



**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 6 October 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 T Bryant, Cllr M Bustard, Cllr G Fowler, Cllr M Keller, Cllr C Lees, and Cllr S Thorogood

**In attendance:** County Cllr Shing (Items C.631 - C.635), District Cllr M Lunn (Item C.637 ) K Larkin (Parish Clerk), and D Picknell (Admin Officer)

*There were two members of the public present*

### **Public Session**

Speed limit on the A259 – Mr S Worsfold referred to the correspondence on this topic published in Report 18 for the meeting, and stated that the arguments put forward by East Sussex County Council for refusing to support a 30 mph speed limit through the village did not conform to the criteria set out by the Department of Transport in their publication *Setting Local Speed Limits*. He urged the council to consult that document. The Chair stated that speed was already a standing item on the agenda and agreed that the document would be checked. It was argued that account should be taken of the fact that the A259 bisected the village resulting in a great deal of pedestrian movement across it, and that although rights of way approached Friston Hill, walkers could not safely cross there. A 30 mph speed limit could result in vehicles taking an extra 16 seconds to traverse the parish, which would not be a serious delay for vehicles, but would be invaluable to pedestrians.

Clearance of drain on Friston Hill – Mr Worsfold recorded his appreciation of this recent remedial work by East Sussex Highways.

Rainwater Harvesting – Mr M Pankhurst on behalf of the Cricket Club referred to Report 9A on the Agenda and confirmed that the project to harvest rainwater at the recreation ground to maintain the cricket pitch would qualify for a £10,000 grant, the total cost being approx. £13,000 if the storage tank were put below ground. Alternatively, an above ground tank could be sited behind the pavilion and would be cheaper and possibly safer to install and maintain. The cost of an irrigation system linked to the storage would be extra, and the Club requested the council to consider making a contribution to the overall cost. It was not yet known whether planning permission would be required.

Access ramp – Mr Pankhurst asked whether the project to create an access ramp to the pavilion (already approved) could be put into action alongside the rainwater harvesting project. The cost of digging out and landscaping the ramp would be approx. £400. The current thinking was that the access should be on the tennis court side of the pavilion, rather than the play area side, as the lower gradient would mean it could be shorter and safer for wheelchair users. The contractor had yet to confirm the condition of the substrate which

would affect the actual positioning and cost of the ramp. The Chair thanked Mr Pankhurst for the information, which would all be taken into consideration by the council.

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

**C.631 Acceptance of apologies for absence:** Cllr P Hill, Cllr H Milligan

**C.632 Declarations of Interests:** - None

**C.633 Minutes** – the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 4 August 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**C.634 Report of Maria Caulfield MP**

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

**C.635 Report of the County Councillor**

County Councillor Shing reported on the following matters:

- a) New Highway contractor – the Cabinet had recently approved a new highway contractor to serve for the coming five year period (March 2023 onwards). The cost of the contract had increased by £1.8 million.
- b) Support fund for families – the Cabinet had approved a fund of £3.9 million but this only amounted to £50 per child in the county.
- c) Funding for community groups – the county council had also approved community funding which would be disbursed locally by Wealden District Council, in grants of £1,000 to £15,000 for suitable projects
- d) Local Transport Plan review – further consultation would take place in the autumn to underpin this ongoing review
- e) Speed limit on the A259 – responding to current correspondence, Cllr Shing stated that he did not expect the highways department to approve a speed reduction on the A259

RSOLVED - That the report of the County Councillor be noted

**C.636 Business in Progress**

The council received and took note of Report 7 on progress made since the meeting on 4 August 2022.

*Under Standing Order 10a the Chair moved that item 7c on the agenda, to appoint four lay members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, be deferred to the end of the meeting and treated as confidential. The motion was put to the meeting and declared carried unanimously. The following items were then discussed:*

- a) Appointment of External Auditor 2023/27 – members agreed to accept the appointment of the council's External Auditor by the SAAA (Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd) **RESOLVED - To accept the appointment of an External Auditor 2023/27 by the SAAA Ltd**

