



East Dean & Friston P a r i s h C o u n c i l

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 04 January 2024 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 7.30 pm

Councillors present: Cllr P Seeley (Chair), Cllr H Milligan, Cllr G Fowler, and Cllr P Hill

In attendance: County Cllr S Shing, District Cllr D Greaves (item C.878 - 883); S Adeniji (Parish Clerk)

There were 6 members of the public present

Public Session

Mr Ian Haydock raised a concern about item 18, correspondence from a resident asking for a contribution towards the cost of cutting back an overgrown hedge. It is the owner's liability to maintain an overgrown hedge, the council should therefore not pay or contribute towards it.

The Chair thanked Mr for his contribution.

The Chair closed the Public Session and opened the meeting.

C.878 Acceptance of apologies for absence: Cllr T Bryant, Cllr M Bustard, Cllr C Lees, Cllr D White and Cllr G Street.

C.879 Declarations of Interests: - None.

C.880 Minutes of the parish council meeting held on 7 December 2023 –. The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 07 December 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

C.881 Report of the Member of Parliament

No written report was received from Maria Caulfield MP.

C.882 Report of the County Councillor

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

- a) He has been appointed to serve on the East Sussex Fire Authority. In his new role, he visited Eastbourne Fire Station to promote its services.
- b) ESCC is consulting members of the public on its proposed Local Transport Plan 4 (2024 – 2050). The public consultation closes on the 25th of February.
- c) Cllr Seeley asked Cllr Shing to chase up the minutes/notes of the last Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) meeting. Cllr Shing explained that the delay was because of staff changes within the department.
- d) Cllr Shing will chase up an update on Footpath 25.

- e) Cllr Hill raised the issue of blocked gullies at the bottom of the A259. Cllr Shing asked Cllr Hill to send him an email explaining the issue.

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

C.883 Report of the District Councillor

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

- a) Electric car charging points are being installed in various WDC car parks
- b) An Annual Budget Consultation is underway and residents and businesses are being urged to have their say. The consultation closes on 12th January and the results will be reviewed before the council sets its budget in February.
- c) The consultation is for the 2024/25 budget and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the next five years, the council's General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets.
- d) The council is also consulting on the increase of its share of Council Tax by 2.99%, which equates to £6.23 for a band D property for the year 2024/25, to agree General Fund Revenue 2024/25 budget proposals, estimates for 2025-2029 and the General Fund Capital Programme.

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

C.884 Update from the meeting of 7TH December 2023

None as most of the items are on the agenda.

C.885 Environmental Health (Licensing) – Environmental Framework

The council discussed report 8 regarding Wealden's District Council's consultation on its proposal to develop an environmental framework which can be applied to the Licensing area. Members agreed that as the questions are environmental, Cllr Bustard should be asked to respond to the questionnaire on behalf of the parish's council.

RESOLVED – That Cllr Bustard be asked to respond to the questionnaire on behalf of the parish council.

C.886 Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillor Allowances

The council considered the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillor Allowances.

Members agreed to adopt the report.

RESOLVED – That the parish council adopt the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Town and Parish Councillor Allowances for 2024/25 and the suggestion that the acceptance of allowances should be for the clerk to communicate directly with individual councillors.

C.887 Tennis Court Resurfacing and Cricket Net Practice Usage Proposal

Cllr Milligan introduced her report outlining a proposal to resurface the tennis court, replace the fence and investigate the feasibility and cost of incorporating pickleball

lines. Cllr Milligan explained that the community tennis court is a valuable asset to the parish, and it requires refurbishment due to the worn-out surface and fencing. The council should consider granting permission for the cricket club to use the tennis court for net practice. This proposal will help ensure the long-term functionality of the court and cater to diverse recreational interests i.e. tennis, pickleball and cricket. There is also a basketball hoop that can be used as well.

Members expressed their support for the proposal, the Chair explained that a holistic approach and a long-term plan are required. A wider conversation between the different organisations (the Tennis club, Cricket club and Bowls Club) should be encouraged and a wider development plan with timelines be produced. The parish council currently sets aside a budget each year for the tennis court improvement.

