

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 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 P Hill, Cllr P Seeley, Cllr J Walker and Cllr B Wheatley

**In attendance:** County Cllr S Shing (Items C.93 – C.94); K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

*There were two members of the public present.*

### **Public Session**

Planning applications on land adjacent and to the rear of The Old Parsonage – a resident welcomed the decision of the SDNPA to re-consult on these applications and thanked the parish council for requesting it.

*The Chair closed the Public Session and opened the meeting*

**C.90 Acceptance of apologies for absence:** - Cllr L d’Urso, Cllr K Godden, P Williamson (Tree Warden); Cllr V Rowlands (SDNPA)

**C.91 Declarations of Interests:** - None

### **C.92 Minutes**

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- b) The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **C.93 Business in Progress**

The council noted Report 7 on progress since the August meeting, and the following points were discussed:

- a) Friston Build-out – members welcomed the overall design of the build-out but agreed it should be longer than 3.4m (perhaps 4.5m-5m) so it would not be possible to swerve around it, nor park behind it, both of which would exacerbate the danger of people parking in the slip road to Crowlink Lane.  
**ACTION: PH/PS to request a site meeting**
- b) Dutch Elm felling subsidy – members noted that East Sussex County Council was now offering a 10% subsidy to private householders, and it was agreed that in order to keep the total subsidy to 50% of cost, the parish council should reduce its contribution from 50% to 40%. **ACTION: KL to notify**

**ESCC and the Tree Warden.** [Note: Report 9(c) from the Tree Warden also refers].

- c) Safety in the Birling Gap Road – Cuckmere Buses had replied that they were unable to assist with transport from the village to the coast for regulatory reasons, chiefly that they should not compete with commercial services. East Sussex Highways were considering safety signage. **ACTION: item to go on SLR October agenda**
- d) Downsview Lane bus stop – members noted the positive input from Highways. **ACTION: item to go on SLR October agenda**
- e) Remembrance Sunday – the new cornet player would not charge a fee, but it was agreed that a donation of £25 should be paid to the Eastbourne Silver Band for kindly supplying the player. The council would reimburse Mrs Hobbs for a wreath (approx. £20) **ACTION: KL**. The Chair and Rector would liaise over the arrangements for the ceremony (**ACTION: MK**), the local branch of the Royal British Legion having disbanded. Wreaths would be cleared at the end of November.
- f) War Memorial railings – a fresh quote of £940 had been obtained for the refurbishment of the railings. This was below budget and it was agreed that it should be accepted. The work should either be completed by the end of October or deferred until after Remembrance Sunday. **ACTION: PH**
- g) Lighting in the car park – at the forthcoming Parish Conference Wealden District Council would discuss installing electric charging points in its car parks as part of its sustainability strategy. On this basis the much cheaper option of installing low level solar lighting should be feasible. The Chair might attend the conference.
- h) Decommissioning of East Dean phone box – it appeared BT had not consulted any of the National Park Authorities, which could have led to the failure of consultation locally. BT should rectify this.
- i) Strimming of paths – several complaints had been received that strimming had been done late in the season, which should not recur. Strimming was now complete with the possible exception of Footpath 32 from Micheldene Road to Sussex Gardens **ACTION: PH to check.**
- j) Downsview Lane verge – a contractor had been found with appropriate licensing and public liability insurance. The verge had not been strimmed for five years and now required major work including removal of trees. The cost would be £340 plus VAT but would be less in future years. Residents had been throwing green waste onto the verge and this would all need to be removed. In addition a pile of spoil and flints had been left on the verge following work at an adjacent property and this must be removed before work could commence to save damaging machinery. Letters should be sent to all residents outlining the proposed work and requesting that all tipping cease; and the contractor responsible for the fly tipping should be called back to clear up. If necessary, Eastbourne Borough Council as the owner of the verge would be requested to take action against the fly tipper. **ACTION: PH/KL to send letters as discussed.** The work should be done in November when vegetation began to die back.
- k) Drainage at Friston Pond – work had begun on the new drainage channel and clearance of the undergrowth. The contractor should also clear the fallen tree

near the boundary with Vicarage Cottage, which was still growing and obscuring the nearby memorial seat, which could encourage anti-social behaviour. **ACTION: PH.** The Friston bus shelter had actually been moved by vandals and only put back with difficulty. Proposals would be brought forward for rebuilding the shelter which was now decaying. [See minute C.99g below].

- l) Noticeboards in the shopping precinct – the Chair had obtained two quotations of which the cheapest was £279 plus VAT for metal boards painted green (like the new Village Hall Trust boards). It was agreed that the boards should be ordered, one for the council and the other initially for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. **ACTION: MK/KL**
- m) Cricket Club 20/20 event – members complimented the Club on a good and well-supported event. The roof insulation would now be done at the pavilion followed by ‘winterisation’. The honours boards should be moved for the duration of the work. **ACTION: ND to liaise with Mr Pankhurst; ND/PS to turn off water.**
- n) Play area – work on the new fencing and gates, with metal posts for improved durability, would begin shortly. The swing seats would be fitted with new bolts and replaced **ACTION: ND.**
- o) Responsibility for roads maintenance in the shopping precinct – this appeared to be the responsibility of the Roads Company, unless the Hon. Solicitor should advise to the contrary. However, the parish council should consider making a contribution to the Roads Company.
- p) Memorial seats – there was currently one space at Friston Pond, a potential donor having been lost due to a slow response. There was also one concrete base at the recreation ground.

