



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 August 2019 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, Cllr P Seeley, and Cllr J Walker

In attendance: County Cllr S Shing (Items C.73 – C.74); District Cllr M Lunn (Items C.73 – C.75); K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

There were three members of the public present.

Public Session

Planning application on land adjacent to the Old Parsonage – two residents expressed concern over fresh proposals affecting the site of a previous application. The Chair stated that the matter would be on the agenda for the next Planning Committee meeting on 20 August 2019.

Picnic tables on the Village Green – the manager of The Tiger Inn responded to a recent query about commercial use of the village green, explaining that the picnic tables were there for use by any member of the public, and that The Tiger did not sell sandwiches etc. during the day but encouraged visitors to use other nearby outlets. The Chair thanked the manager for her helpful response.

The Chair closed the Public Session and opened the meeting

C.70 Acceptance of apologies for absence: - Cllr B Wheatley

C.71 Declarations of Interests: - None

C.72 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

C.73 Business in Progress

The council noted Report 8 on progress since the July meeting, and the following points were discussed:

- a) Friston Build-out – East Sussex County Council estimated the total cost of design and construction at £17,900 approx. If the Parish Council would pay the £6,000 they had budgeted, the Community Match Fund would pay the remaining sum. This was welcome news. However, members requested a reasonably accurate sketch of the proposed works before releasing the

parish's contribution. If necessary, an Extraordinary Meeting would be held on 20 August 2019 to make a final decision. **ACTION: KL to notify ESCC.**

- b) Safety in Birling Gap Road – it was noted that buses to Birling Gap were infrequent and/or expensive in the summer, resulting in tourists using the more frequent and cheap No.12 service to East Dean instead, and walking down the road. The question was raised whether Cuckmere Buses could provide an alternative. **ACTION: KL to contact Cuckmere Buses.**
- c) Squeeze gate – an estimate of £324 had been received for replacing the gate. However, Mr Walker had kindly offered to replace the gate charging only for timber (oak) and fittings, and it was agreed that this offer should be accepted, and a budget of £200 allocated to the project [661-General ROW Maintenance]. Residents had kindly contributed £40 towards the cost. The safety barrier at the end of the path should be replaced by ESCC. **ACTION: KL to liaise as required.**
- d) Bin at Friston Pond – the bin could not be re-purposed and the concrete base would be disposed of. **ACTION: TB**
- e) Fallen tree on Greensward – this had been removed.
- f) Trumpet player for last post – the Wealden Brass Band should be contacted. **ACTION: KL.**
- g) Car park lights – no further information. **ACTION: KL to follow up**
- h) Phone box – the final decision of BT was not yet known. The council had asked for the phone to be retained on safety grounds.
- i) Mowing the outfield – a question was raised as to whether the outfield really needed extra cuts. None had been done in July. The strimming of paths was included in the contract for July. **ACTION: PS/PH to check condition of paths; KL to remind contractor.**
- j) Picnic tables on the village green – members were pleased to note the reassurances from the manager of The Tiger Inn that the tables were for general use, and their number limited.
- k) Downlands precinct – the clearing and refurbishing of the precinct was nearly complete, expect for signage. Members thanked Cllr d'Urso for her work on this project. The 'No parking on pavement' signs would be affixed when other signage and notice boards were tidied **ACTION: LD/PH to liaise.**
- l) Barclays mandate – the mandate change was in preparation **ACTION: MK/PS/KG/KL**

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

C.74 Report of the County Councillor

County Cllr Shing reported on the following matters:

- a) Temporary traffic lights at Exceat Bridge – the current works should be completed by 9th August, i.e. prior to the annual Airbourne event.
- b) Borehole tests – a rumour had circulated that borehole tests were to be carried out at Birling Gap. This was unfounded and possibly confused with works for the new bridge at Exceat.
- c) Village Fete – Cllr Shing had attended this successful event

- d) South Coast Classic cycle event – there had been a large number of complaints about the disruption caused by the rolling road closure for this event, as the format of the event had changed from one large circuit to multiple laps of a much shorter circuit, to save costs. The event would have taken place under a Home Office licence. Councillors agreed to raise the matter at the next SLR meeting

