



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 2nd March 2017 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 6.30 pm

Councillors present: Cllr S Fuller (Chair), Cllr I Haydock, Cllr P Hill, Cllr M Keller, Cllr J Sargent and Cllr P Seeley

In attendance: District Cllr J Wilton (Items C.335-C.338); K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

There were twelve members of the public present.

Public Session

The following matters were raised:

- Highway matters – Mr S Worsfold noted that (1) the trees blocking the pavement opposite Forge Cottage had been cleared; (2) South East Water would raise the level of the noisy inspection cover on the A259 to make it silent; (3) the brown tourist sign at the A259/Gilberts Drive junction should be amended to remove reference to the Sheep Centre (now closed); and (4) the drains on Friston Hill were still not functioning properly, despite being categorised as a hotspot by ESCC Highways. The Chair confirmed that (4) was on the agenda for the parish's liaison meeting with ESCC in April, and that (3) would be added to the agenda. **ACTION: Clerk to add item to SLR agenda**
- Flooding at foot of Friston Hill – Mr J Gottlieb stated that the flooding was not only affecting his property but also lifting the inspection cover at the bus lay-by as much as 2 inches. A cone had been placed on top to indicate the safety hazard. The Chair stated that County Cllr Shing had asked Wealden District Council to sweep the gutters to prevent more debris entering the drains. Responsibility for keeping the drains and gully pots clear rested with ESCC, and responsibility for keeping the level of East Dean Pond low enough to permit outfall from the highway rested with the Gilbert Estate. It was suggested that the Fire Brigade should also be able to assist in case of flooding. **ACTION: Clerk to contact all parties.**
- Potential development of land east of Gilberts Drive – a number of residents of Gilberts Drive had been contacted by the prospective developer and sought assurance that the parish council would be involved in the discussion of the plans and would represent their views. The Chair confirmed that a public consultation session would be held on Tuesday 21st March 2017 at 7.00 pm in the small hall of the village hall, during the Public Session of the next Planning Committee meeting. The parish council, as a statutory consultee, would reserve comment until specifically asked by the planning authority, but would also ensure that residents' views were fully represented.
- Keep Our Downs Public campaign – Mr C Walsh asked whether the parish council shared the concerns of residents over the proposed sale of five downland farms by

Eastbourne Borough Council. The Chair of Planning stated that the parish council was not a consultee in this matter, and had a policy of remaining non-political, but had agreed that individual councillors should be free to lobby for protection of the landscape. The prevailing view of the meeting was that capital assets should not be sold for revenue. The Chair drew attention to the statement just issued by the Chief Executive of the South Downs National Park Authority, which was strongly supportive of maintaining the character of the downland landscape. The parish council endorsed the actions of the SDNPA.

The Chair closed the Public Session and opened the meeting

C.335 Acceptance of apologies for absence: - Cllr A Hookham, Cllr R Maxwell

C.336 Declarations of Interests: - District Cllr J Wilton – Item C.338 Telefonika Mast (personal interest)

C.337 Approval of the Minutes: - The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

C.338 Report of the District Councillor

District Cllr J Wilton reported on the following matters:

- a) Potential development of land east of Gilberts Drive – the developer had asked for a meeting and seemed prepared to amend plans to meet local concerns.
- b) Telefonika Mast - the proposed mast would be good for the village. Contrary to supposition, it would provide a signal to Sussex Gardens and probably also to Birling Gap, where there was an urgent need for mobile phone coverage for public safety. The proposed general location was the least unacceptable option, balancing effectiveness against the need to preserve long views.
- c) A27 upgrade – the government had decided not to build a Chichester by-pass, and Stephen Lloyd (former MP for Eastbourne) was lobbying for the money to be spent on the A27 between Lewes and Polegate. It was agreed that Ms Caulfield, MP for Lewes, should be asked to do likewise, particularly if some funds could be released for a new Exceat Bridge.
- d) Flooding on Friston Hill – Cllr Wilton would pursue Wealden to get the gutters swept. **ACTION: Clerk to provide details**
- e) Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance – Cllr Wilton supported the current fund raising campaign and encouraged the parish council to make a donation [see also Item C.346b below].

RESOLVED - That the report of the District Councillor be noted

C.339 BUSINESS IN PROGRESS

The council considered report 4 on progress since the February meeting, and the following points were raised:

- a) General Power of Competence – it was noted that the council could continue to exercise the power until the next ordinary elections in May 2019 unless it ceased to meet the eligibility criteria. In that event, actions already started under the GPC could continue, but new actions could not commence.
- b) Hire Agreement with Cricket Club 2017 – the new Agreement signed on behalf of the Club was countersigned by the Chair.
- c) Hire Agreement with ROMPA Stoolball Club 2017 – it was agreed that the Club should be offered an introductory hire charge of £250 for the season

ACTION: KL

- d) Speed Watch on the Downlands Estate – the Chair of the Residents' Association would suggest a place and time for a PCSO to run a speed check

ACTION: PS/KL

- e) Council Noticeboards – members took note of the information provided on replacement/repair. Cllr Fuller would take the matter forward.

