c) He explained the effects of the Waste Food Collection law on the County.

A question was raised regarding Footpath 25 but Cllr Shing confirmed that no response has been received from ESCC.

RESOLVED - That the report of the County Councillor be noted.

C.848 Report of the District Councillor

Wealden District Council (WDC) Cllr Greaves reported on the following matters:

- a) WDC overview and Scrutiny Committee raised certain questions with South East Water following their 11th September meeting. Points raised include:
 - SEW have a plan to significantly improve their capability to respond to incidents
 - ensuring adequate resources for prompt incident response
 - improved provision for vulnerable customers (they expect to have 100,000 people on their priority services register by 2024/25)
 - improved response capabilities for premises such as schools, farms and care homes through the use of bowsers (mobile and fixed)
- b) An Extraordinary Full Council meeting has been called for 8th February'24 to consider a draft local plan.
- c) The Government has confirmed that weekly waste food collections will take place from March 2026. WDC have been reviewing the latest announcements from DEFRA on simpler recycling and food waste collections and has already started the planning process for this.
- d) Significant work has been carried out to improve and develop digital services (we would identify this as the 'My Wealden' service). As usage (by the public) for the services has increased significantly the underlying site has not evolved to meet the needs of customers. A huge effort has gone into introducing technical improvements throughout the site.

RESOLVED - That the report of the Wealden District Councillor be noted

C.849 Update from the meeting of 5th October 2023

None as most of the items are on the agenda.

C.850 Preliminary Consideration of the Budget and Precept for 2024/25

The council considered the first draft of the budget and precept for 2024/25. It was noted that this is the first draft of the budget. Members noted the need to invest in Environmental issues as well as some investment in Friston Pond and the Shopping Precinct.

RESOLVED – To note the first draft of the Forward Budget 2024/25 and to suggest any alterations ahead of the next Council meeting.

C.851 ESCC Grass Cutting Service 2024

The council took note of Report 9 and agreed to carry on with the status quo.

RESOLVED – To continue to take on the responsibility on behalf of ESCC for delivering the urban grass-cutting within the parish.

C.852 Play Area Annual Inspection Report 2022

The council took note of Report 10, members agreed that items highlighted as having a medium to high risk must be attended to as soon as possible. It was noted that the loose bench is the only high-risk issue, the bench will be moved. Members noted that regular maintenance of the hedges was needed. The overgrown hedge will be added to the ground maintenance contract. It was noted that last year Wicksteed furnished the parish council with a quotation for the repairs, therefore the Clerk was instructed to contact Wicksteed to ask for a quotation for the remedial works to be carried out.
ACTION: SA to write to Wicksteed.

RESOLVED – To instruct Wicksteed to furnish the council with a quotation for the remedial works.

C.853 2024 – 2025 Municipal Year Meeting Timetable

The council considered the draft 2024 – 2025 meeting timetable, it was noted that the annual Parish Council meeting was scheduled to be held on the 2nd of May which is the same day as the election of the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC), therefore the Village Hall will be unavailable. In addition, Thursday the 6th of June is the 80th anniversary of the D-Day celebrations. It was therefore decided that the May and June meetings will be held on the 9th of May and 13th of June respectively. The annual village meeting will be held on Friday the 12th of April. It was noted that the meetings of the Neighbour Plan Steering Group now start at 7.30 pm.

RESOLVED – To adopt the 2024 – 2025 meeting timetable with the following alteration: the annual parish council meeting will be held on the 9th of May, the June meeting will be held on the 13th of June and the annual village meeting will be held on the 12th of April.

C.854 Approve The Draft Parish Priorities Statement

Cllr Bustard stated that the feedback received from residents has been incorporated into the draft Parish Priorities Statement. The views of the parish council are therefore being sought. Cllr Bustard stated that he had asked the consultant to furnish him with a list of items raised during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation that would not be included in the Neighbourhood Plan, once received this will be passed on to the Council. The Chairman suggested submitting the draft parish priorities plan to Wealden District Council as a Courtesy.

RESOLVED – To approve the Draft Parish Priorities Statement.

C.855 Payments and Receipts

The council took note of Report 13 listing the payments to be made in November 2023, and noting receipts for October 2023. *[Note: the complete Payments Schedule is appended to these Minutes].*

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £4,674.52 be approved

C.856 Business In Progress

The council received and took note of Report 14 on progress made since the meeting on 5 October 2023. The following items were discussed:

a) Offer of free trees from the Woodland Trust

Members considered the offer of 420 free saplings from the Woodland Trust. The Chair suggested enquiring if the trees could be planted in people's private gardens rather than just on Council property, if this were possible then the trees could be offered to residents to encourage them to plant trees. The trees can also be planted along Gilberts Drive.

RESOLVED – To take up the offer of free trees from the Woodland Trust.

b) Change to the timetable of Bus 41

A change in the timetable of Bus 41 was noted.

c) CIL Payment Received

The CIL payment of £767.21 received from the SDNPA was noted.

d) First internal audit for 2023/24

The arrangements for the first internal audit for 2023/24 by Mulberry & Co. on 18 December were noted.

e) Parish Council's new registered address.

It was noted that the Parish Council's new registered address is now at the Village Hall.

f) Invitation to Care for the Carers Annual Event

The invitation to the Care for Carers Annual meeting was noted.

C.857 Reports:

- a) Chair of the Council – The Chair confirmed that a meeting has been arranged with the National Trust on Thursday 30th November at 2 pm. Cllr Hill raised the possibility of the Farrar Hall being owned by the Parish Council. **ACTION: TB to investigate.**

Remembrance Sunday 12th November: Approval was given for the Chairman to pay the Bugler the sum of £50.

Village Lunch Thursday 7th December: The Parish Council will pay for the wine and take a table. Approval was given for the Parish Council to buy the wine.

