

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 16 February 2009 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr S Charlton, Vice Chairman, in the Chair
Cllr J Byford
Cllr J Dumelow
Cllr G Ellis
Cllr R Savage

In attendance: County Councillor J Garvican
District Councillor A Watkins
Prof V Reynolds – Parish Plan Chairman
13 Parishioners
S Smith - Clerk

Public Questions

1. Mrs Gregory drew attention to the poor condition of certain posts which have chains marking the parking spaces in the Dene Car Park and requested that the damaged posts be replaced. Cllr Ellis will arrange for a local contractor to inspect and report
2. Mrs Daw noted that there has been an increase in dog fouling on The Tye and that at certain times the dog litter bin has been full. Cllr Savage will take the matter up with Wealden DC.
3. Mr Goodchild expressed his thanks to the Chair and to the Members of the Planning Committee for the professional way in which the Meeting held on 12 February 2009 concerning the recent application regarding Winton Street Stables was conducted.
4. Mr Goodchild reported that the overflow of vegetation on the High Path to the North of the village on the C39 had not yet been cleared. The Vice Chairman confirmed that following the January Meeting she has spoken to ESCC Highways, but would pass on her contact via the Clerk should Mr Goodchild wish to take up in his own right with ESCC.
5. Mr Walker requested an update on the status of the Parish Council's communications with ESCC over the tables and chairs outside The Singing Kettle which he felt impeded pedestrians. The Vice Chairman advised that the premises had been visited by an official from ESCC who had spoken to the proprietor and that no further action would be taken. Mr Walker recorded his disappointment, following which several parishioners expressed their feelings, both for and against the tables and chairs.
6. Mrs Embry expressed her concerns that the Parish Council was continuing to explore the possibility of situating an Affordable Housing scheme at a site in Cuckmere Road, when it was outside the "Planning Envelope". This was deferred as it was due to be addressed as an Agenda item during the Meeting.

The Meeting

294.0 Apologies for Absence

294.1 The Clerk had received an apology for absence from Cllr Monteath-Wilson who was unwell and unable to attend.

295.0 Minutes

295.1 Unadopted Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 January 2009 had been circulated previously. Acceptance of the Minutes as a true record was **proposed** by Cllr Byford, **seconded** by Cllr Dumelow and **agreed**.

At this point the report from the District Councillor was taken as the County Councillor was delayed and not yet at the Meeting.

296.0 Report from District Councillor

296.1 Cllr Watkins updated the Meeting on the following points which had arisen since the January Parish Council Meeting.

- He had attended the Parish Plan Meeting on 8 February and considered it to have been an “excellent” event which would enhance the village’s contribution to WDC.
- The recommendations of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 12 February (which he had attended) would now be assessed by WDC.
- He had visited the village during the flooding of the last fortnight and noted the deterioration of the highway surface, which was exacerbated by drivers ignoring the Road Closed signs.
- Affordable Housing is still moving forward and he confirmed that it is viewed as an exemption in Planning Policy, but made no further comment as it is the subject of an Agenda item.
- The location for a possible recycling point in the village continues to be discussed.
- Although outside this Parish, he noted the Planning Application involving a young Marine injured in Afghanistan who lives in WDC which had been given National Press coverage was still progressing, indicating the importance WDC attaches to its Planning Policy.
- WDC is now preparing for a 3.5% increase in Council Tax for 2009/2010 which is below the 3.9% originally indicated

296.2 The Vice Chairman requested assistance from Cllr Watkins to put pressure on WDC to expedite the remarking of the white lines in the Dene Car Park, to which he agreed.

297.0 Report from County Councillor

297.1 Cllr Garvican advised the Meeting of the following points which had arisen since the January Parish Council Meeting.

