



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 1st October in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, East Dean, commencing at 7.00 pm

Councillors present: Cllr Bustard, Cllr Fowler, Cllr Gaffney, Cllr Greenway, Cllr Harvey, Cllr Langford, & Cllr Morris. District Cllr Greaves.

In attendance: Clerk & RFO Phil Burgess.

Public Session: Two members of the public were present.

John Dann referred to a council undertaking in the 2025 AVM to hold a public meeting regarding traffic issues on the Beachy Head Rd and Gilbert's Drive and an offer from Maria Caulfield (MP at the time) to investigate noise cameras. He also requested rumble strips to reduce speed. Cllr Bustard advised that the council had escalated this issue and a meeting had been held last week which had made excellent progress. Members present included representatives of the National Trust, the Police, Beachy Head Chaplaincy, Charles Davies-Gilbert, Josh Babarinde (Eastbourne MP) Cllr Jack Morrell (ESCC Meads) and Darrell Gale (Director of Public Health ESCC). Terms of reference were also well underway for the appointment of a retired corporate lawyer and barrister Peter Baldwin (who also attended the meeting) as an independent co-ordinator and focus for the group. A public meeting may not be appropriate at this early stage in the group's development.

Tim Pontin requested sight of the speed logging data carried out on the private estate.

Action: Clerk to approach ESCC.

2432 Apologies for absence. Cllrs Hill and Larkin. County Cllr Shing.

2433 Declarations of Interest. None.

2434 Member of Parliament report. Written report noted.

2435 County Councillor Report. Written report to be circulated

2436 District Councillor report. Cllr Greaves' written report would be circulated after the meeting. Main points as follows:

- WDC is offering cost of living support to families in need
- The 2026 Canvass of residents will be circulated soon
- "Scale up" funding available to assist business growth.
- Training available free for small and medium enterprises (SMEs)
- Concerning rise in organised fly tipping involving theft and abandonment of large lorries
- NHS community respiratory wellness sessions to be run.
- CLIF funding pot is now exhausted but renewal is likely.
- Southern Rail bus replacement services outside rush hours between Eastbourne and Haywards Heath.

2437 Minutes of the meeting on 6th August 2026. These were approved by council and signed by the chair.

2438 **Matters arising and update on actions outstanding.** Progress noted on Agenda Item 7 report. No additional issues raised. Further action required on:

- Minute 2387 Pneumatic speed monitoring
- Minute 2404b Defibrillators on website
- Minute 2420 Downlands Wall insurance claim
- Minute 2421 CIL Spending this financial year
- Minute 2425 Recreation Ground Digger hire

2439 **Payments and receipts.** All approved as detailed.

2440 **Bank Reconciliations.** Both accounts agreed and signed by the chair. *Action: Date discrepancy on Current account (believed to be a software issue) to be investigated by clerk.*

2441 **Council Policies.** New policies for IT and Risk Management and Insurance were adopted.

2442 **Pavilion Health and Safety.** It was noted that all council responsibilities had been met. For completeness the Cricket Club should be required to evidence their testing schedule. *Action: Clerk to pursue.*

2443 **Outstanding issues from AVM.**

- a) Requested “sleeping policemen” along The Fridays stretch of road would not be permitted without street lighting. Rumble strips should be investigated as an alternative. *Action: Clerk*
- b) A regular newsletter was not adopted

Note: Members felt that an overarching website to give access to all village websites was worth investigation. *Action: Cllr Morris to approach Gill Carstens before progressing.*

2444 **Sign Cleaning.** Councillors were asked to notify the clerk prior to the November meeting of any signs that require cleaning and/or foliage removal. Decision deferred to consider either overall report to ESCC engagement of a contractor at that point. *Action: Cllrs*

2445 **Sussex 1550.** There was no appetite for the council to hold an event. *Action: Clerk to publicise in Parish magazine and notify History society in case of other interest.*

2446 **2027 Meeting Dates.** Ordinary Parish Council dates were agreed as follows:

- Thursday 7th January
- Thursday 4th February
- Thursday 4th March
- Thursday 1st April (Easter Sunday Falls on 28th March)
- Thursday 3rd June
- Thursday 1st July
- Thursday 5th August
- No September meeting
- Thursday 7th October
- Thursday 4th November
- Thursday 2nd December

The APCM (annual parish council meeting) would be held on Thursday 13th May 2027, within the statutory time-frame following the elections on 6th May 2027.