ACTION: KL

RESOLVED – That the report of the County Councillor be noted

C.75 Report of the District Councillor

District Cllr M Lunn reported on the following matters:

- a) Green waste collection – there had been no further complaints but Cllr Lunn was still ready to hear from residents having problems
- b) Climate change – Wealden District Council had debated its contribution to the national emergency reduction of carbon emissions by 2050. It would use the planning process to improve the energy efficiency of new homes, including the provision of charging points for vehicles in all new homes and Wealden car parks, and would put its own house in order by reducing the carbon footprint of council activities. Car park lighting, where appropriate, would be provided using local renewable sources. The greatest need across the nation was for renewable energy supplies: locally this was likely to come from additional wind turbines.
- c) South Downs National Park Authority – (i) Enforcement - Cllr Lunn had raised the issue of lack of planning enforcement at a meeting of the Policy Committee and had requested a detailed report. The parish's Chair of Planning asked why enforcement matters were being treated as confidential. The parish council should at least be given a clear timeline in any enforcement case. It was noted that the SDNPA had now offered a liaison meeting, which was much appreciated. (ii) Seven Sisters Country Park – the SDNPA had agreed in principle to open a local office for residents to visit, view plans, submit correspondence etc.. (iii) Community Infrastructure Levy – over £1 million was currently held from CIL and Section 106 contributions. Cllr Lunn had requested a fuller report on how such monies were to be spent. Cllr d'Urso advised that the parish had an application in the system for £10,000 towards the moving of the cricket square, which had been necessitated by the building of new houses within striking distance of the existing square.
- d) Exceat Bridge – the survey work for the new bridge had uncovered some WW2 bombs (rendered safe).

RESOLVED – That the report of the District Councillor be noted.

C.76 Appointment of an Administrative Assistant

The council considered Report 9, the report from the interview panel. The panel recommended that Ms Nicola Osborne be appointed as an Administrative Assistant with effect from 02 August 2019, working an average of 10 hours per week over a four week period, at NJC salary point 5.

RESOLVED - That Nicola Osborne be appointed as the council's Administrative Assistant with effect from 02 August 2019

C.77 Annual Village Meeting 2019: Follow-up

The council took note of the draft minutes of the Annual Village Meeting 2019 (subject to final approval at the AVM 2020). At the meeting there had been muted support for arranging for an NHS pop-up clinic to visit the parish, offering free health checks to residents aged 40-74 with no pre-existing medical conditions. The local surgery had been consulted and advised that such checks were already provided locally at their Seaford clinic, and residents could book appointments there to suit their needs. It was agreed that this service should be publicised and no extra provision was needed.

C.78 Quarterly Finance Report Q.1 2019/20

The council considered Report 11 by the Lead Member for Finance. Overall the budget was slightly underspent (£2,000) at the end of the first quarter. There had been fluctuations in the cost of mowing (balancing out as cost neutral). A large water bill had been received, caused by a long run of estimated readings, but Cllr Day was now obtaining meter readings on a monthly basis and the situation had rectified. A more detailed audit trail now appeared in the council's minutes. The following points were discussed:

- a) Moving the cricket square - the Cricket Club was making every effort to raise funds for this essential project
- b) East Dean in Bloom – the future budget agreed for this project was £1,500 on the basis that at least £800 should be raised from donations; £900 had already been donated and £951 had been spent.
- c) Adjustment of capital project funding - £1,000 had been budgeted for re-fencing the play area (budget code 805); and £5,000 for maintenance of the pavilion, of which £815 had been spent (code 806). Of these, the fence was likely to be overspent (using metal posts for maximum durability) and the pavilion to be underspent. It was agreed that these two budget heads should be combined in order to complete both. £2,500 had been budgeted for refurbishment of the War Memorial railings but this should be deferred to ensure that work did not overlap with any upcoming memorial events. £500 had been budgeted for maintenance of the bus shelters and the most urgent item was the replacement of the rotten floor of the East Dean south side shelter with marine ply (cost £50-£100); however, both the East Dean shelters and the Friston south side shelter, all made of timber, might need to be replaced within the next 5 years. Any unspent budget from 2019/20 would be carried forward for this purpose.
- d) Flooding at Friston Pond – a quotation of £445 had been received for installing an open concrete channel in place of the pipe which was currently prone to block and flood Crowlink Lane. The council had supported this proposal in principle but a further quote was needed. **ACTION: PH to obtain a second quote.**
- e) Fallen tree at Friston Pond – this should be cleared away as the remaining seat was no longer visible (to be charged to budget head 664, General Contingency). **ACTION: PH to organise.**

Member thanked the Lead Member for a clear and comprehensive report.

