East Dean & Friston
Parish Council

Date: **04 March 2021**

Title: **Report Item 14 -– Correspondence**

By: **K Larkin (Parish Clerk)**

Purpose: **To report on correspondence received since the February meeting**

Recommendations: **To note the report**

Note: more items may be added to this schedule prior to the council meeting on 4th March 2021; a copy of the final version can be obtained by emailing the Clerk: clerk@edfparishcouncil.org.uk

The following items of correspondence have been received since the February council meeting:

- **Neighbourhood Plan** – a resident has enquired what exactly the council means by 'forming a management strategy' [February minutes, para. C.353]. The council is requested to consider this further and provide clarification on the following points:
    - If the strategy is to be an overarching strategy for the management of the whole project, the issue is that currently the council is short of members and the Steering Group membership is also in flux. Formation of an overall strategy may have to wait until after the elections to be held on 6th May, and after the next Annual Parish Council Meeting at which all responsibilities will be reviewed. An invitation could then go out to all residents to consider joining the Steering Group to fill gaps in its membership.
    - If the 'strategy' refers specifically to progressing a digital mapping exercise followed by a tree, shrub and hedgerow survey/management plan which would build upon the findings of the mapping exercise, then the question is whether an NPSG member may go ahead and obtain quotes with a view to bringing recommendations to the council for funding to be authorised out of the NPSG budget. The NPSG had previously supported such a proposal, but councillors at the February 2021 meeting queried whether this work would be appropriate after all, as the advice from the SDNPA had been that the findings would go beyond the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan.
    - Following on from the above, the council is asked to clarify when and how funding will be released for expenditure on NPSG project work generally. The council budget for 2021/22 has set aside £14,225 for the Neighbourhood Plan. However, each individual proposal for expenditure should come to full

council, on the recommendation of the NPSG, for prior approval. Only the council can lawfully authorise the expenditure of public money.

- **Publicising the May elections** – a resident has thanked the council for publicising the forthcoming by-election to fill three vacancies on the parish council, and encouraging residents to consider standing for election.
- **Vehicle noise** – it has been reported that this seasonal problem has started up again already. The sound is of motor bikes racing or doing time trials round the Beachy Head Road, or revving up vehicles just to make a noise. The information has been passed to the Traffic Management Working Group and will be raised with East Sussex Highways.
- **Dog waste** – two residents who very kindly remove deposits on certain routes state that the problem is getting worse. They also report that the litter they find is changing, and now includes disposable coffee cups and PPE which may be a health hazard. They suggest drawing more attention to the fines that may be imposed by Wealden if anyone is actually caught leaving dog waste in a public space, and possibly providing more bins.
- **Village Hall Trust** – the Trustees have thanked the council for the donation of £561, being the sum of 50% of the hire charges which the council would have expected to pay in normal circumstances; and for agreeing to waive the repayment of ground rent of £375 that it pays on the Trust's behalf to Wealden District Council. Running the Hall for such an extended period with no, or little, income has been and remains a real challenge.