

From: Jonathan Timberlake [mailto:j.timberlake@btinternet.com]
Sent: 19 May 2023 09:10
To: 'Parish Clerk'
Cc: 'Paul Seeley'; 'East Dean and Friston Residents Association Committee'
Subject: RE: PC meeting 18 May - public session

Dear Katrina,

As suggested, below are the main points of my statement to the PC meeting yesterday. Please let me know if anything is not clear.

As I mentioned there, I am happy to respond to any queries councillors may have on this or other environmental issues.

Best wishes, Jonathan Timberlake

xxxxx

I am a member of the EDF Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, and also lead the Environment Group of the Residents' Association.

I would like to outline what the NPSG is already doing in gathering background information on the environment. With PC support, a detailed document on the parishes' biodiversity has been obtained from the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre. A copy is with the PC. This information is now being analysed by myself, adding in local observations and findings, and will result in determining the most important areas for conservation and possible interventions – species, habitats, wildlife corridors, etc. Draft results suitable for consultation with residents should be ready in a few months.

The proposal from Climate Friends for an external consultancy (Wild Business) to look at mapping and assessing the current network of green spaces and identify nature recovery opportunities has an approx. 70-80% overlap with what we are already doing under NPSG. The Wild Business consultancy is basically a desk exercise, with the main sources of data being the SxBRC document that we now have and information on Defra's MAGIC website. The main points of difference are:

- Wild Business would assess other costs and benefits (i.e. economic, health, carbon sequestration) of nature conservation strategies
- WB would provide artists impressions of nature recovery schemes
- But there would be no place for any consultation with residents, or incorporation of local knowledge.

Full consultation with residents is, in my professional experience in conservation, an essential step in order to undertake acceptable and successful nature conservation. It gives the community 'ownership' of recommendations and resulting interventions. And it is one that would be undertaken in the neighbourhood planning process.

Any PC funding allocated to Neighbourhood Planning or environmental issues would – in my opinion and that of the RA – be much better used for consultation with residents or in implementation of conservation/nature-improvement recommendations.

However, there is a second smaller proposal to the PC from Climate Friends - to obtain a local consultant (Laurie Jackson) to survey the main parish road verges to help maintain their recent designation as wildlife verges. This, in my opinion, would be a very worthwhile use of PC funds and would add to the NP process. Both myself and the RA would support it.