



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 7 July 2022 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 6.30 pm

Councillors present: Cllr P Seeley (Chair), Cllr M Bustard, Cllr T Bryant, Cllr G Fowler, Cllr M Keller, Cllr C Lees, Cllr H Milligan and Cllr S Thorogood

In attendance: County Cllr Shing (Item C.609)
K Larkin (Parish Clerk), and D Picknell (Admin Officer)

There was one member of the public present

Public Session

Mr R Salmon stated that the Residents' Association had become concerned about the decline in presentation of some parts of the Downlands Estate and hoped that the council and the RA together might be able to initiate some improvements. There were particular problem areas in Micheldene Road near its junction with the A259 (overgrown with weeds and marred by hoardings); behind the shops (hedges encroaching onto the highway); and from the Deneside junction to Elven Lane junction (cars routinely parked to obscure the junctions). The white Estate entrance gate often had a bike chained to it. The RA realised that there was no easy solution to any of these problems, given that the ownership of the Estate roads was inconsistent from one part of the Estate to another, and that problems of lack of clear authority and complete responsibility over the roads also existed for historical reasons.

Cllr Bryant responded that he had researched the ownership of the Estate roads on behalf of the council in 2013. Most of the roads had been owned by the companies that had built the Estate. These roads had fallen into the hands of the Treasury Solicitors when the companies were wound up in 2013, and then passed to the Crown Estate [*represented by Messrs Burges Salmon*]. The council had previously enquired about buying them back for the parish but had been advised that each plot would be treated as a separate transaction which would have made the cost prohibitive. However, the council could try again to argue the principle that they should be sold as a package. A different situation applied in the earliest part of the development done in Friston in the 1930s where householders were more likely to own their verges, extending into the middle of the road.

Regarding authority and responsibility for the maintenance of the roads, it was acknowledged that the Roads Company was only responsible for the state of the tarmac and did not have authority to raise the sums required, now that the amounts originally covenanted by householders had been left way behind by rising costs. The amount now required per household was estimated at £285pa but only £90 could feasibly be charged, and some households refused to pay even that. When a property was sold, any arrears of covenanted payments could be reclaimed but only at the low rate prescribed in the covenants. A former councillor had investigated the possibility of raising money through the

precept. This would be technically possible, but the cost would have to be shared across every household in the parish, not only those on the Estate, and could be regarded as unfair.

Regarding the hoardings, these should be removed and were subject to enforcement action by the local planning authority, but the process was proving extremely slow. The parish council could only issue reminders.

The Chair stated that the council would consider this matter further in the Correspondence report later in the meeting and would keep in contact with the Residents' Association.

Mr Salmon departed. The Chair closed the Public Session and opened the meeting.

C.605 Acceptance of apologies for absence: Cllr P Hill

C.606 Declarations of Interests: - None

C.607 Minutes

The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 9 June 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

C.608 Report of Maria Caulfield MP

The council took note of a written report from Maria Caulfield MP on general constituency matters.

C.609 Report of the County Councillor

County Cllr S Shing reported on the following matters:

- Exceat Bridge – the planning application would not now go to the SDNPA's Planning Committee until October, but there was still hope that if it were approved it could meet the deadline for government funding to be secured.
- Gully work at the Upper Street/A259 junction – no date had yet been set for this work.

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

C.610 Business in Progress

The council received and took note of Report 7 on progress made since the meeting on 9 June 2022. The following matters were discussed:

- a) Monthly rate for cleaning bus shelters – members agreed that the monthly rate should be raised from £50 to £60 with effect from 01 April 2022. The rate had remained unchanged for over a decade. The council recorded its thanks to Mr Franklin for undertaking this work so reliably and for so long.

RESOLVED - That the monthly rate for cleaning the bus shelters should be raised to £60 with effect from 1 April 2022

- b) Donation for Ukrainian refugees - the Chair reported that the Steering Group for 'Communities Together' were in the process of formalising an account

specifically for donations with Networx, the Eastbourne charity which had years of experience relating to refugees. Networx had agreed to administer a dedicated account in the name of the Group. In deciding how funds should be used the Steering Group had agreed, in principle, to follow the 4-funding criteria used by the Homes for Ukraine Community Support grant fund i.e. transport, communication, accommodation and education. The Group had noted the Parish Council's preference for the £1,000 donation to target a local organisation and would liaise with the council over the distribution of the funds once the account was set up. Members agreed that this would be a good outcome and that the donation should be paid as soon as the account was set up.

