

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 5th July 2018 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 6.30 pm

Councillors present: Cllr M Keller (Chair), Cllr T Bryant, Cllr N Day (items C.594 onwards), Cllr L d'Urso (items C.594 onwards), Cllr K Godden, Cllr B Greenwell, and Cllr A Hookham

In attendance: County Cllr S Shing (Item C.600); District Cllr J Wilton (items C.590 – C.595); K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

There were no members of the public present.

C.590 Acceptance of apologies for absence: - Cllr P Hill; Cllr P Seeley

C.591 Declarations of Interests: - None

C.592 Approval of the Minutes: - The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 7th June 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

C.593 CO-OPTION OF A COUNCILLOR

The Chair proposed and Cllr Bryant seconded the motion that Mr Nigel Day be co-opted as a member of the council.

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

Councillor Day signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

C.594 BUSINESS IN PROGRESS

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

- a) Council insurance – the new policy was in place; further information on the addition of key worker cover was awaited.
- b) New website – the basic 'transparency' site was complete (£500 plus VAT). Members noted that 'extras' including additional capacity, approved at the June meeting, would cost a further £150 plus VAT, but would still be within budget, and the order had been confirmed. This was approved.
- c) Updated reference documents - the new Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, GDPR policy and Privacy Notice would all be published on the new website.
- d) Council grants - £100 awarded to the Community Watch should be vired away as invoices for the Watch's hall hire should come direct to the council. A

display cheque should be obtained for the presentation to the RNLI, which would be made by Cllr Hookham. **ACTION: KL/AH**

- e) Emergency Plan – a list of vulnerable people could only be provided if the Responders remained operational, but training had been withdrawn by SECAmb, making it impossible to recruit.

The Chair varied the order of business to enable the District Councillor to report

C.595 REPORT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

District Cllr Wilton reported on the following matters:

- a) Complaints on parking at The Fridays – there should be no problem with parking alongside the recreation ground, or in the village car park, or in the landowner's subsidiary car park. However, many vehicles were parking outside the houses and on the pavement (photos supplied). The council could notify the Gilbert Estate of the problem outside the houses.
- b) Waste collection – there had been no more problems with missed domestic collections. It would be worth installing another litter bin at the bus stop (A259 East Dean, N) and checking whether the contents were recycled, as most of it would be recyclable.
- c) Post Office – the East Dean branch had been closed for some weeks. There was no further information.
- d) Tourist coaches – problems had been reported to the police and to Wealden District Council following problems caused by a foreign coach parking in the entrance road to the village car park.
- e) Traffic count – Cllr Wilton had done a count of car movements on the A259 between 6.20 – 8.35 am. The numbers had steadily increased from one every 7 seconds to one every 2.7 seconds. This was local commuter traffic, and the large new housing estates going up e.g. at Polegate would exacerbate the problem. The A27 must be upgraded.

RESOLVED - That the report of the District Councillor be noted

C.596 BUSINESS IN PROGRESS (resumed)

The following further points were discussed:

- a) Emergency Plan – the Village Hall Trust had agreed to the proposed use of the Hall in emergencies and had written this into the standard terms and conditions for hirers. The council would initially pay compensation for loss of hire and subsequently seek to recover the cost
- b) Fireworks at Christmas – carried forward.
- c) Additional litter bin – Wealden District Council proposed to charge £250 pa for collections from each additional bin. Members agreed that an additional bin should still be provided at the bus stop (A259, East Dean North side) but that the collection charge should be queried: the location was already on the collecting schedule. **ACTION: KL to order bin and query collection charge**

- d) Parking problems – (i) To discourage coaches, or camper vans parking overnight, appropriate signage should be repeated at the main gate. The council would need to pay for a custom made wooden sign, which would also need the approval of the Gilbert Estate, due to the sensitive location. **ACTION: KL to find out cost.** (ii) At The Fridays the parking of builders' vans outside the houses, especially on the pavement, was a safety issue and could get worse in the school holidays with access to the recreation ground from the Went Way closed off. **ACTION: MK/KL to contact the Gilbert Estate.** A residents' parking zone would involve charging for permits and enforcement, and would not be a practical solution. (iii) At the north end of Gilberts Drive the council had considered additional yellow lines, but ESCC Highways had indicated that yellow lines were not currently a priority due to funding issues. (iv) Speedwatch was being re-launched and could be used in the parish if volunteers would man it. **ACTION: MK/KL to publicise this in the parish magazine.**
- e) Gore Farm Close – no further action to be taken over installation of bollards
- f) Highways – the update was noted
- g) Diseased elms – some elms alongside Friston Hill had been felled, but too late to prevent the disease spreading. The job was not yet complete.

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

C.597 RISK ASSESSMENT

The council took note of Report 6, and considered the draft extension of the Risk Assessment to classify and prioritise the types of risk that might conceivably have to be faced under the Emergency Plan. This was agreed. However, it was noted that the basic Risk Assessment had last undergone complete revision in 2016, when its recommendations had all been implemented. The document should be re-worked to remain current. Cllr Greenwell kindly undertook to do this. **ACTION: BG.**

C.598 PLANNING POLICY

The council noted the suggestion of the Planning Committee that they should lobby the SDNPA over the interpretation of the 30% rule (extensions to residential properties should not increase the habitable area by more than 30%). [The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 19th June 2018 (Item P.914) refer.] It was agreed that strict enforcement of the 30% rule could have unintended consequences, e.g. if an original small dwelling lacked facilities that would now be regarded as basic, a 30% increase could itself be too small to make much difference, yet if the plot were large enough to take a bigger extension, that could be acceptable. The guideline against allowing a small dwelling to be lost should be treated as a separate issue. Both guidelines should be interpreted on a case by case basis. The Chair of Planning endorsed liaison with the SDNPA in principle but advised that the parish should first study the latest draft of the Local Plan, which would become the principal reference point for the Village Design Statement. **ACTION: TB.**

C.599 PLANTING TREES AT THE RECREATION GROUND

The Council gave preliminary consideration to a proposal from the Lead Member for the recreation ground that some native trees be planted along the northern boundary.