RESOLVED - That the Quarterly Finance Report Q.1 2019/20 be noted and action taken as discussed

C.79 Replacement Noticeboard in Downlands Way

The council considered Report 12 recommending the replacement of the council noticeboards in Downlands Way. It was agreed that two new boards should be provided, one to be purchased from the Neighbourhood Plan budget and used for that purpose, and the other from the council's General Contingency budget (664); these should be the maximum size (1050 x 750 = 9 x A4) from the Noticeboard Company. However, a green surround would be preferred and a revised price should be obtained for this. The noticeboard at the top of Friston Hill was in poor condition and should be removed. **ACTION: KL to update costings.**

RESOLVED – To approve the purchase of two replacement notice boards for the Downlands Way precinct and the removal of the Friston notice board

C.80 Events programme 2019/20

The council considered Report 13 outlining the programme of events for the rest of the year 2019/20. The following points were discussed:

- a) Cricket Club – the Club might be interested in mounting a bonfire event in the future, but not in 2019.
- b) Remembrance Sunday – the council would continue to support this event. The brass band which played at the Village Fete might be able to supply a bugler **ACTION: KL to enquire.**
- c) Carols at Christmas - Cllr Hill was investigating the possibility of including a firework display in the Carols event planned for early December, using the Horsefield as the firing site subject to the landowners' permission.
- d) 75th Anniversary of VE Day - this would fall on Friday 8th May 2020, the May Day holiday being postponed to coincide with it. The council would consider a village celebration at the October meeting **ACTION: KL to add to the agenda.**
- e) Cricket Club 20/20 event – this fundraising sporting event on 28th September was already covered in part by the club's seasonal hire agreement. Councillors supported the Club's fundraising endeavours. However, there was concern that if publicised on social media the accompanying evening events could attract overwhelming numbers of visitors from outside the parish giving rise to familiar problems of parking, marshalling and security generally. **ACTION: KL to request a meeting between councillors (PH/PS/ND) and Club representatives.**

RESOLVED - That the report on events planned in 2019/20 be noted and action taken as discussed

C.81 Dutch Elm Disease: felling subsidies

The council considered Report 14 and noted the withdrawal of East Sussex County Council's felling subsidy for householders removing infected trees. No action had

been taken to fell trees on highway land alongside the Twitten (Footpath 25 from Upper Street to Friston Church) and as a result the disease had spread into adjacent gardens. [Note: Cllr Hill declared an interest as his garden was affected]. The parish council had assured residents that it would try to keep services going during austerity, and members agreed it should do so in this case, making good the budgetary shortfall from reserves if necessary, i.e. the parish would pay 50% of the cost instead of the current 25%, provided that householders took prompt action. Householders would be free to use any contractor. The revised policy would be publicised, the Tree Warden notified and householders contacted where cases were identified. **ACTION: KL to contact the Tree Warden/ MK to publicise.**

RESOLVED - That the parish council should increase its subsidy for the felling of diseased elms in private gardens from 25% to 50% forthwith, using money from reserves if necessary.

C.82 Payments and Receipts

The council considered Report 15 - the Schedule of Payments for August 2019 and receipts for July 2019. [Note: the complete Schedule is published on the council website]. An additional payment of £180 for cleaning at the pavilion; £21.50 for Fete expenses etc.; and approx. £293 gross salary for the Administrative Assistant were added to the Schedule. Members recorded their appreciation of further generous donations received for the East Dean in Bloom project, from the Downlands Butchers (£100); Strands of East Dean (Hairdressers)(£150); the Barn Stores (£100); and St Anne's Vets (£100).