Cricket Club: The Cricket Club would like to put up a television in the Pavilion. It was agreed that the permission of the Parish Council is not needed but the responsibility for insuring the television rests with the Club.

The Cricket Club can dispose of the Snooker table, but the Table Tennis can be relocated to the Village Hall.

- b) Planning Committee – the council took note of the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on the 17th of October 2023

- c) Finance – the council took note that the bank balance at the end of June 2023 was £100,376.26. The Council noted the Budget Monitoring Report for October 2023

- d) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – There is an Open Evening on the 29th of January 2024. The Council have applied for both the Locality Grant and Technical Grant. The Technical Grant is being used for housing needs analysis. The vision statement is currently being worked on.

- e) Rights of Way and Highways: Cllr Lees gave feedback on the SLR meeting. Footpath 25 (along the A259), ESCC confirmed during the SLR meeting that the top half of the footpath has been closed but they couldn't confirm the timescale for remedial works to be carried out. The dangerous Footpath 28 was raised at the SLR meeting but ESCC advised that closing the footpath is a difficult process. If the footpath cannot be closed, then the Parish Council may have to put up a sign stating "dangerous footpath".
- Cllr Lees confirmed that the drainage issue (A259 to Upper Street) was also discussed at the meeting and ESCC confirmed that this is being investigated. The issue of powering a defibrillator panel/cabinet from the street light was raised at the SLR meeting but the response was not positive. It was noted that ESCC has not circulated the minutes of the SLR meeting. **ACTION: SA to chase ESCC highways for Minutes of the SLR meeting.**
- The fingerboard at the end of the Old Willingdon Road towards Jevington needs repair. **ACTION: CL to investigate.**
- It was noted that a garden fence panel from one of the houses in The Ridgeway is broken and leaning dangerously into the tarmac. **ACTION: SA to write to the resident.**
- f) Tree Warden: It was noted that two trees have fallen in recent days, one is on the main road, west by the pond. This is an issue for ESCC Highways. Cllr Hill advised that he is still investigating the overgrown trees by Friston Pond. **ACTION: PH to contact Climpsons.**
- g) Recreation Ground: - Nothing to report.
- h) Defibrillators: - All up to date.
- i) Downlands Estate Management Group:- The Chairman and Cllr Hill attended a meeting with the Resident Association (RA) and the Roads Company. The RA would not financially support the lopping of the tree on Michel Dene Road. The Roads company was prepared to fund a third and the parish council may have to fund the rest. **PS to contact the Roads Company to see if they are prepared to increase their contribution to 50% of the cost of falling these trees.** The Roads Company have written asking for the meeting to be held every six months.

C.858 Correspondence

The council took note of Report 17 on correspondence received since the October meeting.

Climate Friends Group: - The Chairman mentioned a recent correspondence received by Mr Williamson and the Climate Friends group.

RESOLVED – To note the correspondence received from the Climate Friends group and where necessary the parish council will take appropriate action.

Hedge on Hillside: - The issue came up following a meeting with the Roads Company. Although the parish council have written to the resident and the hedges have been trimmed back. The hedges have not been trimmed back far enough. **ACTION: SA to write to the resident stating that the hedges have not been cut back enough.**

Change in PCSO – The change in the PSCO for the Parish was noted. The Parish Council would like to invite the new PSCO to attend one of the parish council meetings.
ACTION: SA to write to invite the PSPO to the January or February meeting.

East Dean bus shelter – The council noted the correspondence requesting that in view of the decision not to replace the windows glass in the East Dean bus shelter, would the Council; consider boarding up the windows that are not needed (in terms of seeing the bus approaching.) to make them better weatherproofed for the winter months. The council agreed to consider a proposal for the bus shelter to be fitted with anti-vandal polycarbonate sheets as an alternative to window glass. **ACTION: PH to make enquiries on the use of anti-vandal polycarbonate sheets.**

Exclusion of Public and Press

Under Standing Order 3(d) the Chair moved that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, by reason of its confidential nature:.

C.859 Staff Appraisal

RESOLVED – That the confidential staff report by the Chairman was noted.

C.860 Date of next meeting: - Thursday 7th December 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.38 p.m.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....

ANNEX

Payments - November 2023
Receipts - October 2023

PAYEE	DETAILS	SUB TOTAL	VAT	TOTAL	REF.NO	DATE APPROVED	NOTES
Business Stream	Pavilion water services 30July-29Sept	140.11	-	140.11	3028		Paid by DD
Wealden District Council	Elections Cost	844.85	-	844.85	3029		
S. Adeniji/K Larkin	October	1,749.04		1,749.04	3030/3031		
Grants (Eastbourne) Ltd	Ground Maintenance	95.00	19.00	114.00	3032		
HMRC	PAYE/NICS - October 2023	433.52		433.52	3033		
ESCC	Pension contributions - September 2023	568.44		568.44	3034		
Mrs Katrina Larkin	Deputy Clerk's Office Cost & Expenses Oct	51.56		51.56	3035		
Sam Adeniji	Clerk's Office Cost - Oct 2023	26.00		26.00	3036		
Village Hall Trust	Hall Hire - October 2023	105.00		105.00	3037		
JAKK Country Furniture	Machined hardwood bollards,	260.00	52.00	312.00	3038		To be paid from CIL
Sue Hobbs	CiLCA Trainer/Training Course	330.00		330.00	3039		
TOTAL		4,603.52	71.00	4,674.52			
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RECEIPTS							
HMRC VAT	VAT Claimed	2,084.94	-	2,084.94	BACS		
SDNPA	CIL payment	767.21	-	767.21	BACS		
Groundwork UK	Grant for Neighbourhood Plan	6,950.00		6,950.00	BACS		
TOTAL		9,802.15		9,802.15			