These could be planted as fairly mature specimens and in due time give protection to the new houses from damage by cricket balls. The moving of the cricket square was not financially feasible. The trees would be visible from the Birling Gap Road and could in effect contribute to the landscaping which the planning authority had specified should be provided as a condition of the planning permission. They would be on council land and would remain council property. They would not be subject to the restrictive covenants which limited the erection of structures on the recreation ground. It was agreed that the SDNPA should be approached for advice on biodiversity and suitability, and the advice of the Tree Warden should also be sought.

ACTION: BG

C.600 REPORT OF THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR

County Cllr S Shing reported on the following matters:

- a) Community Match scheme – no update was yet available, but the parish's enquiry had been referred to Rupert Clubb
- b) Libraries to re-open – five libraries recently closed by East Sussex County Council would re-open soon as community libraries, with ESCC waiving any rental charges.
- c) A22 improvements – the Hailsham to Polegate section of the A22 was to be improved. It was hoped that this might take some pressure off the A259 in East Dean, where traffic flows had increased. Key improvements were also needed to the A27.
- d) Cabinet meeting – the meeting held on 26th June 2018 had been a key meeting for considering budget cuts. The minutes should be circulated to parish councillors when available. **ACTION: SS/KL**

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

C.601 NALC STAR COUNCIL AWARDS 2018

The council considered Report 9, noted the categories of awards and noted that the bar was set high. Cllr d'Urso argued that a nomination could crystallise the council's impact on its community, and achieve recognition of its work. A key goal should be to make all services accessible to all (the parish's support of the Cuckmere Community Bus was a good example, combatting isolation. It was agreed that no nomination should be made in 2018 but that the council should look ahead, involve the community, see what residents would most like to achieve, and invite them to cast votes on about five feasible projects, to draw up a list of goals. These could be studied in greater detail at budget-setting time in the autumn. **ACTION: LD/KL**

C.602 BUDGET UPDATE QUARTER 1

The council took note of Report 10 from the Lead Member: the council should be able to take strategic decisions on a more informed basis, and actively manage its reserves throughout the year. Cllr Godden had prepared a new financial model for the council, using code-based categories for its cashbook, and with a budget sheet that would be automatically populated from the cashbook entries. The actual spend

could then readily be compared with the budget heads. The old system was operating alongside the new as back-up until no longer required.

At the end of each quarter the projected spend to the end of the year should be re-assessed and adjustments made to the forward plan and the long term plan: this would require input from councillors and the clerk, so that the reporting to council would be done one month after the end of each quarter (i.e. the first such report should be on the August agenda). **ACTION: KG/KL** to proceed with bringing in the new financial model.

C.603 PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

The council considered Report 11 the Schedule of Payments for July 2018 and Receipts for June 2018. *[Note: the complete Schedule is published on the council website].* It was confirmed that the profits of the council's stall at the Village Fete should be paid to the Eastbourne RNLI.

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £3,484.62 be approved and the clerk be authorised to make the payments

C.604 URGENT MATTERS

The Chair reported that a letter had been received from the central Post Office confirming that the East Dean branch had been closed for some weeks. There was no public information about the cause or about future developments. It was agreed that the council could not intervene in a commercial matter but concern was expressed at the possible loss of the local post office.

C.605 REPORTS:

- a) Planning Committee - members took note of the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on 19th June 2018. It was also noted that Cllr d'Urso had attended an SDNPA Workshop on 19th June and would report back at the July meeting. A key topic of interest had been the provision of Affordable Housing, especially by building Affordable Homes on sites that were too small to be of interest to Housing Associations.
- b) Finance – the bank balance at the end of June was £48,706.16. A sum of £35 should be repaid by the Information Commissioner's Office: the council's annual registration fee had been taken twice by Direct Debit (before and after GDPR came into effect).
- c) Recreation Ground – Cllr Greenwell raised the following matters:
 - o The Heras fencing had been taken down from the new soakaway but the bollard which had been removed to give temporary access to the field still needed to be replaced
 - o The new path to the play area could now be installed. However, the council might wish to reconsider whether to request the Gilbert Estate to re-open the portion of The Drove running up to the play area, on a permissive basis, and to request DJ Utilities to undertake some other

task than the installation of the new path. Excavation for a new path must not disturb the existing trees. Members agreed that DJ Utilities should be asked to put their contribution on hold pending further discussion. **ACTION: BG**

- d) Village Events – Cllr Hookham reported that the stall at the Fete had made £438.90, yielding a net profit of £381.72 for the Eastbourne RNLI. This was agreed to be an excellent result. The following local businesses had very kindly contributed prizes, and should be thanked in the parish magazine:
- The Beehive on the Green
 - The Tiger Inn
 - The Grand Hotel, Eastbourne
 - Birling Gap Café and Shop, National Trust

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

C.606 CORRESPONDENCE

The council considered report 14 by the Clerk, and the following points were discussed:

- a) East Dean Responders – members were concerned to note that due to the suspension of training of potential new responders by SECAmb, the future of the East Dean Responders was now in doubt. A letter should be sent to SECAmb to ask whether there were alternative sources of accreditation and training.
- b) Littering from Vehicles – members noted the new powers adopted by Wealden District Council to issue penalties to offenders. A question was raised as to how this would be enforced. **ACTION: KL to enquire**

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

C.607 Date of next meeting – Thursday 2nd August 2018 at 6.30 pm in the Small Hall

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.04 pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....