



East Dean & Friston

Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 3rd July in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 7.30 pm

Councillors present: Cllr Baker, Cllr Greenway, Cllr Fowler & Cllr Seeley. District Cllr Greaves.

In attendance: Clerk & RFO Phil Burgess.

2 members of the public were present plus Vanessa Rowlands (Chair of South Downs National Park Authority).

Public Session: No issues

2097 Election of Chair. The clerk took the chair initially and Cllr Baker was elected as chair for the remainder of the meeting.

2098 Apologies for absence. Cllrs Hill, Larkin and White. County Cllr Shing.

2099 Declarations of Interest. None

2100 Co-option of Councillor. Gill Morris gave a short resume and was duly elected as councillor. A Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.

2101 Member of Parliament report. Written report received. Cllr Seeley advised the meeting that our MP had raised issues regarding the A259 in Parliament this week. It was resolved to request a presentation and Q&A session for the MPs visit, which would take place in the small hall on 11th August. *Action: Clerk to advise James MacCleary's PA.*

2102 County Councillor Report. Cllr Shing advised in writing that the May A259 carriageway repairs on East Dean Rd (Exceat Bridge) were completed on time and in budget. Cllr Seeley pointed out that 6 potholes had developed on the on the road to Seven Sisters Country Park but only one had been highlighted with spray paint suggesting only 1 was scheduled to be fixed. *Action: Clerk to contact ESCC to ensure all potholes in the group scheduled.*

2103 District Councillor report. Cllr Greaves reported that the apportionment regarding WDC ward budgets grant funding would be decided this month (£10k per ward). Details of the Community Led Infrastructure Fund (CLIF) are contained in David's July report (to be circulated after the meeting). This offers assistance for projects with only a 20% matched funding requirement. The Car park at Downlands may be a suitable fit. The July report also contains details of the BT analogue switch-over to digital and a link for residents to use. *Actions: Clerk to publicise switchover details. Suitable projects for CLIF to be debated at August meeting. Healthy heart grants (June report) to be publicised to charities and CICs within the village.*

2104 Presentation by Vanessa Rowlands (Chair of SDNPA board). Partnership Plan Vanessa reported that the consultation closes in early August and is straightforward and quick, there are no "must fill" questions. The details from the village Neighbourhood Plan would be very useful and the parish had put their name to the plan. Responses can be individual and by council & Cllr Seeley would respond on behalf of the council.

Pedestrian Crossing SDNPA will meet the cost of a crossing near the new Exceat bridge. The ½ million cost would be met from CIL funding. ESCC would not allocate funding for this aspect of the overall bridge replacement project.

Devolution After devolution, SDNP will have a representative on the Mayoral strategic group (which will also draw members from the new unitary authorities). As the only remaining local planning authority after devolution, they will have relevant skills already in place.

Q&A

- Cllr Seeley complimented the SDNP on the quality of the restoration at New Barn Farm in the Seven Sisters Country Park. Vanessa said the Foxhole Cottages had also proved very popular.
- Cllr Seeley said the water quality in the Oxbows was particularly bad with the lack of rain but is often poor. Is the water tested regularly, and information disseminated to the public? Vanessa advised that the level was controlled by sluice gates to both sides of the Oxbows. She will investigate the water quality issue.
- Cllr Fowler reported a problem with the planning portal on the website. It was unavailable for some time.
- Cllr Morris enquired whether it was feasible to re-route cyclists from the main A259 Friston Hill as their speeds were excessive. The feeling at the meeting was that alternative routes were potentially as dangerous.

Further Contact Vanessa would like to attend the next Annual Village Meeting. *Action: Clerk to include in invitation list.*

2105 Minutes of the meeting on 5th June. These were approved by council and signed by the Cllr Fowler as the chair was absent from the June meeting.

2106 Matters arising. None

2107 Update on Actions from June Minutes.

Minute 2052. Broadband. 14 Maps just received from BT require inspection and analysis.

Minute 2085 Internal auditor's report contained 3 recommendations. The first is Bank reconciliations which are now included in agendas. The other two will be cleared at the August meeting.

Minute 2086 Email communications with residents. Still outstanding

Minute 2088 Fireworks Will be discussed at August meeting.

