

Date: 7th September 2017

Title: Report Item 5 – Business in Progress

By: K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

Purpose: To provide an update on progress since the July meeting

Recommendations: To note the progress report

The following are matters of report and/or requests for further instructions arising from the July council meeting:

- **Damaged seat on the Greensward** – the police issued a crime number 47170101199 but closed the case, as they were unable to identify any lines of enquiry. The council's insurers have agreed to pay out on a claim for a replacement seat costing £375 plus VAT (a £100 excess will be payable). A 5' hardwood Riverbank bench has been ordered from Chic Teak, at £375 plus VAT, but a delivery address needs to be supplied.
- **Memorial Tree** – a suitable spot between the pavilion and the tennis court has been identified and the tree was planted in the first week of August.
- **Overgrown trees in Gilberts Drive** – PH/PS dealing
- **Play area** – The new aluminium sign has been supplied, with fixings. PH is to order a second sign in cheaper materials.
- **War Memorial** – the lettering is to be done at an additional cost of £310 plus VAT, authorised by the Lead Member, Cllr Seeley. The new insurance valuation of £35,000 will be reflected when the policy is next renewed.
- **'Ownerless' land** – an information letter has been sent to the owner of an adjacent property who has stated that no one has tried to open up the land. A hedge was removed and a new fence installed, and in order to do this it was necessary to enter onto the land, but the land is otherwise untouched. The residents found the information about ownership interesting.
- **Insurance** – KL will obtain three quotes over the winter for the 2018 renewal, to include key worker and cyber-crime cover as recommended by the internal auditor. However, not all insurers will provide key worker cover (Zurich does not, nor AON), and the cost of a locum is very high. The same recommendations have been made to a number of small parishes, and the Wealden clerks at their next meeting on 20th September intend to discuss the best ways of sharing council work e.g. between the clerk and an assistant. The cost to the council need not increase if the total number of staff hours worked does not increase.
- **Emergency Plan** – SF has completed a factual update
- **Village Safety Day** – KL is to compile a list of organisations and contact details
- **Complaints on noise** – JW to report
- **Maintenance of paths** - several paths required maintenance over the summer: Footpath 34 (Wenthill Close to A259); Footpath 18 (The Brow to Peak Dean Lane); Bridleway 28 (Warren

Lane to A259); and Footpath 8 (The Ridgeway to Old Willingdon Road). An update is requested on any further action required for the autumn.

- **Clearance of vegetation at Friston Pond** – PH/PS to organise

Highway matters:

- **Verge cutting on Birling Gap Road** – East Sussex Highways would charge £100.53 for each extra verge cut in the Birling Manor section of the Birling Gap Road, and a further £139.25 for the rest of the road to Birling Gap. The National Trust has been asked whether they might be willing to share the cost of one or more extra cuts with the parish council in 2018. A reply is awaited.
- **Bulbs and wildflowers on verges** – please see the update attached.
- **Twitten railings** – fresh quotes are being obtained by PH for re-fixing all posts except the top three
- **Drains at the junction of A259/Upper Street** – ESCC is issuing notices for hedges in the vicinity to be cut back. Water is currently not reaching the drains, and overgrowth is one factor – though not the only one
- **Sussex Police** – dates for the speed checks are still awaited

31/08/2017

PLANTING BULBS in EAST DEAN AND FRISTON - updated 07 August 2017

In February 2017 East Sussex Highways notified all parishes that they would like to plant some bulbs and wild flowers amongst the communities within East Sussex, and would supply these along with a team of people to plant them. The parish was invited to suggest locations with an approximate size of the area.

The parish council on 2nd February, Minute C.318 said: ESCC Highways should be invited to consider verges at East Dean bus stop (S side); Friston bus stop (S side), and the A259 verge of Friston pond.

The ROW Committee on 23rd March recommended that: If the East Dean bus stop (south side) were not chosen, the parish council might ask for permission to plant their own bulbs.

The parish council on 6th April received a report from District Cllr Wilton which included the following item C.352.(c) : the Rotary Club would soon have over a thousand crocus bulbs which they would be prepared to gift to the parish for planting on verges and other public places. The parish council noted that planting on verges would require permission from East Sussex Highways, but subject to that it was agreed that this could be a most welcome gift. Cllr Hill undertook to liaise with Cllr Wilton. Since bulbs had been ordered, and there was no certainty they could be used on highway land, the clerk was requested to contact WDC who own and manage the village car park.

An email was sent on 24th May to James Lord, a surveyor at WDC who has previously managed issues relating to the car park. James Lord confirmed that WDC has no objection, provided the Gilbert Estate has no objection.

The present situation is:

- Mr Davies Gilbert has responded positively to the car park proposal, which does not require further authorisation. Rotary Club bulbs could be used here.
- East Sussex Highways Customer Service Manager has responded to my most recent chaser about verges (27 July): *'I've logged your email to the Landscapes Officer and asked him to clarify on the specific areas and queries you've raised. Once I have received some further information from him, I will advise you accordingly. The exact details of the project are currently being finalised and we will be contacting all the parishes who expressed an interest in the scheme once this has taken place.*
- If Highways agree to plant all the verges suggested by the parish, cultivation licences will NOT be required - nor will the Rotary Club bulbs
- If Highways omits some or all of the verges suggested by the parish from their planting scheme, then the parish can ask for cultivation licences to use selected verges themselves, for some of the Rotary Club bulbs.

KJAL

07/08/2017