- b) Planning Enforcement – the Chair of Planning reported the committee’s concern that the local planning authority was too opaque in its treatment of enforcement and wanted the parish not to refer to it either. This was not the norm in other districts (e.g. Horsham, where a weekly update was circulated). The planning authority had a statutory obligation to have an enforcement department but had no obligation to investigate reported cases. It was therefore not clear whether the cost of a legal opinion would be money well spent. Members agreed to ask the Hon Solicitor whether there was a good enough case for the council to seek a specialist legal opinion **ACTION: DP/KL.** It was also agreed to contact Alfriston parish council to ask about their experience, and finally to contact the SDNPA representative for the eastern parishes (also currently the Chair of the SDNPA) for assistance **ACTION: DP.**
- c) East Sussex Association of Local Councils – the council was invited to appoint a second representative (in addition to the Chair) to vote on behalf of the council at the ESALC AGM. **RESOLVED – That Cllr Thorogood (Vice Chair) be authorised to vote at ESALC on behalf of the parish council**
- d) Visit by The Rude Mechanicals Theatre Company 2023 – the company had requested the hire of the recreation ground and pavilion on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023. **RESOLVED - to approve in principle the hire of the recreation ground and pavilion on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 on terms and conditions as in previous years**
- e) Beachy Head Woman Plaque – members noted that the origins of the Woman were no longer thought to be sub-Saharan (as stated on the plaque) and therefore agreed that it should be removed. **ACTION: PS**
- f) Village Sign – members took note of an update from the Lead Member (Report 7 – Appendix). The beacon basket had been refurbished by Mr Dalby following its use at the Platinum Jubilee, and the notice crediting Mr Godwin the blacksmith with its creation had been maintained. The parish council had applied for a Lawful Development Certificate for the installation of a village sign adjacent to the recreation ground, and this was expected to be granted though it had not yet been progressed by the planning authority. Members reviewed the quotes obtained for the timber beam and agreed that seasoned air dried oak should be used (approx. £489.99 plus VAT). The cost of installation would be additional. Mr Godwin had kindly offered to make a suitable finial at no cost. Members agreed that the sign should become a memorial to the late Queen, and that the parish Art Group should be invited to design it. The project should be paid for from Community Infrastructure Levy funds provided it would qualify for such funding **ACTION: MK/KL to check.**

**RESOLVED - That the Progress Report be noted and action taken as discussed.**

### **C.637 Report of the District Councillor**

District Councillor M Lunn reported on the following matters:

- a) Local Plan – the Morningsmill developer had appealed against Wealden’s refusal to grant planning permission, and had won. Undefined costs had been awarded against Wealden on the basis that the planning authority should have known the appeal could not succeed. However, the problem as

experienced locally was that the cumulative impact of a growing number of new developments on existing infrastructure had not been fully understood or provided for. There was strong local feeling that the development would be an imposition. Local MPs had been lobbied, and the new Secretary of State for Levelling Up had also been contacted. It was known that the National Planning Policy Framework was under review and that consequent changes would be incorporated into the Levelling Up Bill where appropriate. Local MPs would table amendments to the Bill resisting local development where there was no supporting infrastructure. This process would take approx. 6 months. Wealden District Council was focussed on getting its Local Plan in place first. However, the obstacle as ever was agreement over future housing numbers.

- b) Water Management – the report modelling the effects of any future housing developments in the upper reaches of the Pevensey watercourses had now been published. It demonstrated that increased housing numbers in the Hellingly area would have an impact of flooding downstream. There was also a proposal to enlarge the Arlington reservoir.
- c) Sewage outfalls – following the large number of outfalls in recent months the water company's fine had been increased to £250 million. However, this in itself would not stop recurrence of the problem. There had been no investment in new sewage works, and the pressure on the existing system was too great, compounded by more extreme rainfall.
- d) Accommodation for Ukrainian refugees – residents who had taken in refugees were now finding the scheme challenging and there was pressure on local authorities to find emergency accommodation for some refugees.

RESOLVED - That the report of the District Councillor be noted

#### **C.638 Business in Progress (resumed)**

Parish Council Grant scheme – members took note that only one application had so far been received, from the local Citizens' Advice Bureau. It was agreed that the deadline for applications should be extended to 15 November 2022 **ACTION: MK/KL to publicise the extension**

#### **C.639 Local Council Award Scheme**

The council considered Report 8 containing the draft application for the Foundation Award. It was noted that the website should be updated to take account of the latest developments on the Neighbourhood Plan **ACTION: DP/KL**. It was also noted that the clerk had undertaken a substantial amount of training which was not formally allocated Continuing Professional Development points and this would be a matter for adjudication by the assessment panel.