- ESCC have indicated that they will seek a 3.5% increase in Council Tax, which will be challenging, given the likelihood of decreased revenue from interest earned.
- Following receipt of a letter from SAFE (Saving Alfriston for Everyone) inviting ESCC to their meeting to be held on 7 March, an officer had contacted him to advise that Cllr Lock (the Lead Member for Transport and Environment) whilst wishing to attend in person would be unable to attend and that he sought to have a separate meeting on another date.
- Although issued in response to events outside this Parish which have been given coverage in the National Press, it was noted ESCC have circulated an internal email providing reassurance that their child protection policies are robust.

At this point the Vice Chairman was asked if a member of the public could address the County Councillor, to which she agreed.

297.2 Mr Ann voiced his disappointment that it appeared in the light of Cllr’s Garvican’s report that no one from ESCC would be attending the forthcoming SAFE meeting.

297.3 Cllr Savage stated that he thought it was reprehensible that no one from ESCC was planning to attend that meeting and asked Cllr Garvican to convey this message to Cllr Lock.

Cllr Garvican then left the Meeting at 7.45pm as he had another engagement to attend.

298.0 Appointments to Outside Bodies

None – The Vice Chairman noted that as this item is seldom debated it should be deleted from future Agendas unless there is a specific need.

299.0 Car and Coach Parks and Public Transport – Cllr Ellis

299.1 White Lines and Entry and Exit Markings in Dene Car Park

Cllr Ellis reported that WDC has still not done this work in view of the bad weather.

299.2 One Way System in Dene Car Park

The blue exit has not yet been replaced by a red sign by WDC.

299.3 Lights in Dene Car Park

Cllr Ellis advised that the timings for illumination appear to have been corrected by WDC.

299.4 Willows Car Park – Potential Recycling Point

Awaiting further communication from WDC.

299.5 Willows Car Park – Safety of Pedestrians on adjoining Pathway

Nothing further to report – to be removed from this portfolio as a Highways and Twittens item.

299.6 Any other Coach and Car Park matter

None.

299.7 Any Public Transport matter

None

300.0 Allotments and Recreation Ground – Cllr Byford

300.1 Removal of Skip

This has been done and the item will be removed from the Agenda.

300.2 Re-letting of Plot 22

The plot still needs rotovating. The Tree Warden does not have a rotovator; so other contractors will be approached and costings obtained prior to work being undertaken

300.3 Allotment Competition 2008

Cllr Byford announced that she had advised Mr Thomas that he was the winner and that the cup would be suitably engraved and presented at a later date. Meantime the Clerk will write to the competition judge to express the Parish Council's appreciation of his work.

300.4 Any other Allotment matter

Cllr Byford outlined progress on the provision of a Notice Board for the Allotments. In the meantime a temporary sign will be placed by an allotment holder.

300.5 Pavilion Progress Report

Work is now nearly completed; once an inspection has been carried out this item will be removed from the Agenda.

300.6 Licence for Clubs using Pavilion

The Clerk reported this is ongoing and will provide an update in March

300.7 Recreation Ground – Dog Fouling

Cllr Byford expressed concern that despite the recent Cuckmere News article and visits from the Dog Warden dog fouling remained a problem. As this issue encompasses a greater area than just the recreation ground, however, it will be removed as an Agenda item in this portfolio. Following a discussion, it was agreed that a feasibility study should be made concerning the provision of fencing around the play area, both to avoid dog fouling in that area and also to enhance the play experience.

300.8 Any other Recreation Ground matter

None.

301.0 Planning – Cllr Charlton

301.1 Minutes from Planning Committee meetings held since last Parish Meeting

Meeting held on 5 February 2009

- WD/2008/2981/LB: The Star, High Street, BN26 5TA – Removal of an internal studwork timber screen in the dining area – *No objection*.
- WD/2008/3076/F and WD/2008/3077/LB: Follers Cottage, Seaford Road, BN26 5TT Restoration and renovation of cottage (includes additional three dormer windows and change of wall finish to east elevation) – *No objection*.

