



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th December in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Gilberts Drive, East Dean, commencing at 7.00 pm

Councillors present: Cllr Bustard, Cllr Fowler, Cllr Greenway, Cllr Harvey, Cllr Hill, Cllr Larkin, Cllr Morris, Cllr Seeley & County Cllr Shing.

In attendance: Clerk & RFO Phil Burgess.

Public Session: One member of the public was present.

No other members of the public were present.

2211 Apologies for absence. Cllr Baker.

2212 Declarations of Interest. None.

2213 Member of Parliament report. None received.

2214 County Councillor Report.

Elections The mayoral election due on 7th May has been postponed until 2028. At present ESCC elections are still planned for that date in 2026 but may be abandoned as the unitary authority will take over in 2028.

Social Care ESCC budgets have been overspent but the Care Quality Commission rated their performance as good.

Jevington Rd Roadworks are now complete, but SGN the gas network now plans to dig up the same area. Cllr Shing will press for a reduction in time and disruption, and fines may come into play for any works over 6 weeks.

2215 District Councillor report. Cllr Greaves' written report has been received.

The main points were as follows:

- Avian Flu a mandatory housing order in force for poultry and other kept birds.
- A consultation on the split of unitary authorities
- Grants available to grow orchards (closing date 30th Jan)

2216 Minutes of the meeting on 6th November 2025. These were approved by council and signed by the chair.

2217 Matters arising. None

2218 Update on Actions outstanding.

Minute 2052 Broadband. City Fibre approached for an update and the scope of the changes is still under consideration. With the impending switch to digital from analogue lines, the vulnerable have to be supported. It has also recently been reported that a company called AST, offering a space-based broadband network aims to eliminate "not spots" (areas without broadband coverage) by March 2026. *Action: Clerk to check with BT what provisions are for complete loss of service on switchover and plans for the area.*

Minute 2179 Downs View Lane Fly tipping. Letter has gone out. Cut already done by contractor. No other hedges/verges are cut by this contractor.

Minute 2180 Greensward Litter Bin. EDFRA notified of bin replacement. Long lead time on bin. Delivery due 9th December

Minute 2912 WDC Matrix of grants publicised as agreed

Minute 2198 CIL Update still OS

Minute 2200 Café East Dean – MB and PB met with resident, further proposals this agenda to conclude issue.

2219 Payments and receipts. All approved as detailed.

2220 Bank Reconciliations. Accounts agreed and signed by the chair. The defibrillator account (nil balance) may be held open in case required for earmarking project funds or amassing sinking funds for maintenance.

2221 May meetings. Although the Mayoral election has been postponed in May the 7th might still be used for county council elections. The date for Annual Parish Council Meeting (APCM) was set to Thursday 14th and the Annual Village Meeting (AVM) will fall on Friday May 15th. *Action: Clerk to advise Village Hall.*

2222 Café East Dean. In addition to the signage changes at the west-bound bus stop, the following were agreed to deter vehicular access to Gore Farm close

- Install no entry sign on private grassed area to left of Gore Farm Close entrance (management company will be advised).
- Letter to Café owner to request that he informs his delivery companies of the correct vehicular route. Guidance on A-board regulations to be included.

Actions: as detailed above

2223 Payroll Software. The move from HMRC software to a commercial package was approved. Clerk to select appropriate package. *Action.*

2224 Road Sweeper. It was agreed that although the service was not ideal, no further chargeable sweeps will be ordered. The current two scheduled plus 1 ad-hoc should suffice.