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

C.340 ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING 2017

The Council considered Report 5 and agreed the proposed outline structure of the event, and the timetable for the run-up to the event. It was noted that no response had been received from the Sussex Police as to the availability of a speaker on the deployment of PCSOs; this would not be pursued.

RESOLVED – That the outline structure and timetable for the AVM 2017 be approved

C.341 SHELTERED HOUSING WORKING GROUP

The council considered Report 6 by Cllr Haydock, chair of the Working Group, updating the council on progress. Whilst still gathering information the working party was tending to support the model operated by the Scanlon Trust whereby land was owned by the service provider who would offer, on a leasehold basis, small sites (say 4-8 units) with no on-site living assistance (except for building/site maintenance, and Lifeline provision). It was noted that land availability might be a limiting factor.

RESOLVED – That the report of the Working Group be noted and the recommended approach be endorsed for reporting to the Annual Village Meeting

C.342 PLAY PROJECT

The council considered Report 7 by Cllr Maxwell regarding sources of funding which were/were not available to the parish council. The funds that appeared to be available to the council had other criteria that the council might not meet. Funds that could be applied for by a 'Friends of the Play Area' group included Veolia Trust donations and Wealden District Council's own grants programme, but these would not easily dovetail with one another. It was agreed that the next step would be to provide a full report at the Annual Village Meeting and seek a mandate for

proceeding with the project. If a mandate were forthcoming, then the council should consider potentially underwriting the whole cost, taking a loan from the Public Works Loans Board to cover the shortfall. This would be reviewed after the AVM.

RESOLVED – That the report on funding information be noted

C.343 PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

The council considered Report 8 (the Schedule of Payments for the month of March 2017) and noted Receipts, including a donation of £20 very kindly sent by the Local History Group towards the repair of the War Memorial. The Chair noted that the Budget for 2016/17 included provision for donations to the council's charity of the year (the Beachy Head Chaplaincy), and the parish magazine. It was agreed that £500 should be paid to the Chaplaincy, and £100 to the parish magazine, before the end of the financial year. *[Note: the complete Schedule is published on the council website].*

RESOLVED - That the Payments totalling £3,870.56 be approved and the clerk be authorised to make the payments online

C.344 URGENT ITEMS: - None

C.345 REPORTS:

- a) The Chair reported on the following matters:
 - i. Development of Land at The Fridays – the Gilbert Estate had given notice that technical exploratory surveys would begin in mid-March, with construction work starting later in the summer. The council will be advised when the actual start date was known.
 - ii. Sale of Eastbourne Downland – the SDNPA Chief Executive had published a helpful statement which was available to view on the parish council website
 - iii. Village Design Statement – the printing was complete, and a supply was available for the Residents' Association
 - iv. East Sussex Association of Local Councils – the Chair would attend the Spring Conference.
- b) Planning Committee – the council took note of the minutes of the committee meeting held on 21st February 2017. The following matters were also raised:
 - i. Birling Gap steps – work was unlikely to begin before the end of May and would then last about six weeks. It would take up space in the car park and affect access to the beach in the early part of the season. Commencement was still subject to the National Trust confirming that it would meet its share of the cost.

- ii. Unauthorised use of an outbuilding - a report had been received that an outbuilding at The Fridays was being used as a dwelling. **ACTION: KL to notify WDC and SDNPA**
- iii. Parking on The Fridays verge – unauthorised parking had also been reported and would be raised at the next highways liaison meeting. In the meantime, a note would be placed on the windscreen of any offending vehicle on behalf of the parish council. **ACTION: PH**
- c) Rights of Way Committee – no meeting (next meeting 21st March 2017 at 6.00 pm).
- d) Finance – the Chair reported that the balance in hand at the end of February was £52,050.
- e) Recreation Ground – the following matters were raised:
 - i. Repair of playhouse - a supporting timber had dropped from the playhouse floor, and Cllr Hill had kindly re-fixed it. A slat was also missing from the roof and this would be repaired **ACTION: PH/PS**
 - ii. Play area gates – the lower gate needed a catch, and the upper gate had been put out of alignment by vandals. **ACTION: PH/PS to do repairs**
 - iii. Broken bollard on The Drove – the bollard had been replaced and would now be concreted in **ACTION: PH/PS**
 - iv. Holes in field surface at goal mouth – it was noted that holes had appeared and should be filled unless likely to recur through animal activity **ACTION: PH/PS**
 - v. Pavilion water supply – this would go back on at the end of March

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

C.346 CORRESPONDENCE

The council considered Report 11 by the Clerk, and the following matters were noted:

- a) Report from Maria Caulfield MP – Ms Caulfield had supplied an update on a number of matters of local interest. The report had been separately circulated.
- b) Request for donation to the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance – a donation of £250 had been requested. It was agreed that at the next Annual Parish Council Meeting the council would consider nominating the Air Ambulance as their charity of the year 2017/18.
- c) Frontier Fireworks – an update had been requested on the council's future bonfire plans, if any. It was agreed to confirm that no event would be held in 2017 but that a review would take place in the summer on the holding of an event in 2018 **ACTION: PH to respond**

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

C.347 Date of next meeting – Thursday 6th April 2017 at 6.30 pm in the Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....