- WD/2009/0023/F: Star Cottage, Riverside, BN26 5TJ – Two storey extension at side of existing cottage to form new kitchen and cloaks to ground floor and bedroom with en-suite bathroom to first floor plus erection of detached single garage – *The following points were raised: concern that the glass in the study upstairs should be changed to prevent the loss of privacy for the neighbour. On the plans presented to the committee, there appears to be no second exit from the property so concerns over this.*
- WD/2009/ 0024/CAC: Star Cottage, Riverside, BN26 5TJ – Reduction in height of front boundary wall and moving of existing five bar gates – *No objection re the moving of the gate, however, we objected to the lowering of the wall as it does not appear to be necessary and is out of keeping with neighbouring properties (conservation area).*
- WD/2009/0133/OH: Dukes Green, Alfriston)
- WD/2009/0124/OH: Riverdale, Alfriston) Re-conductor existing low voltage
- WD/2009/0125/OH: The Rails, Alfriston) overhead line(s)
- WD/2009/0153/OH: Winton Street, Alfriston)
The above four applications were begrudgingly approved on the grounds that without this service the village could have no power
- WD/2009/0044/F: Little Stow, The Furlongs, BN26 5XS – Extension to front roof slope to form loggia – *No objection.*

Meeting held on 12 February 2009

- WD/2009/0059/F: Winton Street Farm Stables and Cottage, Winton Street BN26 5UH
Demolition of existing indoor riding arena, stable blocks and two open barns and development of 4 x 2 bedroom holiday-let cottages together with appropriate landscaping and boundary treatments. – *The Planning Committee felt that the application should be refused on the following grounds:-*
 - *The application is outside Alfriston's Development Boundary and would open the floodgates to further applications of this kind – Policy GD2.*
 - *The proposed development would create and exacerbate traffic problems in this area – Policy TR1.*
 - *To protect the Sussex Downs and AONB – Policy NE8.*
 - *It would deprive leisure activities to the area, in particular in respect of the indoor riding school – Policy LR1.*
 - *The proposed development would result in a substantial change of use of the site.*

It was also considered that there is no current approved access to the site from the C39, merely an informal arrangement.

301.2 Matters for consideration by Planning Committee after the Meeting

WD/2009/0240/OH: Frog Fille, Alfriston – re-conductor existing low voltage overhead line.

301.3 Enforcement Action to be Reported

None

301.4 Local Development Framework

Nothing to report

301.5 Liquor Licence applications

None

302.0 Highways and Twittens – Cllr Charlton

302.1 Flint Wall

The Clerk reported that he had obtained further information about likely costings and the availability of Grants and would report to the sub committee accordingly.

302.2 Pedestrian Exit at Willows Car Park (possibility of pedestrian crossing)

The Vice Chairman confirmed that she expected that a new survey to be carried out in the Summer by ESCC.

302.3 Illegal Parking

Nothing further to report.

302.4 Monitoring Traffic Volumes

Still awaiting details of the new dates for the survey to be undertaken by ESCC.

302.5 Lorry Watch

The Vice Chairman confirmed that the scheme is continuing.

302.6 Potholes in the High Street and Weavers Lane

The Vice Chairman advised that whilst the pothole outside the Newsagents had been repaired, much work remained to be done, having been delayed by the adverse weather conditions of the last couple of months. She confirmed she is continuing to chase ESCC to complete the work.

302.7 Siting of Cones

The Clerk reported that he was still waiting for an indication from the Police on the legality of placing no waiting cones, although he had received confirmation that the placing of cones did not override the enforcement of any parking restriction which may be in place as indicated by single or double yellow lines.

302.8 Request to site "A" Board in Market Square

A request by the Historical Society to promote their meetings was agreed.

302.9 Any other Highway matter

The Vice Chairman advised that the date of the first Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) Meeting of the year had still to be agreed with ESCC, although it was expected to be held on either 20 or 27 March. Cllr Byford expressed her wish that a full week of traffic monitoring be undertaken, rather than a single day and that there was also focus on the pedestrian exit at the South end of the Willows Car Park. Cllr Savage recorded his concerns about the potential costs of traffic surveys and the need to ensure that the money was well spent.

