



# 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 1<sup>st</sup> November 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, Cllr L d'Urso, Cllr K Godden, Cllr P Hill and Cllr P Seeley

**In attendance:** County Cllr S Shing (Item C.653); District Cllr J Wilton (Item C.648); P Williamson (Tree Warden) (Items C.648 - C.657); K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

*There were four members of the public present.*

## **Public Session**

Ball-stop nets/moving the cricket square – the Chair of the Cricket Club spoke in support of the Club's proposals for mitigating the risk of cricket balls hitting the new houses adjacent to the recreation ground, or the play area. The club's insurers would permit play to continue in 2019 under the present arrangements but would review it thereafter. The Club would like a new square to be prepared as soon as possible for first use in 2020. The District Councillor recommended moving the cricket square and seeking help from Wealden District Council in applying for a county grant towards the cost of approx. £20,000: WDC had obtained four new council homes out of the development and would hope to assist. In addition, the Gilbert Estate and the parish council should expect to assist as a concerted effort would be needed to secure the future of cricket on the recreation ground. There was thought to be support for this among residents. Regarding the parish council's proposal to plant trees to screen and protect the new properties, the prevailing view was that this would not stop the balls, and that Purple Beech trees would not provide a good backdrop colour for red cricket balls.

The Post Office – the Chair of the Residents' Association reported his concern at hearing from Maria Caulfield MP that the postmaster at the Barn Stores had resigned and that the Post Office had advertised for a replacement with the information that new premises might be required. No one had yet come forward. The RA wished to be involved in keeping the local post office open. The Chair of the council had also received the information and agreed it should be published to increase the chances of finding a new postmaster.

Enhancement of the entrance to Micheldene Road – the Residents' Association had invited ideas for enhancing the neighbourhood. The favoured option was to landscape the bank on the left hand side of the entrance to Micheldene Road from the A259. The landowner had been approached and was supportive. The RA had also received complaints about the hoarding at the adjacent property. Councillors agreed that this had been in place too long and might be too high. The SDNPA Enforcement Officer should be asked to do an assessment.

*The Chair closed the Public Session and varied the order of business to enable the District Councillor to report*

#### **C.648 REPORT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

District Cllr J Wilton reported on the following matters:

- a) Exceat Bridge – the preliminary ecological survey had been completed.
- b) Crocus bulbs – 4,500 bulbs were being donated to the parish by Cllr Wilton personally, as a leaving present
- c) District Elections 2019 – Cllr Wilton would not seek re-election in 2019 and would be pleased to advise any potential candidate for election.
- d) New path at The Fridays – it was gratifying to report that a new footway was now open providing a safer passage to the recreation ground.

In discussion, members thanked Cllr Wilton most warmly for the bulbs gifted to the parish.

RESOLVED - That the report of the District Councillor be noted

#### **C.649 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** - Cllr B Greenwell

#### **C.650 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:** - None

#### **C.651 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** -

- a) The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- b) The minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

#### **C.652 BUSINESS IN PROGRESS**

The council considered Report 4 on progress since the October meeting, and the following points were discussed:

- a) Soakaway easement – the Deed of Easement was presented to the council and signed on behalf of the council by the Chair and Cllr d’Urso, witnessed by the Clerk.
- b) Decoration/repairs at the pavilion – the Cricket Club had very kindly done a substantial amount of redecoration (before and after photos were shown) and the council was most appreciative. The work had uncovered several leaks and it was agreed that quotes should be obtained for the repairs and for ‘winterising’ the building. Budgetary provision was in place. **ACTION: BG**
- c) The Drove – research continued into the history of The Drove and a report would be brought to a future meeting.
- d) Councillor email addresses – dedicated addresses were now available for every councillor linked to the website.
- e) Emergency Plan – the safe had been installed in the village hall and would contain no valuables but confidential information for emergency use. The lists of contact numbers were under revision. **ACTION: KL**

- f) Carols and Fireworks – Cllr Hill reported that it would not be possible to use the Horsefield as the firing site in 2018, so there would be no firework display, but the rest of the event could be held as planned on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December 4.00 – 6.00 pm. Costs would include the catering and lights for the tree; there would be no sponsorship but the event should break even with takings from the catering and might make a small profit (if so, this could be shared with the Village Hall Trust in thanks for their co-operation). Marshalls would be required. Members agreed that the event should go ahead on this basis.

