

Date: 4th April 2019

Title: Report Item 7 – Report of the District Councillor

By: Cllr J Wilton/K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

Purpose: To report on a request made to Wealden District Council for lighting in the village car park

Recommendations: To note the report

Wealden District Council owns and manages the village car park in East Dean. The car park is not lit and recently a resident tripped and fell in the dark. The resident is badly bruised but thankfully has no broken bones.

District Cllr John Wilton has asked whether Wealden can supply low-level lighting in the car park. He has raised the question whether Wealden ought to install lighting on health and safety grounds. It is of course Wealden that has the final say in such matters, though the Gilbert Estate should also be consulted.

In 2014 the parish council did consult residents on the provision of lighting in the car park, as part of their project to draw up a Village Action Plan. There were 398 responses to this question, with a small majority in favour (54% yes, 46% no). The parish council therefore asked WDC to investigate lighting that part of the car park nearest the village hall (i.e. not the section adjacent to The Tiger).

Wealden advised the parish that any lighting would need to be done to their standard, and not solar or too low-level as these were not considered that efficient. A holding order would need to be placed with EDF Energy as they would need to provide an unmetered supply point into which WDC could connect. The car parks surveyor would then need to place an internal bid for funds. His view was that three (LED) lights would be sufficient – operated by time switch and photo-cells. This would provide adequate lighting as well as limiting light pollution. At that time (2014) the cost, all to be borne by WDC, was estimated at £15,000. The scheme did not proceed. WDC raised the following questions which are still relevant:

- a) having been without lighting for many years why is there a need now?
- b) disruption would be caused by the route for the supply cable into the roadway/entrance to the car park
- c) the cost would have to be balanced against other priorities within WDC
- d) any relevant restrictive covenants would need to be complied with

In addition, the emerging Local Plan for the South Downs National Park now includes a Dark Skies policy, which must be taken into account.

WDC have been asked for their reaction to the current request for lighting.