The Chair suggested putting a flyer in the monthly parish magazine which helps promote the cricket club, the tennis court and the Bowls club. The flyer will help advertise the various activities of the clubs.

RESOLVED – That a long-term plan and costing be produced and a proposal with a timeline be brought back to a future meeting of the parish council.

C.888 Audit Report

The council took note of Report 11 and considered the recommendations from the interim audit notably that the website should be updated with a privacy notice and that the council increase its Fidelity Guarantee to £150,000-£200,000 as at present the funds being held are over £100,000, the council is not covered by the FCS scheme.

RESOLVED – To accept the external audit report for 2022/23 and the report and recommendations of the interim internal audit report for 2023/24 be accepted.

C.889 Grant Application from the Cricket Club

The council considered Report 12 and discussed the application from the Cricket Club for a grant of £1,150 towards three projects as follows:

- Repair of the Club cricket net including replacement netting, repairs to wheels and towing bar
- Installation of netting to prevent balls from going into the wildlife strip to the south of the ground
- Purchase of a second-hand refreshments bar for the pavilion

Members noted that despite two emails being sent out to various organisations inviting them to apply for grant assistance from the parish council, the Cricket Club was the only organisation that applied. The proposals and the projects were considered by Councillors, members welcomed the proposal of the Cricket Club to protect the wildlife strip.

RESOLVED – That the application be approved and the sum of £1,150 is granted to the Cricket Club.

C.890 Payments and Receipts

The council took note of Report 13 listing the payments to be made in January 2024 and noting receipts for December 2023. *[Note: the complete Payments Schedule is appended to these Minutes].*

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £1,837.82 be approved.

C.891 Business In Progress

The council received and took note of Report 14 on progress made since the meeting on 07 December 2023. The following items were discussed:

a) Wildlife Verges

Members considered the response from ESCC to the application by the parish council to designate some verges as wildlife verges.

RESOLVED – That the response from ESCC be noted.

b) To consider a plan for D-Day 80 – 6th June 2024

Members discussed this item, and Cllr Fowler indicated his willingness to be involved in planning the event. Councillors agreed that as many Councillors were absent from the meeting, this item should be deferred to the next meeting when there would be better representations.

RESOLVED – That plans for D-Day 80 should be considered in the February meeting.

c) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Annual Monitoring Return for 2022-23

Members took note of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Annual Monitoring Return for 2022-23 which has been published on the Council's website and a copy sent to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA).

RESOLVED – To note the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Annual Monitoring Return for 2022-23.

d) Precept Form for 2024/25

RESOLVED – That the Precept Form for 2024/25 be approved for signature by the Chairman and Clerk.

e) National Planning Policy Framework

The proposed updates to the National Planning Policy Framework as circulated by Maria Caulfield MP were noted

f) Report by the Clerk on Progress made since the last meeting

Members took note of the report by the Clerk on progress made since the last meetings.

RESOLVED – To note the report.

C.892 Defibrillators

The council took note of Report 15 from Cllr Hill setting out the defibrillator expenditure to be incurred over the next 12 months. The planned expenditure is for the sum of £1,460 which would be spent on replacing pads that have expired or will expire during the year as well as replacing 3 batteries which will be due for replacement later in the

year. Members noted that there is a separate budget of £4,156 which has been set aside for defibrillator expenditure.

RESOLVED – That the proposed defibrillator expenditure for the year be approved.

C.893 Reports:

- a) Chair of the Council – The Chair reported that now that the village shop has new owners, the parish council should help the new shop by generating some press coverage. The Chair also raised the issue of the Decking outside the Sheppard Café. The meeting noted that Cllr Bryant will bring a report on this issue to the February meeting.
The Chair suggested having a list of small contractors who can be called upon to do small jobs when required.
- b) Planning Committee – the council took note of the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on the 19th of December 2023.
- c) Finance – the council took note that the bank balance at the end of December 2023 was £102593. The Council noted the Budget Monitoring Report and Bank Reconciliation Statement for December 2023.
- d) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – The council took note of the Neighbourhood Plan Open Evening on the 29th of January. All members of the parish council are invited to attend.
- e) Rights of Way and Highways: There is nothing to report.
- f) Tree Warden: Henry Gotcher has not taken action to lopp down his trees. Cllr Hill reported that the trees in Michel Dene Road are protected by TPOs and that the parish council have applied to the SDNPA to have the crowns of the acacia trees reduced.
- g) Recreation Ground: - Nothing to report.
- h) Defibrillators: - Nothing to report.
- i) Downlands Estate Management Group:- Nothing to report.