**ACTION: PH/PS**

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

*The Chair further varied the order of business for the convenience of those attending:*

**C.653 REPORT OF THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

County Cllr S Shing reported that the county council would make a decision as to whether to support the Friston build-out project at a meeting on 19 November. Cllr Shing would support the application and supply a copy of the officers' report to the parish.

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

**C.654 PLANTING NEW TREES AT THE RECREATION GROUND / BALL-STOP NETS**

Members agreed that these two items were related and should be considered together (Reports 7 and 8). However, the landscaping which had yet to be done on the new development would include some planting **ACTION: TB to check details.** It was agreed that the council should defer further action on trees and await details.

Members noted that the favoured mitigation option was now moving the cricket square. This had been discussed in November and December 2014 and March 2015. The council had been asked to enter into a Section 106 agreement which would have required the developer to move the cricket square at his expense, to facilitate his housing development, but this would have ensured the grant of planning permission for a development strongly opposed by the community. The council had therefore had no mandate to accept the proposal.

*The Chair suspended Standing Orders to enable a Club member to state that the Club had re-opened negotiations with the Gilbert Estate. There had been a suggestion that both the Estate and the parish council should contribute £5,000 towards the total cost of £20,000. Standing Orders were re-imposed.*

Members noted that the question of a grant from the council was not on the agenda but could be considered at a future meeting. In the meantime, the council would not object to the Club seeking planning permission for the installation of ball-stop nets, though these would be very unattractive. Members reiterated that the need for mitigation measures was a direct consequence of the housing development taking place so close to the cricket ground. However, the council sympathised with the Club's efforts and would support them in finding a solution. Moving the cricket square would be a potential solution for future consideration.

**C.655 BUDGET 2018/19 MONITORING**

The council took note of Report 5 on the council's finances for the three months ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018. The new model accounting system had been successfully introduced. There was now a variation of £9,520 (surplus) between the last revision of the budget and the projected outturn for 2018/19, excluding capital projects. Capital projects were underspent by approx. £7,000. Over the whole year the projected surplus could rise to £24,132 rather than the £14,612 projected in the last revision of the budget. If the revised outturn was correct, there could be an additional contribution to cash reserves of £16,520 at the end of this financial year (from a closing balance of £29,141 to one of £45,661) compared to the revised budget for 2018/19.

Members agreed that each capital project should have a lead member: War Memorial railings – Cllr Seeley; pavilion refurbishment – Cllr Greenwell to continue with planned plumbing repairs; Friston Build-Out on hold pending a decision from ESCC as to match funding. In 2019/20 capital expenditure would be more clearly separated from routine expenditure.

RESOLVED – That the Budget Update for Quarter 2 be noted

**C.656 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

The council took note of Report 6 proposing a Job Description for the post of Administrative Assistant and the placing of an advertisement forthwith. It was agreed that the advert should be placed with a closing date of 6 December 2018.

RESOLVED – That the post of Administrative Assistant be advertised forthwith

**C.657 REPORT OF THE TREE WARDEN**

The council considered Report 9 by the Tree Warden as follows:

- a) Tree dossier - It was agreed that the preparation of a tree dossier comprising a survey report with recommendations would be the key to a sound management plan and that the Tree Warden should be authorised to obtain estimates of cost for consideration by the Budget Working Group. **ACTION: PW**
- b) Dutch Elm Disease – the council would continue its present grant scheme repaying 25% of the cost incurred by householders in removing diseased trees, subject to the works being invoiced by ESCC who would also contribute 25%.
- c) Ash die-back – it was agreed to follow the advice of the East Sussex Beat Forester (Forestry Commission England) not to remove all diseased trees unless this was required for Health and Safety or other management reasons, partly as felling did not control the spread of the fungi and partly as there was evidence of recovery amongst some affected trees, which could promote resilience.
- d) Maps required – the council would try to provide most of the maps requested (a complete map of Crown/unregistered land was not readily available). **ACTION: KL**

- e) Budget for Tree Warden activity – the council had agreed to pay for the Warden to attend the SE Tree Wardens Regional Forum meeting 2018. The pamphlets mentioned could also be purchased for reference.
- f) Planning applications – the Warden would be notified of any new planning applications having implications for trees. **ACTION: KL**
- g) PC Website – the Tree Warden should be listed on the council website to confirm his credentials, and should have a council email address linked to the website. **ACTION: LD**

RESOLVED - That the report of the Tree Warden be noted and action taken as discussed.

