

Date: 1st March 2018

Title: Report Item 4 – Business in Progress

By: K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

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

Recommendations: a) To note the progress report
b) To agree to fell a tree obstructing Footpath 19
c) To approve ESCC's draft design for an East Dean Village name plate

The following require further action:

- **Hedge cutting** – the council is requested to get a tree surgeon to fell a tree blocking Footpath 19 between Nos.48 and 50 Peak Dean Lane. The agents acting for the landlords of No.48 have complained that the blockage caused by the tree is in effect diverting the path slightly towards No.48 where the hedge should not otherwise need trimming. It is strictly ESCC that has responsibility to keep the right of way open, but as there is no safety issue the matter is likely to be treated as low priority.
- **East Dean Village Name Plate** – some while ago the parish council asked ESCC to provide an East Dean Village name plate. A design has now been prepared and the council is asked to approve it. The details are appended to this report.

The following are matters of report arising from the February council meeting:

- **Play Project** – Councillors met a representative of SGN on site on 8 February to agree the arrangements for DJ Utilities to work on site, laying a new, level all-weather track to the play area. A further meeting was held on 21 February with Proludic's contractor to plan the installation of the Kanope equipment. The Gilbert Estate has been advised that the parish council does not agree that the Estate's restrictive covenants over the recreation ground can be stretched to give them a power of veto over the replacement of play equipment; the laying of a track; or the replacement of the play area fence on the side adjacent to the new housing. Mr Davies Gilbert has stated that he still disagrees.
- **Mowing contract** – all contractors have been contacted. ESCC has been notified of the parish's choice of contractor. It needs to approve the verge cutting element of the contract. The Agreement can then be signed. ESCC have now advised that from 2018 onwards they will only pay for two urban verge cuts per season instead of the six previously allowed. This will mean a reduced payment of £341 to the parish (down from £1,499). The parish council has sent a protest, on the basis that verge cutting is ESCC's responsibility, and the parish is only supposed to be augmenting the number of cuts for amenity purposes, not providing a basic service.
- **Social Media Policy** – this has been added to the website
- **ESCC consultation on recycling of non-household waste** – the start date of the consultation has been put back about one month whilst ESCC revises its proposals. The parish council will

then respond with its concerns about the future treatment of asbestos waste from domestic premises

- **Village Hall** – (i) the Hall Trustees have been notified that the PC Chair will in future be the council's nominated trustee *ex officio*; (ii) Wealden District Council have been notified that the parish council wants to re-register the hall site as an asset of community value. The Hon. Solicitor has been asked to advise on the discrepancy in the plans of the site. Briefly, the advice is that the triangular area to the south of the entrance drive was not included in the registration of the Hall's leasehold title in 1999 because it fell outside Wealden District Council's freehold title, and was at that time unregistered. It is now registered to the Gilbert Estate. It would appear that the Estate has, since 1999 registered its title to various parcels of previously unregistered land, this isolated section being picked up with the remainder. In terms of the application to re-register the site as an asset of community value, the advice is that the application be filed by reference to the boundary shown on the leasehold plan, with notice being served on the Gilbert Estate in respect of the triangle. (iii) Assistance dogs – the Hall Trustees are aware of the new regulation and have new signs on order.
- **Post Office** – a complaint has been made to the Post Office about lack of proper support for the village post office from central administration. An acknowledgement has been received. Maria Caulfield MP has also been contacted and has replied as follows: *I am meeting with the new external affairs manager for the post office next week to discuss a number of branches and will certainly take this up with him and keep you updated. A number of colleagues have similar issues and if I do not have a satisfactory response we will be holding a round table meeting with the minister to ensure that we get action. I did raise the East Dean post office in Parliamentary questions last week so the minister is aware of the issue already.*
- **Highway matters** – (i) the problem of parking on the Gilberts Drive verges has been added to the SLR agenda list for the next meeting on 13 March 2018; (ii) a new ANPR camera has been installed on the A259 at the bottom of Friston Hill but the pole remains as it was; (iii) some gulleys have been cleared, but not the one opposite Micheldene Road on the A259, nor the one up Friston Hill.
- **Signs at Friston Pond** – the new parking signs have been installed on the churchyard wall
- **Village Events** – the Fete organisers have received confirmation that the council will make a grant of £250 towards the running of the Fete in 2018 and will take a stall
- **GDPR** – work on editing and reducing the records continues.

The following are matters of report arising from earlier meetings:

- **War Memorial** – an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund is pending
- **Squeeze gate** – the family of the person memorialised has yet to be located
- **Diseased elms** – as yet there is no sign of any felling
- **Best Kept Village signs** – MK/PS to report
- **Brown tourist sign** – this has been replaced
- **Cricket Club** – the Club is working on the plans for a proposed storage shed, which are expected to be ready before April. It has supplied a list of all fixtures for the 2018 season; and it has received the updated hire Agreement for signature. An informal enquiry has been made about the consents that would be required to allow the cricket square to be moved further south. The Gilbert Estate has noted the council's comments on the terms of the Club's agreement with the Cricket Club but still maintains that the council should 'reduce the burden on the taxpayer'.
- **Friston bus shelter** – the Perspex window is to be replaced
- **Notice boards** – the boards at Windmill Lane and the Village Hall are back in service

- **Downlands Way covenants** – a letter has been sent to all covenanters, and the Hon. Solicitor will complete the winding up of the covenants

APPENDIX

East Dean Village Nameplate

The ESC Senior Traffic and Safety Officer has now had the opportunity to design a sign for 'East Dean', which can be facilitated on the back of the map type sign heading towards Friston Pond, which will require the vegetation to be cut back.

Below is an example of the sign design, the grey box at the top will be the County Council Crest:



And a Google Maps snap showing the location of map type sign on the A259 that I propose to affix the 'East Dean' sign to the back of.



If the parish council is happy with these proposals, ESCC will endeavour to get a quote for these works. Should this go ahead, this will have to be funded through the ESCC budget for the next financial year (April 2018).