The AVM (annual village meeting) would take place on Thursday 15th April 2027 under the pre-election council jurisdiction.

2447 **External Audit.** The conclusion of the 2025-26 external audit and auditor's comments were noted.

2448 **Downlands Way Changes.** Changes detailed in the working group minutes were approved with the following exceptions/additions:

- a) Benches – the proposed siting on FP52 Friston Church Path to the rear of Telegraph House to be abandoned
- b) Locations of remaining benches would be mapped out. *Action Cllr Gaffney*
- c) Flyers for windscreens would be prepared for persistent obstruction on the footpath between Wenthill Close and Downlands to ensure white lining works could go ahead. *Action: Clerk*

2449 **White Village Gates.** The introduction of these "gates" to the 4 access roads to the village was agreed in principle. SDNP would be approached for approval and potential funding with the offer of displaying their logo. *Action: Clerk to approach SDNP*

2450 **Flag Policy.** Whilst councillors felt support for Ukraine should be maintained, it was evident that the flag was taking precedence and that the Sussex flag should be flown more often. *Action: Cllr Greenway to prepare an alternative flying policy for approval.*

2451 **Friston Hill Cycling update.** Cllr Morris had met Dan Fagan of the National Trust (Hobbs Eares is NT owned) and the NT will share funding with the council for a cycle and disabled-friendly gate at Friston Church. The path from Upper Street to the church is a permitted route and should fall within NT's insured responsibility. A bench on Hobbs Eares was not approved by NT as there are strict rules governing positioning. Cllr Morris will continue negotiation.

2452 **Toilet Update.** There remains an unspoken arrangement for the toilets at the Tiger and Hiker's Rest to allow public use. The issue would be revisited for potential council assistance should the Wealden Community toilet payment scheme be dissolved.

2453 **Urgent Items.**

- a) Xmas Lunch. Councillors would prefer to retain the tradition of having a council table(s) and councillors will still serve wine. *Action: Councillors to advise Clerk of numbers and plus ones for the event.*
- b) Cllr Harvey advised that events specifically for the village within the village hall would attract a lower fee for hire. Cllr Bustard declared an interest as VH Trustee.
- c) Cllr Bustard and Morris will assist with the attachment of "street poppies" to lamp posts. The bugler has been booked and wreath ordered.
- d) Jozef will retain the left-over flints from the wall repair until needed again.

2454 **Reports.**

- a) **Chair of the council.**
- b) **Defibrillators.**
- c) **Rights of Way and Highways**
 - "Pedestrians in road" sign near Shepherd's cottage is still obscured by vegetation despite ESCC offer to clear it. *Action: Clerk to request estate assistance*
 - Obstructive parking near Dipperays (access to Bowls Club). *Action: Clerk to obtain some traffic cones.*
- d) **Tree Warden.**

- e) **Recreation Ground.** Cllr Fowler will fix the missing bolts on playground equipment. Cllr Harvey has a pair of replacement Tennis net posts if required.
- f) **Disability Plan.** Plans for the path at Jevington Rd are progressing
- g) **Downlands Estate Management Group.**
- h) **Greensward meeting.** Cllr Greenway reported that the committee was disappointed they were not consulted on the Residents' Survey.
- i) **Jevington Rd Group.**

2455 **Correspondence.**

- a) Report on an exposed manhole cover on Birling Gap Rd was noted.

2456 **Confidential Item.** Minuted in confidential minute M4

2457 **Date of next meeting.** This will take place on Thursday 5th November 2026 at 7.00 pm.

Meeting Closed at 9.26 p.m.

Minutes confirmed as a true representation: Signed.....Date.....