



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 7th June 2018 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 7.05 pm

Councillors present: Cllr M Keller (Chair), Cllr L d'Urso (items C.576 onwards), Cllr K Godden, Cllr B Greenwell, Cllr A Hookham, and Cllr P Hill

In attendance: District Cllr J Wilton; and K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

There were five members of the public present.

Public Session

Phone mast on A259 - a resident requested the council to lobby the contractors to install the new phone mast without further delay. The lack of a signal at Birling Gap was a safety issue as even the Beachy Head Chaplaincy did not have a land line. The Chair noted that not all residents were in favour of the installation, and some queried whether the signal could reach Birling Gap; if it did, its availability would still depend on which network individual visitors were using. The parish council had pressured BT to maintain the old phone kiosk at Birling Gap, as an interim measure. The grant of planning permission did not mean that the work had to be done: the decision would probably be made on a commercial basis. It was reported that the National Trust was also keen to get the installation done, and could supply visitor numbers to support the commercial case for the installation.

Complaint about noise – a resident had complained to the council about an alleged incident involving another resident. The clerk explained that although an individual councillor had intervened, the council had not done so, and the council had no power to act as a 'tribunal', though it could take an interest and engage in private correspondence on such matters. The Chair confirmed that the council was willing to hear a statement from the resident who was the subject of the complaint, and was in attendance. A statement was duly made, correcting certain facts and pointing to the good reputation of the resident. Members accepted the statement and agreed that no further action need be taken.

The Chair closed the Public Session and opened the meeting

C.573 Acceptance of apologies for absence: - Cllr T Bryant; Cllr P Seeley

C.574 Declarations of Interests: - Cllr Keller and Cllr Hill – PCC request for churchyard donation (connections with East Dean Church); Cllr Greenwell – Bowling Club request for grant (member of the Club).

C.575 Approval of the Minutes: - (a) The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd May 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair;

(b) the minutes of the ordinary parish council meeting held on 3rd May 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

C.576 CO-OPTION OF A COUNCILLOR

The Chair proposed and Cllr Hill seconded the motion that Mrs Lesley d'Urso be co-opted as a member of the council.

RESOLVED – The motion was put to the meeting and declared carried unanimously.

Councillor d'Urso signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

The Chair formally reported the resignation of Cllr David Clarke. Notices had been issued and it was hoped that this vacancy could be filled at the July meeting.

C.577 BUSINESS IN PROGRESS

The council considered report 5 on progress since the May meeting, and the following points were discussed:

- a) Council insurance – confirmation of the council's new policy cover with RSA commencing 01 June 2018 had been received, with employers liability certificate, policy schedule and policy document . However, the invoice in the sum of £1,118.89 was still awaited.
- b) Play Area and recreation ground
 - o The contractors had installed the missing bolt on the new equipment.
 - o The soakaway – work was complete but the Heras fence was partially blocking the normal access to the recreation ground, and should be removed as soon as possible.
 - o New footpath to the play area - delayed pending agreement on what should be done with the spoil. Members agreed it must be removed from the recreation ground.
 - o Removal of seat – new memorial seats could be accepted as village assets on the understanding that they could be disposed of at the end of their useful life.
 - o Dog show licence – the organisers had obtained insurance as required by the council. The licence was duly signed.
 - o Plaques – these should be stored in the pavilion, except for the Beachy Head Woman plaque, to be displayed on the pavilion.
- c) Footpath 8 sign – it was noted that many other twittens on the Downlands Estate were not signed, despite the normal rule specified by ESCC Rights of Way that paths should always be signed at the point of departure from a metalled road.

RESOLVED – That the Progress report be noted and action taken as discussed

C.578 STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- a) The council considered amendments to the Standing Orders, recommended by NALC, to take account of changes in legislation, particularly on data protection. A further amendment had been proposed to SO 18(a)(v) by the Lead Member for Finance, to clarify that contracts with a value below £25,000 *excluding VAT* should be exempt from a formal tendering process. It was also noted that SO 20(b) regarding mandatory Transparency regulations was not applicable to parishes with a turnover between £25,000 pa and £250,000 pa and therefore not applicable to EDFPC.