303.0 Rights of Way and Countryside – Cllr Dumelow

303.1 Condition of White Bridge

Cllr Dumelow reported that 2 slats were missing which have been reported to ESCC who should repair the structure shortly.

303.2 The Old Coach Road

Nothing to report.

303.3 Any other Rights of Way matter

None

303.4 Condition of Fence between the Spots and Glebeland

Cllr Dumelow and The Clerk have checked the lease granted to the Parish Council in respect of the Glebeland and the Clerk will report further in March.

303.5 Any other Countryside matter

None

303.6 South Downs Campaign

Nothing to report.

303.7 Any National Park Matter

None.

303.8 Any report from Tree Warden

No report, although Cllr Dumelow advised that the Tree Warden was to inspect a tree adjacent to the Playing Fields which was giving cause for concern.

At this stage, Cllr Savage expressed his wish to obtain an update at the next meeting from District Cllr Watkins on the status of the Berwick Way as it has an impact on our village. Following on from this, Cllr Byford commented on the poor state of the pathway immediately to the North of the White Bridge on the East side of the Cuckmere, which falls within the boundary of Cuckmere Valley Parish Council and requested the Clerk to make representations to CVPC, to which he agreed.

304.0 Strategic Planning

304.1 Affordable Housing

The Clerk reported that he, the Chair and District Cllr Watkins met officials from Wealden's Housing Department together with the Head of Planning to establish the potential feasibility of Affordable Housing at a site in Cuckmere Road. At the Meeting it was established that Planning Department have serious reservations about development outside the

Development Boundary of the village. An invitation has been extended for an Official from the Planning Department at WDC to address our March Meeting. In the meantime an Official from the Housing Department will continue enquiries with the Land Registry over ownership of land which would be required for access to the Cuckmere Road site.

304.2 Registration of Allotment land

The Clerk reported that he had written to the Council's solicitors requesting them to proceed with registration.

304.3 Any other Affordable Housing matter

The Clerk had nothing further to report.

304.4 Parish Plan

Cllr Savage reported that over 150 people attended the Village Meeting on 8 February and that many items will be taken forward to the Parish Plan Committee Meeting which will take place next month.

304.5 Any Website matter

None.

304.6 Emergency Planning Sub Committee

Cllr Savage expressed his opinion that the recent floods have galvanised ideas among villagers with several offers of assistance being made. Many of these will be incorporated into the Parish Plan.

304.7 Future of United Reformed Church and Hall

Cllr Ellis drew the Council's attention to a leaflet which had been produced by the Church outlining proposals for future use. Cllr Savage advised that a petition urging support for the proposals at the recent Parish Plan Meeting was well supported. The Vice Chairman asked Mr Wilson if he would address the Council about the proposals after the Meeting.

304.8 Additional Surgery Car Parking

No further contact from the surgery. This item is to be removed from the Agenda.

305.0 The Tye – Cllr Savage

305.1 Status of the fence between the Spots and Glebeland

Already covered under item 303.4

305.2 Any matters relating to the Tye

None

306.0 Finance – The Clerk

306.1 Statement of Finances

The Clerk advised the summary of bank account balances as at 16 February 2009

Precept Deposit account	10,511.00
Current account	8,890.45
Savings Account	5,484.27
Car Park Account	<u>31,421.80</u>
Total	<u>£56,307.52</u>

306.2 Invoices for Payment

January 2009

The Clerk presented the following cheques for payment

- £ 203.76 – Wages – C Burden
- £ 148.28 – Wages – D Skertchly
- £ 707.21 – Wages – S Smith
- £ 370.93 – HMRC – Tax and NI
- £5,610.83 – Grass Cutting – G P Pocock
- £ 836.62 – Norvett Electronics Limited – Sports Pavilion
- £ 346.22 – Alfriston Heartstart – Mine
- £ 101.93 – V Reynolds – Parish Plan expenses
- £ 29.29 – C Adcock – Parish Plan expenses

Total **£8,355.07**

A proposal to accept the Finance Report was **proposed** by Cllr Savage, **seconded** by Cllr Dumelow and **agreed**.