- c) Pensions Discretions policy – members considered a draft policy document setting out the council's stance on discretionary additions to its pension scheme. None of the potential discretionary additions were currently relevant and it was agreed that the draft policy should be adopted and published on this basis. **ACTION: KL**

RESOLVED – That the draft policy on Pensions Discretions be adopted with effect from 01 April 2022

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

C.611 Platinum Jubilee Beacon Legacy

The council considered Report 8 from the Lead Member and noted that although the use of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding had originally been approved for moving the Jubilee beacon to incorporate it into a new village sign, that proposal did not now seem feasible. It was recommended instead that the beacon be left on the recreation ground (where it could be used again) and a slimmed down village sign be provided at the roadside with a suitable finial e.g. a crown. Members agreed in principle that this would be practical and cost effective, and invited the Lead Member to obtain costings from Mr Godwin for a finial, and from Mr Levitt for installation, and to check the need for planning permission. The placing of the 30mph sign adjacent to the recreation ground might also need to be reconsidered. A decision could then be made as to whether the project should be funded in the current year or the following year. **ACTION: MK**

RESOLVED - That the recommendation to leave the fire beacon *in situ* and provide a new village sign be approved in principle subject to future consideration of costings

C.612 Local Council Award Scheme

The council considered Report 9 and approved the draft Parish Action Plan set out in paragraphs 2(a) – 2(j). Members also noted the sample training and development policy appended to the report and agreed that it was suitable for use as a template for an East Dean and Friston policy. The documents should be adopted accordingly and the council should then proceed to register its application for a Foundation Award. **ACTION: KL**

RESOLVED – That the Parish Action Plan be approved

RESOLVED - That the training and development policy be approved

C.613 Neighbourhood Plan

The Chair of Planning reported that following a meeting with the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group it was jointly recommended that the Steering Group should comprise four councillors and four members of the community. The Terms of Reference previously drawn up were generally sound but the original membership of 12 had been unwieldy. It was agreed that the four councillor members should be: Cllr Bustard (Chair), Cllr Fowler, Cllr Lees and Cllr Milligan. Attendance could be via Teams (or similar). Working Groups would spin off from the Steering Group, and any councillors would be welcome to attend those sessions. At least one place would be allocated to the Residents' Association which had indicated its interest and willingness to participate. Other interested parties with analytical or communication skills would be welcome. The invitation to participate would be widely publicised **ACTION: HM; MK; KL**. The deadline for responses should be the end of September, with proposals brought to the October council meeting for formal approval. The wording of a draft notice for the council website was also considered and approved.

C.614 Net Zero Policy/Environment policy

- a) The council took note of a Net Zero policy template produced by the East Sussex Association of Local Councils.
- b) The council took note that it was invited to participate in the South Downs National Park Authority's networking initiative for parishes interested in combatting climate change. it was agreed that the council should sign up **ACTION: KL**

C.615 Email and internet usage policy

Members reviewed the current policy and considered that it was still fit for purpose and no amendments were required.

RESOLVED – That the Email and Internet Usage policy be re-adopted with effect from 07 July 2022

C.616 Payments and Receipts

The council took note of Report 13 containing the schedule of payments for July 2022 and receipts in June 2022. *[Note: the complete Payments Schedule is appended to these Minutes]*. Sheppards Café had kindly agreed to donate £75 to the Air Ambulance following the Jubilee beacon event **ACTION: DP to supply bank details**. Funds raised for the Air Ambulance by the council should be sent forthwith **ACTION: KL**

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £6,505.45 be approved

C.617 Reports:

- a) Chair of the Council – a very good defibrillator training session had been held on 30 June. There was still a demand for training, and another session would be organised **ACTION: PS/DP**
- b) Planning Committee – the council took note the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on 21 June 2022. A draft of an updated Village Design Statement would be brought to the committee for discussion at their next meeting on 19 July.
- c) Finance – the council took note that the bank balance at the end of June was £82,123.10. The council also took note of the Budget Monitoring report for the first quarter of the financial year 2022/23, produced on the new Rialtas accountancy software. This was agreed to be a clear and useful presentation. It was noted that some virement was needed and the clerk should bring a virement report to the next meeting **ACTION: KL.** It was also noted that for the past two years the council had not recouped its payment of £375 for the village hall ground rent from the Village Hall Trust, due to the financial implications of Covid for the Trust. This year, the refund should be claimed **ACTION: KL.**
- d) Traffic Management Working Group – Cllr Seeley and Cllr Lees had met representatives of the East Sussex Highways and licensing teams on 29 June to identify suitable sites for the next installation of speed signs, but had concluded that the A259 could not be used as signs could not be placed within 50m of a junction, and there was no room on the verges. Instead, Highways would paint more 40mph roundels on the westbound carriageway. The council noted that the £2100 allocated to this project would not now be required and could be vired to another budget head **ACTION: KL to put this on the next agenda.**
- e) Rights of Way and Highways – (i) residents of Went Way had requested that their road sign be repositioned. The council had a budget for signs and would pay for this; (ii) Overgrowth on the Twittens – a round of strimming was under way following the recent growth spurt. Some residents who were responsible for hedge maintenance adjacent to rights of way would be contacted.
- f) Tree Warden – a quote of £185 had been received for removal of the dead elm tree at Friston Pond. It was agreed that this work should be ordered **ACTION: ST**
- g) Recreation Ground – (i) the Lead Member would organise a skip for a round of rubbish removal. It was agreed that the burnt out litter bin on the A259 by the eastbound East Dean bus stop should then be disposed of; (ii) Play area maintenance – some defects had been reported and an inspection with maintenance had been ordered from Wicksteed. The Lead Member would inspect the equipment and advise on the repair required to the ‘spiders web’ on the Kanope multi-play climber, which was not supplied by Wicksteed but

by Proludic; (iii) The padlock to the vehicle gate had been removed but was thought to have been returned.