The Chair thanked all councillors for their contributions to a substantial progress report, despite the summer recess.

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

#### **C.94 Report of the County Councillor**

County Cllr Shing reported on the following matters:

- a) Traffic lights at Exceat Bridge – temporary lights had been installed for Airbourne and there had been no complaints about traffic management or flows (though numbers had been down). The parish council agreed that the temporary lights must be provided for each Airbourne event until the new bridge was open. There would be two more days of temporary lights for survey work at the Bridge **ACTION: SS to supply dates.**
- b) ESCC finances – the county had advance notice that it should receive extra funding in 2020/21.
- c) Climate emergency action – ESCC would be considering its future policy at its meeting on 14 October. The target date was currently 2050; Cllr Shing argued that 2030 would be better as it would encourage earlier action, even if the target had to be revised.
- d) Licencing of road cycle race – members complained that the South Coast Classic had effectively closed the A259 and the Birling Gap Road and cut off

the village for the duration of the event. A Home Office licence had been obtained but the management of the race had been changed subsequent to the issue of the licence. Both the parish and ESCC would wish to prevent this happening again: ESCC had a duty to draw up emergency access plans when road closures were organised. **ACTION: KL to add to SLR agenda**

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

#### **C.95 Risk Management Strategy – Annual Review**

The council reviewed the current Risk Management Strategy (Report 8). The following amendments were agreed:

- 1.4 Information – documentation could be supplied in digital form to save the cost of printing
- 2.1 Financial Regulations – NALC had published new model regulations which the council would consider in November **ACTION: KG/KL**
- 2.3 Audit – the council did not ask the Internal Auditor to do a six-monthly audit. The auditor had not expressed any concerns about this. This section should be checked against the new model financial regulations and amended if required. **ACTION: KG/KL**
- 3.4 Assets – the appointment of an Administrative Assistant for key personnel cover was still on the agenda
- 4.1 Personnel – to be reviewed following the filling of the current vacancy
- 4.2 Competence – revised in the light of changes of membership
- 7.1 Safety at the Play area etc. – the play area was routinely monitored by the Lead Member, and Wicksteed would be invited to do future safety inspections, as well as some minor maintenance in the spring **ACTION: ND/KL**
- 10.3 Working conditions – to be amended following the filling of the current vacancy.

Members approved the Risk Management Strategy subject to the above revisions. The next overall review would be done in October 2020. However, all councillors would be welcome to propose amendments at any time.

RESOLVED -That the Risk Management Strategy be amended and approved as discussed.

#### **C.96 Report of the Tree Warden**

Members considered Report 9. [Note: For Item (c) - Dutch Elm Disease felling subsidy - please see also Minute C.93 (b) above]. Members noted that the Tree Warden had originally been given a generic job description issued by East Sussex County Council, and agreed that this should be revised and dovetailed with the Neighbourhood Planning project requirements, in consultation with the Warden. The Chair would convene a meeting and report back to the council **ACTION: MK/TB/PS/PH/PW.**

**C.97 Schedule of meetings for 2020**

The council considered Report 10 on the draft schedule of meetings for 2020. It was agreed to adopt the schedule subject to the alteration of the January 2020 meeting to Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January, and to the insertion of an Annual Village Meeting date on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020. A note should be added alerting residents to the possibility of Thursday meetings being disrupted if an election were held and the village hall used as a polling station. This could happen in 2019.

RESOLVED - That the schedule of meetings for 2020 be approved as amended

**C.98 Payments and Receipts**

The council considered Report 11 - the Schedule of Payments for September and October 2019 and receipts for August and September 2019. *[Note: the complete Schedule is published on the council website]*. It was noted that 20 cuts had been done on the recreation ground during the season, whereas 14 were scheduled in the mowing contract. The Cricket Club should be requested to refund the council for the 6 extra cuts. The commercial printing budget had been overdrawn by £60 due to the reprinting of the walking maps: this sum should be vired from another budget head (to be confirmed by the Lead Member) and an additional amount should be budgeted for commercial printing in 2020/21. Members noted the receipt of the second instalment of the precept and support grant for 2019/20.