306.3 Any other Finance matter

None

307.0 Parish Clerk

307.1 Co-Option of Councillor

The Clerk reported that he had received no response to the Notice place requesting applications for co-option. As that Notice expired immediately prior to the Meeting, the Vice Chair requested that another Notice be prepared to expire on the date of the March Meeting.

307.2 Dog Fouling update

The Clerk confirmed that he had contacted the WDC Dog Warden who had agreed to increase her profile in the village

307.3 Any other matter

None

308.0 Reports from Outside Bodies

308.1 Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Partnership

Nothing to Report.

308.2 Cuckmere Community Bus

The Vice Chairman advised that the next meeting would be held on 6 April.

308.3 Cuckmere Flood Forum

No further meeting

308.4 Festival

AGM to be held on 26 February. Nothing further to report.

308.5 Heartstart

Cllr Dumelow advised that the Valentine's Day Dance had been cancelled and that a table top sale will be held next month to raise funds.

308.6 Safer Wealden Partnership

Nothing to Report.

308.7 Village Hall Committee

The Vice Chairman noted that following Cllr Knights resignation the Parish Council does not have an official representative on the Committee and asked the Clerk to write to the Village Hall Committee Chairman to rectify the situation. Meantime Cllr Savage will attend their March meeting.

308.8 Wealden District Association of Local Councils

No Report

308.9 Any other Outside reports

None, although Cllr Byford suggested that SAFE is included in the reports from next month.

309.0 Clerk's Correspondence

309.1 Wealden Police Commander's Messages

These have contained no items of specific local note and this item will be deleted from future Agendas.

309.2 Other Correspondence

- SAFE have invited representatives from the Parish Council to attend their meeting on 7 March.
- The Clerk read out a letter from ESCC advising a Temporary road closure involving Winton Street from 30 March to 4 April, copies of which he will post on the Notice Boards. Meantime the Clerk will contact ESCC to ascertain their intentions should bad weather cause additional disruption.
- A letter has been received from a Parishioner drawing attention to potential problems with parking on the Recreation Ground during the Festival as a result of erosion. This will form an Agenda item next month.

310.0 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 16 March 2009 at 7.30pm in the War Memorial Hall, preceded by Public Questions from 7.15pm

The Meeting was then closed; however, the following further Public questions were taken.

- Mr Wilson asked for clarification from the District Councillor regarding WDC's Swim Free in Wealden scheme for the over sixties population. Cllr Watkins will revert.
- Mr Wilson commented that ESCC's Notice of the temporary closure referred to traffic using Waterloo Square, whereas it should have referred to Market Square, thereby perpetuating this incorrect nomenclature.
- Mr Wilson then spoke about the proposals for the future of the United Reformed Church and Gunn Memorial Hall. At present it is proposed to sell the Hall and keep the Church as a heritage and interpretation centre. Finance would come from the sale of the Hall. The Church Synod has indicated that unless the proposals receive the full backing of the village it will walk away from this scheme. Upon implementation of the proposed scheme, the Church would still be owned by the Southern province of the Church. Cllr Savage added that 75 signatures supporting the proposals had been received at the Parish Plan meeting. Cllr Ellis suggested that a village meeting specifically aimed at discussing the future of the URC could be convened.
- Professor Reynolds stressed the independence of the Parish Plan Committee from the Parish Council whilst highlighting the spirit and level of co-operation which existed. Accordingly Cllr Savage's earlier comments should not strictly have formed part of the Parish Council Meeting, a point which was acknowledged by both the Vice Chairman and Cllr Savage. Professor Reynolds acknowledged with gratitude the Grants of £1000 and £250 previously agreed by WDC and APC provided to support the Parish Plan initiative.
- Mr Phillips requested that microphone be used in future which was duly noted.
- Mr Phillips drew attention to the heavy ivy growth on a Sycamore tree on the South side of Kings Ride. This will be brought to attention of ESCC at the forthcoming SLR meeting.