

**Date:** 05 September 2023

**Title:** Report Item 18 – Business In Progress

**By:** S Adeniji (Clerk)

**Purpose:** To consider and note an update from the parish office

**Recommendations:**

- a) To consider a cut-off date for the council's grant scheme 2023/24 and agree to a grant for the council's chosen charities.
- b) To consider a request for repair works to be carried out to the cricket club marquee
- c) East Sussex Association of Local Councils – to appoint a second councillor (in addition to the Chair) authorised to vote on behalf of the council at the ESALC AGM on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023
- d) To note a report by the Clerk on progress made since the July meeting

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The following are matters for decision:

- **Grant Awarding process 2023/24** – the council is invited to launch this process for the 2023/24 financial year and to decide whether there is to be a cut-off date for applications. A sum of £2,200 has been budgeted.

The Parish Council's chosen charities for 2023/24 are Beachy Head Chaplaincy and the RNLI. The council may wish to set aside a grant for each of these charities.

- **Repairs to the Cricket Club marquee Store** – An email has been received from Cllr White asking for the following repair works to the Cricket Club Marquee store:
  - Replacement of 4 new hinges
  - Improved inner door lock
  - Seal applied to the top of the doors to prevent water ingress
- **East Sussex Association of Local Councils** – to appoint a second councillor (in addition to the Chair) authorised to vote on behalf of the council at the ESALC AGM on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023

The following are matters for report:

Outstanding Items from the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023

- **SA to arrange a meeting with MC**– This has been arranged for the 29<sup>th</sup> of September.

- **SA to write to the National Trust**– The National Trust has since confirmed that the beach at Birling Gap is managed by Wealden Borough Council (WBC). The response from WBC is as follows:

*“At clifftop level on the fence next to the staircase are the four standard warning signs to the national RNLI standard.*

*On the second landing of the staircase is a sign saying “emergency equipment” next to a case containing two lifelines and a further sign explaining how these should be used. The instructions are repeated on the lifelines themselves. The second landing is as close as we can site the box to the actual beach without it being damaged in heavy seas when waves are breaking over the staircase.”*

- **SA to amend the inland registry address for all the titles owed by the parish council to either the village hall or a Post Office Box**– A motion has been included on the agenda to discuss this further.

#### Other Items

- **Raising a levy for the Roads Company through the precept** – A letter was sent to Borough of Merton Borough Council (MBC) to find out how they have been able to raise a levy through the Community Tax on behalf of the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators. According to MBC, *“they have been able to raise a levy through the council tax for the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators (WPCC) by virtue of statute”*. The statute makes WPCC a levying body by statute.
- **Councillors Allowance** – This first instalment of the Councillor allowance will be paid at the end of October.
- **Strengthening Local Relationship (SLR) meeting** – Despite numerous emails to ESCC Highways, they have not been able to give a date for an SLR meeting.
- **Conclusion of audit 2022/23** – the council’s External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn, has completed its review of the council year ended 31 March 2023 and has certified that the information given in the council’s Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with proper practices and that no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit, with the External Auditor’s certificate, has been published on the council’s website and a copy placed on the council’s noticeboard in the shopping precinct.
- **National Trust Changing Chalk – Community Grants Scheme** – Sussex groups from Shoreham to Eastbourne can now apply for grants to fund projects that will make a real difference to their local communities, thanks to Changing Chalk’s Community Grants Scheme. The scheme, run by the National Trust and funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, supports grassroots community-led initiatives that will help to restore lost habitats, bring local histories to life, and provide new experiences in the outdoors. With a total of £150,000 to award over three years, there are grants of up to £5,000 available for community projects and up to £10,000 available for projects focusing on restoring the chalk grassland of the Downs, a priority for Changing Chalk. Further details can be found at <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/sussex/changing-chalk-community-grants-scheme>
- **Wealden Community Spaces Grants Programme** - A new, capital-only, Community Spaces Grants Programme to support and enable partners to improve local rural green spaces within the district is being launched by Wealden District Council.

The council is inviting organisations such as Not for Profit organisations and town and parish councils to apply for grants between £1,000 and £5,000 for projects that will help benefit the residents of the Wealden district and improve/enhance community green spaces. A total funding pot of £34,530 is available. Further details about the grant scheme and information on how to access the application on Friday 29 September can be found at <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/information-for-businesses/economic-development-and-growth/rural-england-prosperity-fund/>

- **Play Area Annual Inspection Report 2023** – The annual inspection of the play area was carried out by Wicksteed on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September. The report has been received, and a quotation has been requested for the remedial works highlighted in the report. The inspection report and the quotation will be brought to the November meeting.

Other actions which remain outstanding are as follows:

- **Benches** -The photographic archive of all the benches is to be updated.