C.894 Correspondence

The council took note of Report 18 on correspondence received since the December meeting. The following matters were discussed:

a) Email received from Mr W.

The council response is that the Net Zero policy template produced is for businesses to complete and is not within the remit of the PC.

With regard to point b - SDNP initiative the parish council has signed up and awaits further information.

b) A Second email was received from Mr W.

The email received from Mr W on 21 October has been passed to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for consideration and response.

c) Running Event – Email from Mr K.

In response to the email received from Mr. K notifying the council that on May 26th they are hiring the Village Hall in East Dean to use as an aid station stop for the runners. The council has no objections to the event.

d) . An email regarding Hillside.

In response to the email received regarding the hedge in Hillside, the parish council will not refund the cost of cutting back the hedge i.e. £160. The parish council notes that it is its owner's responsibility to cut the hedge back to a point whereby any growth is accommodated on the verge and not over the road. Although the hedge has been trimmed it was only trimmed to the edge of the road and any growth will be over the road.

e) The Cricket Club

The council took note of the correspondence from the Cricket Club which advised the council of the Club's intention to apply for a Club alcohol license from Wealden District Council. The Council supports the application. **ACTION: SA to notify the Club accordingly.**

f) Traffic at the top of Crowlink Lane

The council took note of the correspondence about the parking around Friston Church, with people parking on the slip road off the A259. It was noted that signs urging people to avoid parking were erected by the parish council to deter people from parking on the slip road. The parish council does not have the authority to issue "No Parking" signs.

It was noted that the event is a one-off and occurred during the annual Christmas Carol service.

The Parish Clerk was asked to respond by explaining that the parish council paid for and erected signs on the flint wall, adjacent to the slip road and that in future the Council will liaise with the Church to endeavour that future events are managed better. **ACTION: SA to write to residents.**

g) Handrail between Michel Dene and Peak Dean Lane

The council took note of the correspondence and the request for the handrail at the top of the twitten from Peak Dean Lane to Michel Dene Road to be extended by one short length past the tree root which obstructs the path. This will be investigated, the council noted that the steps may need repairing. **ACTION: To be raised with CL.**

Under Standing Order 3(d) the Chair moved that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, due to its commercial sensitivity and confidential nature:

C.895 Mowing contract 2024/2025/2026

The council considered the three tenders received for the new mowing contract.

RESOLVED – That the mowing contract from 2024 – 2026 be awarded to Contractor B, subject to a meeting with councillors to ensure that both parties are clear on the expectations of the contract.

C.896 Date of next meeting: - Thursday 1st February 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.08 p.m.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....

ANNEX

		Payments - January 2024			Receipts - December 2023		
PAYEE	DETAILS	SUB TOTAL	VAT	TOTAL	REF.NO	DATE APPROVED	NOTES
Mulberry & Co	Interim Internal Audit	140.63	28.13	168.76	3061		
East Dean & Friston Village H	Hall Booking	40.00		40.00	3062		
EDF Energy	Pavillion Electricity	83.97	4.20	88.17	3063		
HRMC	PAYE & NICs for December	482.60		482.60	3064		
ESCC	Pension contributions - December 2023	857.75		857.75	3065		
K Larkin	Office Cost & Mileage	51.56		51.56	3066		
S. Adeniji/K Larkin	January Salary to be confirmed via email	-		-	3067/3068		
S. Adeniji	Office Cost	26.00		26.00	3069		
J Timberlake	Biodiversity data	50.00	10.00	60.00	3070		
Clr Hill	Christmas lights	62.98		62.98	3071		
TOTAL		1,795.49	42.33	1,837.82			

RECEIPTS

TOTAL

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