- h) Environment – a koi carp had been introduced to Friston Pond without permission and must be removed as it posed a danger to native wildlife. Mr Warner could relocate it if it could be caught.

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

C.618 Correspondence

The council took note of Report 16 on Correspondence received since the June meeting, and the following matters were discussed:

- a) Maintenance of the Downlands Estate – the Chair referred back to the discussion of this issue in the Public Session. He reported that there was no realistic possibility of the roads on the Estate being adopted by East Sussex Highways. Highways would require the roads to be surveyed and cores drilled to investigate their construction, which would not have been done to current highway standards. Current standards would require street lights and pavements to be provided, which would not be feasible. The Chair and Vice Chair would meet representatives of the Residents' Association to pass on information, go through the issues and identify any areas where leverage could be exerted to improve maintenance. The question of ownership of the roads would be re-opened in principle with the Crown Estate and consideration would also be given to who might have ownership if a sale could be agreed, e.g. the Roads Company, or a newly formed Community Interest Company in which the parish council might have a share. A report would be brought to council in October **ACTION: PS/ST.** In the meantime, hedge maintenance would be pursued, with enforcement action from East Sussex County Council if required **ACTION: CL/KL**
- b) Dog waste – a problem had been reported at the recreation ground. The Lead Member would monitor the situation in case any commercial dog walkers were responsible.

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

C.619 Date of next meeting: - parish council meeting, Thursday 4th August 2022 at 6.30 pm in the Small Hall

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....

APPENDIX

Note: more items may be added to this schedule prior to the council meeting on 7 July 2022; a copy of the final version can be obtained by emailing the Clerk: clerk@edfparishcouncil.org.uk							
PAYEE	DETAILS	SUB TOTAL	VAT	TOTAL	REF.NO	DATE	NOTES
Advance Mouldings Ltd	Pavilion roof fibreglass works	80.00	16.00	96.00	1853	24/06/2022	Paid
St John Ambulance	Jubilee event First Aid cover	96.00	19.20	115.20	1854	24/06/2022	Paid
HMRC	PAYE/NICS - June 2022	223.80	-	223.80	1855	07/07/2022	
East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension contributions 01April-30June 20	1,482.96	-	1,482.96	1856	07/07/2022	
Grants (Eastbourne) Ltd	Grounds mtce - June 2022	923.00	184.60	1,107.60	1857	07/07/2022	
Grants (Eastbourne) Ltd	Grounds mtce - June 2022 - extras	40.00	8.00	48.00	1858	07/07/2022	
R Franklin	Cleaning bus shelters - May 2022	50.00	-	50.00	1859	07/07/2022	
NALC	Neighbourhood Planning Review - traini	43.09	8.62	51.71	1860	29/06/2022	Paid
Village Hall Trust	Hall hires - June 2022	57.00	-	57.00	1861	07/07/2022	
K Larkin/D Picknell	Net Salaries (aggregated) - July 2022	1,564.14	-	1,564.14	1862/1863	28/07/2022	
K Larkin	Office costs/mileage - June 2022	51.56	-	51.56	1864	07/07/2022	
D Picknell	Office costs - June 2022	26.00	-	26.00	1865	07/07/2022	
Rialtas Business Solutions	Financial software setup + MTD + 1 year maintenance	708.00	141.60	849.60	1866	07/07/2022	
Cuckmere Buses	Support grant April -June 2022	680.38		680.38	1867	07/07/2022	
Business Stream	Pavilion water - 2 March-29 June	51.50	-	51.50	DD	14/07/2022	
J Dann	Jubilee Town Crier uniform	50.00	-	50.00	1868	07/07/2022	
TOTAL		6,127.43	378.02	6,505.45			
RECEIPTS							
D Picknell	Jubilee Charity donations	263.77	-	263.77	BGC	07/06/2022	
Agon Systems Ltd	Pavilion hire	36.00	7.20	43.20	BGC	22/06/2022	
K Larkin	Jubilee BBQ proceeds	212.00	53.00	265.00	100269	27/06/2022	
Barclays	Bank interest	1.08	-	1.08	BGC	06/06/2022	
TOTAL		512.85	60.20	573.05			