RESOLVED - That the draft application be approved for submission

#### **C.640 Environment Projects – Greensward**

The council considered Report 9 in which the Greensward Company requested a grant of £600 for reseeded the southern portion of the Greensward in order to re-wild it. The Lead Member commended the application for its biodiversity and communal benefits and for the positive precedent it would provide. It should however be seen as

a one-off grant. The work would be undertaken by the council's mowing contractor who would invoice the council direct. It was noted that because the council did not own the land, it would be unable to reclaim the VAT from the Inland Revenue.

**ACTON: KL to confirm the award of the grant to the company.**

RESOLVED - That a grant of £600 be approved for the project to re-wild the southern portion of the Greensward

#### **C.641 Rainwater Harvesting**

The council considered Report 9A regarding a proposal by the Cricket Club to harvest rainwater at the recreation ground. Members also referred to the discussion of this item in the Public Session. The Chair proposed that the council should support this initiative which would enhance a council asset and benefit both the community and the environment. The Lead Member for Environment and the Lead Member for the Recreation Ground also supported the proposal. In discussion there was support for the project in principle, and an agreement that the council should support the grant application being made by the Cricket Club to the England Cricket Board grant fund. In addition, the council would be willing to consider a financial contribution, possibly using CIL funding. The Club would check whether planning permission was required. The nature of the project should not put it within the category of works that were subject to veto by the Gilbert Estate under the terms of the restrictive covenant the Estate had over some works at the recreation ground. The Club was invited to proceed with work on the project and to report back with firm quotations.

RESOLVED - To approve in principle a proposal by the Cricket Club to harvest rainwater at the recreation ground

#### **C.642 Civility and Respect Pledge**

The council considered Report 10 on a proposal by the National Association of Local Councils that all town and parish councils should sign up to a Civility and Respect pledge, along with a Dignity at Work policy which carried the principles of civility and respect through into the workplace. Members unanimously supported these proposals. It was further agreed that both the pledge and the Dignity at Work policy should be applicable across all council business, including sub-committees and working groups on which there could be lay members as well as councillor members.

RESOLVED – That the council should sign up to the Civility and Respect pledge formulated by NALC

RESOLVED - That the council should adopt a Dignity at Work policy using the template circulated by NALC

#### **C.643 Resilience and Emergency Plans**

The council considered an offer from the East Sussex Association of Local Councils for their Emergency Plan Project Manager to review the parish's emergency plan in the light of a potential energy or water supply crisis. The cost would be £50 per hour for 2-5 hours work. Members agreed to take up this offer.

RESOLVED - To invite ESALC's Emergency Plan Project Manager to review the parish's emergency plan as discussed

#### **C.644 Town and Parish Councillor Allowances 2023/24**

Members took note that the Independent Remuneration Panel was undertaking its annual review and would welcome input from serving councillors. No response would be sent on behalf of the whole council.

#### **C.645 Grass Cutting Service 2023**

The council took note that East Sussex County Council required formal confirmation that the parish would take responsibility for self-delivery of all urban grass cutting in 2023 on the current terms and conditions. ESCC would make a reduced contribution of £306 to the cost. Members agreed that this should be done **ACTION: KL to notify ESCC.**

RESOLVED - To confirm that the parish council would take responsibility for self-delivery of all urban grass cutting in 2023

#### **C.646 Traffic Management Working Group Update**

The council took note of Report 14. The Chair of the Working Group requested approval for the purchase of a second set of batteries for the speed reactive sign in Gilberts Drive. This was agreed.

RESOLVED – To approve the purchase of new batteries at a cost of £700 plus VAT

#### **C.647 Payments and Receipts**

The council took note of Report 15 containing the schedule of payments made in September and proposed for October, and the schedule of receipts for August and September 2022. It was agreed that a payment of £50 be made to the Royal British Legion (c/o Mrs S Hobbs) comprising £25 for a wreath for Remembrance Sunday 2022, and a donation of £25. Payments for the hire of a skip at the recreation ground (previously approved in principle), and for pavilion cleaning in the 2022 season were added to the schedule.