RESOLVED – That amended Standing Orders be adopted as drafted, with immediate effect, incorporating the proposed amendment to SO 18(a)(v) and deleting the inapplicable SO20(b)

- b) The council considered new financial regulations based on an SLCC model, suitable for smaller councils. Amendments were proposed by the Lead Member for Finance, as follows: FR 6.2.1 – specify that in the absence of the Proper Officer a suitably qualified replacement should be appointed as cover (not applicable to ordinary holidays or sick leave); FR 9.2.1 – redraft in tabular format for clarity. In debate on FR 9.2.1 and FR 9.2.3 Orders for Goods and Services, members noted that where there was budgeted provision for expenditure on a council asset, Lead Members would typically negotiate an order (with or without obtaining three quotes for items under £1,000) and report it to council before placing the order themselves. However, it was noted that under model FR 9.2.3 all orders should be placed by the RFO. It was agreed to amend this to 'Orders should be *signed off* by the RFO only' (FR 9.2.3.). The prior report to council by the Lead Member should not be omitted except in urgent cases (for which see FR 4.2.4.).

RESOLVED – That new Financial Regulations be adopted as drafted, with immediate effect, incorporating the proposed amendments to FR 6.2.1; FR 9.2.1 and FR 9.2.3

C.579 COUNCIL WEBSITE

Members considered Report 7 by the Lead Member for Communications comparing alternative website packages to improve compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and Transparency regulations, e.g. by providing all councillors with corporate email addresses. The Vision ICT Transparency package was recommended as having most room for future expansion, with additional graphic services if required. For a quick and easy set-up, content should be transferred from the old website by Vision ICT, then maintained in-house with support and training also provided. The cost would be £550 for start-up and £425 pa thereafter, for corporate email addresses and data back-up. This was within budget (£1,000 for start-up and £500 pa thereafter). The current domain name should be retained. Input would be required on the look of the new site. The Chair proposed that Councillor d'Urso be appointed to assist with Communications, and this was agreed. **ACTION:**

KL to check whether a grant was obtainable from NALC; AH to contact Vision ICT.

RESOLVED - That a Vision ICT Transparency package website be obtained at a cost of £550 start-up plus annual fees estimated at £425 pa

RESOLVED - That Cllr d'Urso be appointed to assist the Lead Member for Communications

C.580 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

The Chair thanked Cllr Hookham and the clerk for the seminar on the General Data Protection Regulation held on 15th May to assist local clubs and societies with their compliance. Some 20 residents had attended. Members took note of Report 8 on the council's own activities to comply with GDPR, including the result of the council's Data Audit. For each category of information listed, the Audit schedule gave full information on consents required (if any), storage, disposal etc., which would assist councillors in their personal compliance. Members were satisfied that the council was proceeding in the right direction, though the work of disposing of old personal information where appropriate would continue for some months. Members also noted and approved the draft Data Protection Policy and draft Privacy Notice prepared for council use.

RESOLVED – That the report on GDPR compliance be noted

RESOLVED - That the draft Data Protection Policy be approved with immediate effect

RESOLVED - That the draft Privacy Notice be approved with immediate effect.

C.581 ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

Members took note of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2018, and reviewed the proceedings. On this occasion, no follow-up actions were required from the council.

C.582 PARISH COUNCIL GRANT SCHEME

Members took note of Report 10 on applications for grant funding received from the Parochial Church Council and other village organisations. The Chair advised that the Village Hall Trust had withdrawn their request for a grant towards production of the Village Quarterly Diary, as a new sponsor had been found for the Diary (Barwells Solicitors). Members reviewed the other grant applications and requested further information on the three projects put forward by the Bowling Club.