#### **C.658 RUDE MECHANICALS THEATRE COMPANY VISIT 2019**

The theatre company had requested a licence for a performance to take place on the recreation ground on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 on the same terms as in previous years. This had included making a donation to the Community Watch.

RESOLVED – That a licence be issued on the same terms as in 2018

#### **C.659 COUNCILLOR REMUNERATION**

The council considered a response to Wealden District Council for submission to the Independent Remuneration Panel for their Parish Remuneration Report 2018/19. Members endorsed the response sent to the panel by Cllr Seeley, and doubted whether anyone took on the role of councillor to receive the annual allowance (£160, or £275 for the Chair): this did not amount to serious remuneration and was only recommended for elected members, which was inequitable. EDF councillors had in fact never taken allowances, but the Budget Working Group should reconsider the payment of allowances for future years.

#### **C.660 PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS**

The council considered Report 12 the Schedule of Payments for November 2018 and Receipts for October 2018. *[Note: the complete Schedule is published on the council website].*

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £3,062.04 be approved and the clerk be authorised to make the payments

#### **C.661 URGENT ITEMS**

Post Office - The Chair noted the discussion in the Public Session and reiterated that in the interests of retaining a local post office, the information received from Maria Caulfield MP, and that available on the Post Office website, should be publicised on the council's website. This was agreed.

#### **C.662 REPORTS**

The following items were discussed:

- a) Chair of the Council – the Chair had drafted a document on local protocol for certain ceremonial occasions where national observance was expected. A

- copy would be stored in the emergency safe. **ACTION: KL to check if a spare Union flag can be stored in the safe.**
- b) Planning Committee – (i) the council took note of the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018. (ii) The Chair advised that he had drafted a notice for the website, inviting volunteers to form a Steering Group for a Neighbourhood Plan. (iii) The Crowlink Corner planning application had been called in for decision by the SDNPA Planning Committee, and Cllr Bryant would register to speak on behalf of the council.
- c) Events – (i) the council would provide the wine for Village Christmas Lunch on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018. There was a budget of £100. **ACTION: PH to order supplies.** (ii) Remembrance Day – the centenary ceremony on 11 November 2018 would be the last on which the local branch of the Royal British Legion would parade its flag. Members agreed that some large poppies should be obtained to decorate the railings of the War Memorial. **ACTION: PH**
- d) Finance – the balance at the end of October 2018 was £68,634.01
- e) Rights of Way and Highways – (i) the draft minutes of the SLR (County liaison) meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 were not yet ready **ACTION: KL.** The Lead Member reported that the key theme of the meeting had been ESCC's lack of resources and its decision only to finance a 'core offer' in the coming year. (ii) The bus shelters at Friston (north side) and East Dean (south side) needed remedial work to the floor slabs. **ACTION: PS.** (iii) Accident on Footpath 25 - a resident had fallen over a tree root in the dark and suffered a serious injury. **ACTION: KL to report to ESCC for urgent attention.** (iv) Roads Company AGM – to be held on 22 November 2018
- f) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – (i) the council took note of the draft minutes of the AGM held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018. (ii) District Cllr Wilton would be pleased to meet any potential candidate for election as ward councillor in 2019.

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

### **C.663 CORRESPONDENCE**

The council considered report 15 by the Clerk, and the following matters were discussed:

- a) UK Power Networks request for wayleave – a request had been received for a wayleave across Friston Green; this would go on the December council agenda. A site meeting had taken place.
- b) SE Water – information was being sought on the adequacy of the support offered to vulnerable customers. The enquiry would be passed to the Community Watch for response.
- c) SDNPA Community Infrastructure Projects – a fresh round of bidding was opening for the use of CIL funding. Members were invited to bring proposals to the December meeting (e.g. maintenance at Friston Pond).

- d) Clearing vegetation from flint wall at recreation ground – this had been requested by the adjacent landowner. **ACTION: PH to instruct contractor to clear a 2' strip along the southern boundary wall.**

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

**C.664 Date of next meeting – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018** at 6.30 pm in the Small Hall

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10 pm.*

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....