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £9,368.96 be approved and the clerk be authorised to make the payments

**C.99 Reports**

The following items were discussed:

- a) Chair of the Council – the council was invited to send a representative to the Cuckmere Buses social evening on 25 October.
- b) Planning Committee – the council took note of the minutes of the committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September. At the next meeting on 15 October representatives of the SDNPA would be present for a liaison session.
- c) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – the council took note of the draft minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 20 August 2019. No meeting had been held in September. The next meeting was scheduled for 15 October 2019; the Group Chair and Vice Chair would confer over future arrangements pending the appointment of a new Administrative Assistant. The Chair hoped to extend the membership of the Steering Group and to include younger members of the community. Flyers inviting residents' input had been circulated with the October parish magazine, and thanks were due to all those who had helped to make this possible.
- d) Finance – the bank balance at the end of September 2019 was £87,790.52.
- e) Rights of Way and Highways – the next county liaison (Strengthening Local Relationships) meeting would be held on 22 October 2019. Members were invited to put forward items for the agenda.

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- f) Recreation ground – a quote for insulation of the pavilion roof had been accepted in the sum of £2,275 and work would begin shortly.
  - g) Friston bus shelter – the shelter now required a new base and extensive rebuilding. Two quotes had been obtained for relaying the floor in concrete, and rebuilding with 9 inch brickwork either to window level (£2,750) or to roof height (£3,750), re-using the existing roof and sourcing old bricks for colour match. In discussion there was support for a complete rebuild for improved durability. Planning permission was unlikely to be required (like for like replacement). It was agreed to request the Lead Member to make draft provision for this in the next budget, as it was not included in the current budget.
  - h) Village Fete – Cllr Wheatley gave a report on the parish council's stall, kindly run on the day by Cllr Godden and other family members (Report 13g). The cost of setting up the games had been £61.82, and the net profit had been £59.18 which would go to the JPK Project. The stall had raised the profile of the Project, and had been supported by a number of local businesses through the donation of prizes, which were much appreciated. Members thanked Tension Technology International; the Downland Butchers; The Hikers Rest; and Divine of East Dean (Hairdressers), for their support. Members also thanked Cllr Wheatley and Cllr Godden, and agreed that the proceeds should be combined with any proceeds from the Christmas Carols event and formally handed to JPK in the New Year.
  - i) Communications – members took note of updated advice on GDPR compliance from the Information Commissioner. Key points for councillors to act upon were the use of dedicated email addresses for council business, and care in the use of portable devices for more than one purpose.

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

### C.100 Correspondence

The council took note of Report 14 on correspondence received since the August meeting, and the following matters were discussed:

- a) 3 Cornish Cottages – no response had been received from Eastbourne Borough Council and a reminder should be sent **ACTION: KL**
- b) Speed limit on A259 – this was a standing item on the SLR agenda. It was agreed to investigate 30 mph speed limits in other villages which did not appear to meet the standard qualifying criteria **ACTION: PS**
- c) Vehicle left in shopping precinct – the vehicle was not in use and should have Statutory Off Road Notification. It should not be left on council property and should be removed **ACTION: ND to check.**
- d) Pavement outside Old Forge Cottage – the maintenance enquiry would be referred to the county liaison meeting on 22 October **ACTION: KL.** However, members doubted whether this pavement or crossing point was much used.
- e) Trees in Micheldene Road – the ongoing problem here was that the land on which the trees stood had fallen into the ownership of the Treasury Solicitor, who would not maintain it. Land could be transferred out of their ownership for

a large fee (approx. £2,000) and the parish council had previously enquired about taking over all the land that had lapsed into Treasury ownership when the companies that had developed the Estate were wound up. The response had been that a separate fee would be charged for each individual parcel (of which there were many). It was agreed that the NPSG should consider proposals. **ACTION: NPSG**

- f) Mobile phone mast not yet constructed – the lack of mobile signals across many parts of the parish continued, and was now affecting mobile banking. This too should be considered in the Neighbourhood Plan process. **ACTION: NPG.**

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

*Under Standing Order 3(d) the following item of business was declared confidential by reason of the personal subject matter.*

### **C.101 Staffing Review**

- a) Clerk's annual appraisal and salary review 2019/20 – the clerk left the room and the meeting received a confidential report from the Chair.

Councillors were unanimous in agreeing that the clerk had performed exceptionally well during the past year, particularly with respect to the introduction of a new financial reporting and monitoring system. Councillors also noted the extra hours and stress that the clerk had incurred, due to the resignation of two admin assistants before they had been able to provide an effective input to the work of the council, and wished to show the council's appreciation in a tangible form. *[Paragraph added by the Chair].*

RESOLVED – That the clerk should be paid at the new hourly rate of £13.15 (£13,676 pa and £1,139.67 per month), i.e. an increase of £348.40pa and £29.04 per month, with effect from 01 April 2019, in accordance with the national scale.

RESOLVED - The Chair moved and Cllr Seeley seconded the motion that the clerk should receive an additional payment of £500 (subject to tax) in recognition of additional work undertaken. The motion was put to the meeting and declared carried unanimously.

- b) Appointment of an Administrative Assistant – one application had so far been received and a second was anticipated. Interviews would be held in October.

### **C.102 Date of next meeting: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 6.30 pm in the Village Hall.**

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.51 pm.*

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Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....