Standing Orders were suspended to enable a Club representative to provide clarification: some members had been obliged to leave the Club because of the

difficult access way, and some visiting teams could no longer attend for the same reason. It would cost £6,000 to resurface the path and provide a handrail. This was a top priority. Specialist equipment priced at £600 would help players who could not bend, by providing arm extensions. The re-levelling of the green (laid in 1936) would cost £30,000 and was a longer term project. Standing Orders were re-imposed.

It was noted that if the Bowling Club received £600 and all other grants requested were paid, the total cost would be £1,100, to which a further £500 should be added for the council's Charity of the Year (Eastbourne RNLI). The total budget for grants was £2,000 in the current financial year, leaving £400 unallocated.

RESOLVED - That the following grants be paid: Bowling Club - £600; Community Watch - £100 (hall hire fees to be invoiced directly to the council); Hedgehog Street - £50; Parish Magazine - £250; Table Tennis Club - £100; Eastbourne RNLI - £500.

Members then considered the request from the Parochial Church Council for an annual grant to be paid into a ring-fenced fund for maintenance of the churchyard. It could be argued that because use of the churchyard was open to all residents it should be regarded as a civic amenity. However, it was also argued that many people would not want to use the churchyard, and more financial information was required from the PCC.

Cllr Keller, Cllr Hill and Cllr Greenwell withdrew from voting, having each declared an interest in this item.

Cllr Hookham proposed and Cllr d'Urso seconded the motion '**That as an interim measure the £400 remaining in the grants budget for 2018/19 should be paid into the churchyard fund, and that in future a churchyard donation should be considered separately as part of each annual budgeting process, on the basis of fuller information**'.

RESOLVED - The motion was put to the meeting and declared carried by those members present and voting.

C.583 EMERGENCY PLAN

The council considered a revised draft of the Emergency Plan. The Plan now provided for a resource pack with a combination lock to be stored in the village hall, containing an internet phone and comprehensive contact details (as provided in the confidential Appendices to the Plan, all of which would now be updated). It was proposed that the £200 provided in the budget for 'minor asset replacement' be used to provide the pack and phone. **ACTION: KL to circulate hard copies of the revised Plan and Appendices to all councillors.**

RESOLVED - That the revised Emergency Plan be approved

RESOLVED – That a budget of £200 be allowed for provision of the resource pack and contents

C.584 FIREWORKS AT CHRISTMAS

The council considered a report from the Working Group, with a statement of the projected finances of the event. Cllr Hill reported that he and the Chair had met Mr Davies Gilbert to discuss the possibility of The Drove being opened for use as a processional route on the night of the event. The Estate, though prepared in principle to grant a licence for the use of their land, and not ruling out the use of The Drove, would prefer a venue other than the recreation ground/Drove to be used. Alternatives had been duly considered, but none found suitable. In discussion, it was agreed that if the event could not be held on the recreation ground in 2018 it should be postponed for a year. **ACTION: MK/PH to notify the Estate.** It was further noted that on the projected figures, there would be a £900 exposure risk on such an event. The costs of clearing up and disposing of waste, and providing special event insurance cover, should be added to the budget.

C.585 CLERKS REVIEW

The Council considered a confidential oral report from the Chair. Members then considered whether the clerk should receive the national pay award appropriate to her point on the pay scale from 1st April 2018 onwards. The new hourly rate at Spine Point 27 was £12.815 (£13,327.60 pa and £1,110.63 per month), i.e. an increase of £261.04 pa and £21.75 per month. In view of the exceptional work carried out by the clerk during the past year, in particular due to the disruptions caused by high turnover in councillors and the complications caused by the introduction of GDPR, the council had no hesitation in confirming the above pay award.

RESOLVED – That the clerk should be paid at the new hourly rate of £12,815 (Spine point 27) with effect from 01 April 2018.

Moreover, recognising that the clerk was currently at the top of her pay scale, and that therefore there was limited scope for rewarding the above mentioned exceptional work, the council wished to award the clerk an ex gratia bonus payment of £200 with their thanks.