*[Note: the complete Payments Schedule is appended to these Minutes].*

RESOLVED – That the payments totalling £10,534.87 (for September and October 2022) be approved

#### **C.648 Reports:**

- a) Chair of the Council – (i) the Chair thanked Councillor Keller and Debbie Picknell for their work in making the Book of Condolence available to parishioners following the death of the late Queen. There had been very positive feedback from residents, particularly for the commemoration at the War Memorial; (ii) Roads Company AGM – Cllr Keller would attend; (iii) Downlands Estate roads – the round table discussion with the Roads Company and the Residents' Association would take place on 15<sup>th</sup> November after the scheduled Planning Committee meeting; (iv) Dates of Annual

Meetings in 2023 – general parish elections (and District elections) would be held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The Annual Parish Council Meeting and the ordinary May council meeting would therefore be deferred to Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The Annual Village Meeting must be held in either March, April or May, and it was agreed to hold it prior to the elections, on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April if possible **ACTION: KL to check dates with the Hall Manager;** (v) Notice board in the village car park – the council's notice board had become unsafe and it was agreed that the glass and cover should be removed for safety, but that the posts and location should be offered to the Village Hall Trust for general use **ACTION: PS/KL;** (vi) SDNPA Workshop 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022 – members were reminded that places were available for this face to face meeting, the first for two years.

- b) Planning Committee – (i) the council took note of the minutes of the committee meeting held on 16 August 2022 and the draft minutes of the committee meeting held on 20 September 2022. (i) The Chair of the Committee drew attention to the new Technical Advice Note on Equestrian developments which gave potentially controversial advice on tracks in the countryside.
- c) Finance – the council took note of the Budget Monitoring Report for Month 6, 2022/23 (Report Item 17 c). The balance in hand was £102,909.02, following receipt of the second instalment of the precept. The first draft of the Budget for 2023/24 would be brought to the November meeting and councillors were invited to bring forward proposals for discussion. It was proposed that the council should also approve a budget for supplying wine for the village Christmas Lunch 2022, and that this should be approved at the November meeting **ACTION: KL to put this on the November agenda**
- d) Traffic Management Working Group – the Chair reported that he had attended a '20's Plenty' Zoom meeting and would bring forward a report for the November council meeting and the November county liaison (SLR) meeting **ACTION: PS/KL**
- e) Rights of Way and Highways – (i) The Lead Member invited all councillors to bring forward proposals to be discussed at the SLR meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022; (ii) Passing place in Downs View Lane – it was suggested that if the passing place did not form part of the curtilage of the adjacent property it should come within the remit of the Roads Company which could require it to be reinstated; (iii) Footpath 21 – a resident had reported that a handrail at the Elven Lane end of this right of way (Elven Lane to Downs View Lane) needed repair. Cllr Thorogood and Cllr Lees would inspect the site and report on any remedial works required **ACTION: ST/CL;** (iv) Downlands Precinct tidy-up – it was agreed that Rustic Gardens should be asked to do this work **ACTION: CL;** (v) Budget for Rights of Way - it was proposed that an increased budget be allocated for maintenance purposes in 2023/24 **ACTION: CL/KL**
- f) Recreation Ground – (i) The Lead Member reported that a skip had now been ordered and loaded as previously agreed; (ii) the pavilion kitchen floor – the caretaker had reported that this floor was in a poor state. The Lead Member would take up and dispose of the old floor covering and get a quote for new lino **ACTION: GF;** (iii) the Beacon – a very good job had been done on the refurbishment of the beacon brazier; (iv) Weeding was required around the

tennis court and play area – it was agreed that the mowing contractor should be asked to do this for an additional payment and that a budget be provided for it in 2023/24 **ACTION: KL/PS**; (v) Winter closure of the pavilion – this would be done at the end of October **ACTION: GF/PS**; (vi) Parking at the recreation ground – councillors requested that cars should not always park in the same places, so as to let the grass recover **ACTION: all users**

- g) Defibrillators – the council took note that defibrillator and CPR training would take place in the village (small) hall on 22 November 2022 at 7.00 pm

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

#### **C.649 Correspondence**

The council took note of Report 18 on Correspondence received since the August meeting.

RESOLVED - That the Correspondence report be noted

*The following item C.650 was discussed in a confidential session*

#### **C.650 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

The Chair of the Steering Group reported that the councillor members had met informally and recommended the following four non-councillor applicants to be appointed to the Group: Lesley d'Urso; Jonathan Timberlake; Peter Williamson and Gina Zelent. **The motion was put to the meeting and declared carried unanimously.**

The Steering Group would report to the council where all its recommendations would need to be approved. All the members of the Group and any working groups reporting to it should sign up to the Civility and Respect pledge taken by the council, and should also comply with the council's Dignity at Work policy [Item C.642 above].