2225 Accounts Software. It was resolved to subscribe to the Platinum package with Rialtas Software. *Action: Clerk to expedite.*

2226 CIL Funding. This invitation from SDNP is likely to apply to Friston Pond funding and potentially the drawings and planning process for the pavilion project. *Action: Clerk to investigate feasibility in both cases (likely spending for Friston Pond is £10,000).*

2227 Bank Mandate. Cllrs Bustard and Fowler would be added as authorised signatories, and Cllr Seeley and Hill would be removed from the mandate. *Action: Clerk to expedite.*

2228 Clerk's contracted hours. It was agreed that the Clerk's contracted hours would increase to 22 per week to accommodate project administration. This will take effect from April 2026. *Action: Clerk to amend contract.*

2229 Village Fete. The contribution from the council would increase to £300 for the 2026 event. The amount to be reviewed annually. *Action: Clerk to advise EDFRA chair.*

2230 Precept Budget. The previous 3 years' precept amounts were as follows:

2023-24 68,000, 2024-25 73,500 (8% increase) and 2025-26 77,175 (5% increase)

A significant increase for 2026-27 should be avoided, despite the burgeoning projects.

Suggested corrections to draft budget as follows:

Code	Description	Revised figure
4400	Pavilion Maintenance – inflation only	£1035
4600	War Memorial railings only	£500
4710	Rec & Sports Ground. Beacon basket	£2200
4830	Village Fete	£300
4840	Play area – inflation (prof inspection reqd)	£520

Cllrs Seeley and Bustard would meet the clerk to refine the budget prior to the January Meeting.

2231 MUGA Project. This would be rolled into the administrative scope of the Pavilion Group. Oversight of the grant application will be considered at the next Pavilion meeting

2232 Pavilion Project. Cllr Morris was elected chair of the group. Cllr Seeley stepped down. Remaining councillors on the group include: Cllr Morris (chair) Cllr Baker, Cllr Fowler, Cllr Harvey and Cllr Hill. *Action: Clerk to chase Peter Shoesmith for revised drawings & ballpark estimate. Further meeting required before Christmas to expedite MUGA grant application also.*

2233 Urgent Items. Cllr Bustard requested that the Emergency Plan be updated in respect of personnel. *Clerk to action.*

2234 Reports.

- a) **Chair of the council.** No report.
- b) **Defibrillators.** The spare defibrillator is out of date and therefore should not be used. Further unit to be ordered once the resident at Windmill lane has been contacted and has agreed to provide a power supply. *Action: Cllr Larkin*
- c) **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.**
- d) **Rights of Way and Highways.**
 - I. Squeeze gate in the Horsefield requires significant repair. Cllr Fowler would attend to this with council's agreement.
 - II. Overhanging hedge on Eastbourne Rd between the bus stop and Downs view Lane (believed to belong to a property on Sussex Gardens) would be investigated.
 - III. Surface spreading of bark chippings is due on footpaths. Cllr Hill would liaise with Rustic Gardens.
 - IV. Friston Church Footpath. Some investigation into tree root damage seems to have been undertaken but no action apparent on the partial collapse of the footpath. *Action: Clerk to chase.*
 - V. Water run-off drainage overflow issue around 2a Windmill Lane. *Action: Clerk to raise with EDDR.*
 - VI. An unpleasant smell had been reported around 13 Deneside. Dog fouling is not the issue. No action at present until source can be identified.
- e) **Tree Warden.** None
- f) **Recreation Ground.** Cllr Fowler advised the council that storage is required for a mower recently acquired by the Cricket Club. The CC would finance this, and the council agreed to temporary storage prior to redevelopment of the Pavilion which would include permanent storage solutions. *Action: Cllr Fowler to advise Mark Pankhurst.*
- g) **Downlands Estate Management Group.** Jointly-funded 20mph speed limit still in progress. Police have asked for written confirmation of stakeholders' agreement to

the process. Once finally given the go-ahead, the white lining around Downlands (car park spaces by the shops and delineation of pavement clearance on the approach to the shops) would be rolled in with roundel painting on the estate.

- h) **Traffic Group.** No report.

2235 **Correspondence.** None.

2236 **Date of next meeting.** This will take place on Thursday 8th January 2026 at 7.00 pm.

Meeting Closed at 9.00 p.m.

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

DRAFT