The Chair proposed and Cllr Hill seconded the motion **‘That the clerk be authorised to take the above sum (£200 adjusted for any tax due) from the council’s current account and to show this as expenditure against the budget for administrative support.’**

RESOLVED – The motion was put to the meeting and declared carried unanimously by those members present

C.586 PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

The council considered Report 14 the Schedule of Payments for June 2018 and Receipts for May 2018. *[Note: the complete Schedule is published on the council website].*

RESOLVED – That the clerk be authorised to make the following payments: (a) all payments on the published schedule for June 2018; (b) all grants approved in Item

C.582 above; and (c) the salary increment and gratuity awarded to the clerk in Item C.585 above

C.587 REPORTS:

- a) District Cllr J Wilton reported on the following matters -
- Exceat Bridge – environmental studies were taking place and protected species (e.g. newts) would be re-homed. Work should begin later in the year. Members queried this timescale as a longer timescale had been outlined by ESCC.
 - Safety at Birling Gap – new posters were on display at the Gap and on local bus routes, and advice was being given on local radio and in person on site.
 - Additional litter bin – a second bin was needed at the bus stop on the north side of the A259, East Dean. The council agreed to consider this.
 - Household bin collections missed in Upper Street, Lower Street and Went Way – this happened during a recent road closure but had been avoidable. Residents should ring 443322 if bins were not emptied. Wealden’s current contract with Kier was coming to an end and a new provider would take over.
 - Signs for local shops – a request had come in for better signage for the shopping precinct. It was noted that signs could be affixed to bus shelters without planning permission. The council would be sympathetic to future proposals.
 - A27 proposals – a public meeting had been organised on Tuesday 12th June, apparently in opposition to the proposed dualing of the carriageway between Lewes and Polegate. Cllr Wilton would attend.
 - Cricket and new houses at The Fridays – a cricket ball had already gone through a window hole. Proposals to move the cricket square might have to be re-considered.
 - Phone mast on A259 – Cllr Wilton would contact the National Trust for support in getting the installation done. **ACTION: AH to provide contact details.**
 - Cold calling on the Downlands Estate – a milkman had recently been cold calling despite the policy not to permit cold calling on the Estate. This was hard to enforce.
 - District council elections 2019 – Cllr Wilton intended to stand down in May 2019
- b) Chair of the Council – councillors had agreed that the Chair and clerk should prepare a job description for an administrative assistant, to be considered at a future meeting.
- c) Planning Committee - members took note of the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on 15 May 2018

- d) Finance – the bank balance at the end of May 2018 was £68,867.73
- e) Rights of Way and Highways – Cllr Hill raised the following matters:
- o Extra green litter bin at East Dean bus stop (north side) - the need for a bin was agreed in principle, but there could be an additional fee for emptying it, if the total number of bins in the parish exceeded the historic threshold **ACTION: KL to check with WDC**
 - o Bark chips – a round of spreading was complete but a supply of chips remained. These could be offered to residents for private use and/or a fresh request be made for volunteers to spread more paths.
- f) Village Events – Mrs Sargent had very kindly agreed to help with the council's stall at the Village Fete. Cllr Hookham would seek offers of prizes from local businesses. The council's banner had gone missing.
- g) Cuckmere Community Bus – the council took note of the minutes of the AGM and Stakeholders meetings held on 23 April 2018

RESOLVED – That the above reports (a) – (g) be noted and action taken as discussed

C.588 CORRESPONDENCE

The council considered report 17 by the Clerk, and the following points were discussed:

- a) Unauthorised use of the village car park – the Czech coach had not returned to the car park, but camper vans would often park overnight, despite the sign at the gate. Repeater signs should be considered. **ACTION: KL to contact WDC.**
- b) Phone mast – District Cllr Wilton would take this up with the National Trust
- c) The Drove – publicity should be given to the fact that that the public access previously enjoyed over this track was not a right but a concession, which the landowner was entitled to withdraw. The track was now permanently closed.

RESOLVED – That the Correspondence report be noted and action taken as discussed.

C.589 Date of next meeting – Thursday 5th July at 6.30 pm in the Small Hall

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....