Minute 2091 Football posts reconsider at August Agenda following comments from Cricket Club

Minute 2095C Rude Mechanical Theatre Company. No payment has been received for this year or last. Post meeting note: Licence agreed in October 2024 but no minuted charge for the Theatre. *Charge to be debated in August.*

2108 Planning Committee. Rather than absorbing the planning committee into the main parish council meetings, it was resolved that the planning committee would be rescheduled to take place at 7.00pm on the first Thursday of the Month commencing 7th August. Parish Council would follow immediately afterwards. Where no planning applications require consideration, Parish Council will start at 7.30 p.m. Should a planning application be contentious and likely to involve public representation a special planning meeting can be called by the Clerk. Cllr Fowler would remain as chair of Planning. *Action: Clerk to amend Planning committee terms of reference as necessary and reschedule meetings.*

2109 **Election of chair.** Decision deferred until more councillors present.

2110 **Council Awards Scheme.** Cllrs Baker and Seeley had attended a Village Hall trustee's meeting and assessed catering costs from the Hiker's rest at £15-20 per head. A total cost of the evening (excluding trophies but including drinks) would be £3,000-£4,000 to be divided equally between the Parish Council and Village Hall Trust. This figure was agreed by council (council expenditure between £1500 and £2000). The event scheduled for the 4th October would be ticketed, and both halls would be in use with an exhibition from the Local History group including static displays and a slide show on a loop. Cllrs Baker, Morris and Seeley would liaise with the Village Hall Trust on final arrangements. Trophies, certificates and gifts from local artisans for the winners would be debated at the August meeting. One of the trophies may be named after the council's benefactor, the late Phyllis Burningham. *Action: Trophy awards to be finalised at the August meeting.*

2111 **Councillors' allowances.** Allowances were agreed at the basic rate of £194 per annum and would be paid to those eligible who wish to claim. *Action: Clerk to publicise in notice boards for 14 days before payment.*

2112 **Grant application.** The grant application was again deferred as two further applications had come to light and these would all be considered at the August Meeting for comparison. *Action: Clerk to schedule for August.*

2113 **Annual Fete Greensward.** It was agreed that the parish council would not require a table at the fete. In previous years the facility had been used to publicise the Neighbourhood Plan which is now at an advanced stage. No grant would be awarded to the Fete this year. All excess proceeds from the fete go to the Beachy Head Chaplaincy and the council has supported this organisation through this year's charity grant. *Action: Clerk to advise fete organisers.*

2114 **Benches.**

- a) Application for a sponsored bench/plaque As no suitable sites were available on council land. The applicant would be referred to the Estate office.
- b) EDFRA request for approval on bench siting Council approved the siting of a bench on Gilbert's Drive by the bus stop on the entrance to the Village Hall car park.
- c) Recreation Ground bench repair The quoted £1600 expenditure from Cllr Fowler was approved to repair, rub down and re-coat 10 benches on the recreation ground. Cllr Fowler did not vote.
Action: Clerk to advise applicants in a) and b) above.

2115 **Payments and receipts.** All approved as detailed.

2116 **Bank Balances and Reconciliations.** Three accounts agreed and signed by the chair.

2117 **Parking on Downlands Way and Gilbert's Drive.** In both cases the advice of the local PCSO would be sought and a request would be made for attendance at a future meeting. *Action: Clerk to arrange.*

2118 **New Woodland Grant.** No suitable sites were available.

2119 **Urgent Items.** None reported.

2120 **Bequest from Former Resident.** Gratefully noted.

2121 **Reports.**

- a) **Chair of the council.** No report.
- b) **Defibrillators.** Cllr Larkin notified the Clerk prior to the meeting that all were in order.

- c) **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.** The drop-in sessions had been conducted by steering group volunteers and Cllr Fowler. The SDNP consultation period was now closed and appointment of an examiner for the plan was underway.
- d) **Rights of Way and Highways.** FP8 Ridgeway to Old Willingdon Rd (enforcement) and FP36 Downlands to Wayside (re-instatement) will be debated further at the August Meeting. *Action: Include in August agenda.*
- e) **Tree Warden.** Cllr Greenway advised that the Ivy clad trees (perhaps Ash) need attention. Sited between the Parsonage and Cophall Lane. *Action: Clerk to check.* Cllr Greenway left the meeting
- f) **Recreation Ground.**
 - The Hedge around the play area requires a cut-back. *Clerk to action with Grants.*
 - Pavilion drawings. Price awaited for further drawings from Peter Shoesmith. *Clerk to chase.*
- g) **Downlands Estate Management Group.** Cllr Seeley had met with ESCC regarding the 20 mph limit. Upper and Lower street were approved but more surveys are required on the private estate. These will be carried out shortly within the price already paid.
- h) **Traffic Group.** To meet on 14th July to build on risk and opportunity assessments.

2122 **Correspondence.** None.

2123 **Date of next meeting.** This will take place on Thursday 7th August at 7.30 pm.

Meeting Closed at 10.00 p.m.

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