

Date: 07 April 2022

Title: Report Item 18 – Correspondence

By: K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

Purpose: To report on correspondence received since the council meeting on 03 March 2022

Recommendations: To note the report

Note: more items may be added to this schedule prior to the council meeting on 07 April 2022; a copy of the final version can be obtained by emailing the Clerk: clerk@edfparishcouncil.org.uk

The following items of correspondence have been received:

- **Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss** – at the March parish council meeting the council took note of a letter from Mr P Williamson and Mr R Coomber on the topic of Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss, and agreed that this would be discussed at the April meeting under Correspondence. The letter is appended to this report in full. The Lead Member for the Environment met Mr Williamson and Mr Coomber on 8th February to discuss their concerns and has followed up the actions agreed at that meeting.
- **Event Notification: South Coast Challenge, 3rd-4th September 2022** - this has become an annual charity walk/run/jog event. The organisers have primarily been liaising with the relevant County / District Council as the key stakeholder for the event, but are informing the parish council too as the route passes along the coastal part of the parish. All landowners along the event route are also being notified. An 'Event Overview' document, which details key information on the event is available at <https://www.ultrachallenge.com/south-coast-challenge/>
- **Event Notification: Endurance Life, 18th March 2023** – the 2022 event has recently taken place successfully, and the organisers would like to repeat it next year. They have asked whether there is any reason locally why 18th March 2022 would not be suitable.
- **Defects at junction of A259 Friston Hill and Upper Street** – despite some recent repairs, problems remain. A resident has reported that on the corner of Upper Street in the hedge the coach sign is now hidden with ivy and a 40 mph repeater sign has

been knocked over (this has now been removed); on this corner there is also a drain which is nearly hidden with mud washed down the hill. Over the years so much mud and gravel have been washed down the hill that the bank has come further out into the road at this point. The problems have been reported to East Sussex Highways and will be followed up at the next county liaison meeting on 28th April 2022.

- **Dog fouling** - a resident has reported that recently dog excrement is being left on the path across the Horsefield. The council is requested to raise this in the parish magazine.
- **Tidying the Downlands Way shopping precinct** – a complaint has been received that the two car space is full of dead leaves; there are weeds; and recently there were cardboard boxes by the bins and litter everywhere. The resident suggests that the businesses in the precinct be requested to contribute to a tidy-up.
- **Grass cutting in Downs View Lane** – a resident has requested the council to arrange for the final cut of the year to be a wider cut, as the brambles have taken over and swamped the snowdrops and daffodils which proliferate in the spring. One width is fine for the rest of the season.
- **Passing Place in Downs View Lane** - this is yet to be reinstated and currently the council has no fresh information. However, as the obstructing kerb intrudes on land outside the rear curtilage of a particular property, the council is requested to press for the kerb to be removed. The suggestion to provide a passing place on the other side of the lane is a 'non-starter' as a] it is a steep bank, and b] it is Eastbourne Borough Council land.
- **By-elections** - following consideration of this topic at the February council meeting [Minute C.532] the Chair met Mr P Williamson and Mr R Coomber on 8th February to discuss their concerns, and sent a comprehensive response to them on 11th February. Mr Williamson and Mr Coomber have in turn responded to that. The council will review this correspondence to identify outstanding points, if any remain.

APPENDIX

Letter to EDFPC for 7 April Meeting

The environment, climate change & biodiversity loss

What is the council doing or planning to do locally about this dual global crisis? It is unclear that it has responded to either in a substantive way over the past five years.

Its website notes: "At the council meeting on 3rd December [2020], it was resolved to enhance the oversight of environmental matters, including tree management, by appointing a council member to deal directly with these".

Minutes stated: "The Chair assured the public that there was no intention on the part of the council to cut back on its commitment to the environment." Yet, the lead role for environment has changed hands between councillors three times since then and there have been no council reports produced.

No significant developments have followed on. In fact, it has made no substantive progress and yet: • approval and funding for a survey and management plan for trees, shrubs and hedgerows vanished when the neighbourhood planning process stalled • there has been no revision of its mowing contract despite residents' requests in order to improve habitat for wildflowers.

In October 2021, the council minuted its position regarding the climate, as: "C.461 Climate and Ecology; Environment; and Renewable Energy The council considered Report 9 concerning three matters, as follows: a) Request from the Climate and Ecological Emergency Alliance for support for their Private Members' Bill – members agreed to support this initiative with the following actions: • declaring an ecological emergency"

All well and good to declare an emergency, but what does that actually mean on the ground? This is the decade during which global efforts have to succeed in order to keep our planet habitable and 2022 is the year when countries must go beyond setting national targets, formalise action plans and start implementing them.

So, how is the council doing its bit?

Climate change adaptation

Flash rain is now part of our weather pattern and likely to remain so. It is having an effect on footpaths on the Downlands Estate and remedial maintenance is now required to the following as the flash rain is overwhelming existing road drainage and running off down paths, e.g. at the end of The Brow and at the beginning of 21b in the cul-de-sac, removing

bark/wood chip, creating standing water and making underfoot terrain very slippery, a particular risk to the elder and more frail members of our community:

- The Brow to Peak Dean Lane (photo attached)
- 1a & 21b - Downsvie Lane to Elven Lane (photo attached).

It is likely that adaptations to cope with flash rain/flooding will be required more and more with climate change, as recent national and international reports have and are likely to continue to show. A local neighbourhood plan was a missed opportunity to put such policies and measures in place with, for example, recent storms illustrating the lack of resilience to very strong wind of solid, close-board or featherboard wooden fencing so widespread in East Dean & Friston. Alternatives will have to be found and include planting native hedgerows that provide some shelter from the wind but also let the wind through and provide much needed habitat and connecting corridors for wildlife unlike leylandii hedges, many overgrown and prone to windblow.