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £4,347.41 be approved and the clerk be authorised to make the payments

C.83 Reports

The following items were discussed:

- a) Chair of the Council – the South Coast Classic cycle race had caused severe disruption. The race organisers did place no-parking cones and advanced warning signs as requested. However, the race itself was significantly different from that originally discussed, resulting in extended road closures and severe traffic disruption. There seemed to be a lack of publicity on the day, with no traffic warnings on BBC Radio Sussex and Brighton Bus drivers unaware of what was going on. The Parish Council had no power of veto over the race, which was authorised under a Home Office licence. This would be discussed at the next county liaison meeting with Cllr Shing's support.
- b) Planning Committee – the council took note of the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on 16th July 2019. Two new applications had been received on Land behind or adjacent to The Old Parsonage and were likely to be of great interest to residents.
- c) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – the council took note of the draft minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 16th July 2019. The Group's stall at the Village Fete had stimulated a good level of engagement and

responses were now being analysed. Councillors thanked Cllr d’Urso for organising this.

- d) Finance – the bank balance at the end of July 2019 was £67,797.14.
- e) Rights of Way and Highways – Cllr Seeley and Cllr Hill were surveying all paths to organise the spreading of bark chips in the autumn where required. **ACTION: PS/PH.** It was agreed that a contractor should be employed to help with the spreading.
- f) Recreation Ground – (i) Play area annual inspection - following the recommendation of the 2019 RoSPA safety inspection, Cllr Seeley and Cllr Hill had taken down all six swings but had found that they were fundamentally sound. The bolts of the basketball nets looked more hazardous and would be replaced: Mr Pankhurst would supply new bolts. The Lead Member recommended that Wicksteed (the suppliers of most of the current equipment) be contracted to maintain their equipment as necessary, and to do the next inspection in place of RoSPA: Wicksteed would charge £45 to inspect their own equipment and a further £15 to do a general risk assessment of the whole play area. This was agreed **ACTION: KL.** (ii) Minor vandalism – a large quantity of drinks cans and cigarette ends had been found at the pavilion recently and the Cricket Club had kindly cleared them up. (iii) Film Club - a request had been received from an amateur film club to use the cricket pavilion for location shots. There was no objection: nothing would be touched.
- g) Fund Raising – (i) CIL funding - the Lead Member stated that a decision on the council’s request for CIL funding for moving the cricket square should be announced by the SDNPA in September. (ii) Interpretation boards – preliminary information on this project had been circulated to all members and the Residents’ Association and the Gilbert Estate would also be approached. There would be a further debate in council in October. (iii) Dutch Elm Disease – Cllr d’Urso would also research any sources of funding for tackling this disease.
- h) Wealden District Association of Local Councils –the council took note of the minutes of the AGM held on 10 July 2019.

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

C.84 Correspondence

The council took note of Report 18 on correspondence received since the July meeting, and the following matters were discussed:

- a) Air pollution – members were sympathetic to the resident’s concerns but agreed that the problem was not the lack of legislation but the difficulty of enforcement.
- b) Numbering of new houses at The Fridays – the numbering and signage had been checked and were correct.

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- c) Responsibility for road maintenance in the Downlands precinct – it was agreed that the Hon. Solicitor should be asked to check this in response to an enquiry from the Roads Company.
 - d) Speed limits on the Downlands Estate – Cllr Godden urged the council to accept a greater duty of care towards residents on the Downlands Estate, walking on narrow roads with no pavements, and vehicles speeding past. It was accepted that the roads were technically subject only to the national speed limit of 60mph but the risk inherent in putting up unauthorised signs specifying a lower limit was very small, while the risk of a serious accident under current conditions was disproportionately high. It should be acceptable to install 20 mph signs at the two Estate entrances, with the wording ‘Advisory speed limit’. The Chair clarified that the council could not promote any unlawful action, but was unlikely to officiously strive to have such signage removed.
 - e) Memorial seats – enquiries were ongoing with two families who might be interested in supplying memorial seats, one at Friston Pond and one at the recreation ground.

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

C.85 Date of next meeting: Thursday 3rd October 2019 at 6.30 pm in the Village Hall.
There is no council meeting in September.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.32 pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....