#### **C.651 Date of next meeting: - parish council meeting to be held on Thursday 3 November 2022 at 6.30 pm in the Small Hall.**

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30 pm.*

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....



## APPENDIX

PAYEE	DETAILS	SUB TOTAL	VAT	TOTAL	REF.NO	DATE	
Parish Online	Annual subscription 2022/23	40.00	8.00	48.00	1882	01/09/2022	
PKF Littlejohn LLP	External audit fee 2021-22	300.00	60.00	360.00	1883	01/09/2022	
Vision ICT	Website changes for Op London Bridge	35.00	7.00	42.00	1884	01/09/2022	
R Franklin	Cleaning bus shelters - July 2022	60.00	-	60.00	1885	01/09/2022	
HMRC	PAYE/NICS - August 2022	253.52	-	253.52	1886	01/09/2022	
ESCC	Pension contributions - August 2022	494.31	-	494.31	1887	01/09/2022	
Sue Hobbs	Royal British Legion - wreath and donation	50.00	-	50.00	1888	01/09/2022	
SDNPA	Lawful Development fee - village sign	51.50	-	51.50	1889	26/08/2022	
K Larkin	Office costs - August 2022	38.78	-	38.78	1890	01/09/2022	
D Picknell	Office costs - August 2022	44.90	-	44.90	1891	01/09/2022	
K Larkin/D Picknell	Net salaries - September 2022 (aggregated)	1,560.14	-	1,560.14	1892/1893	28/09/2022	
Village Hall Trust	Hall hires - August 2022	38.00	-	38.00	1894	01/09/2022	
Grants (Eastbourne) Ltd	Grounds mtce - August 2022	923.00	184.60	1,107.60	1895	01/09/2022	
Wicksteed Leisure Ltd	Replace 2 cradle swing seats	500.00	100.00	600.00	1896	01/09/2022	
A D Dalby	Painting of Brazier	232.00	-	232.00	1897	05/09/2022	
WDC	Emptying bins - 01 July-30 Sept 2022	260.00	52.00	312.00	D/D	28/09/2022	
Vision ICT	Hosted email addresses 2022-23	198.00	39.60	237.60	1898	23/09/2022	
C Lees	Refund clearance of burnt bin	45.00	-	45.00	1899	23/09/2022	
Rustic Garden	Repair of information board	158.33	31.67	190.00	1900	06/10/2022	
R Franklin	Cleaning bus shelters - August 2022	60.00	-	60.00	1901	06/10/2022	
HMRC	PAYE/NICS - September 2022	247.52	-	247.52	1902	06/10/2022	
ESCC	Pension contributions - September 2022	494.31	-	494.31	1903	06/10/2022	
K Larkin	Office costs - September 2022	26.00	-	26.00	1904	06/10/2022	
D Picknell	Office costs - September	26.00	-	26.00	1905	06/10/2022	
WDALC	Subscription 2022/23	28.00	-	28.00	1906	06/10/2022	
Grants (Eastbourne) Ltd	Grounds mtce - September 2022	923.00	184.60	1,107.60	1907	06/10/2022	
M Keller	Refund Ukrainian flag/batteries for safe	15.47	-	15.47	1908	06/10/2022	
Various	Councillor allowances (aggregated)(1 of 2)	437.50	-	437.50	1909-1913	06/10/2022	
K Larkin/D Picknell	Net salaries - October 2022 (aggregated)	1,560.34	-	1,560.34	1914-1915	28/10/2022	
Village Hall Trust	Hall hires - September 2022	19.00	-	19.00	1916	06/10/2022	
Vision ICT	Email hosting x1 Dec22-Nov23	18.00	3.60	21.60	1917	06/10/2022	
JH Smith	Pavilion cleaning/supplies May-Sept 2022	516.18	-	516.18	1918	06/10/2022	
G Fowler	Skip for recreation ground	175.00	35.00	210.00	1919	06/10/2022	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9,828.80</b>	<b>706.07</b>	<b>10,534.87</b>			
<b>RECEIPTS</b>							
HMRC	VAT refund Q.1 2022/23	1,122.23		1,122.23	BGC	23/08/2022	
WDC	Precept (2 of 2)	35,750.00		35,750.00	BGC	14/09/2022	
C Irwin	Pavilion hire	36.00	7.20	43.20	BGC	12/09/2022	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>36,908.23</b>	<b>7.20</b>	<b>36,915.43</b>			