

# ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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## Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 19 January 2009 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.30pm.

**Present:** Cllr D Monteath-Wilson, Chairman, in the Chair  
Cllr S Charlton  
Cllr J Byford  
Cllr J Dumelow  
Cllr G Ellis  
Cllr R Savage

**In attendance:** District Councillor A Watkins  
PC E Keenan  
PCSO M Neve  
Prof V Reynolds – Parish Plan Chairman  
Mr J Hurwood – APC delegate to Cuckmere Flood Forum  
12 Parishioners  
S Smith - Clerk

### Public Questions

1. Mr Wilson noted that the grass verge in Seaford Road between Deans Place Hotel and Riverdale House was covered with a lot of debris, possibly caused by tree surgeons not clearing up properly. Cllr Charlton said she would take up the matter with ESCC Highways.
2. Mr Goodchild advised that the High Path on the C39 to the North of the village had become overgrown as a result of an overflow of vegetation from adjoining fields which required cutting. Cllr Charlton said she would deal with the matter.
3. Mr Hurwood drew attention to the skip placed by the allotments which was now overflowing. Cllr Byford said she would arrange for its removal.
4. Mr Wilson observed that the 'Slow' sign painted on the highway in North Street just before the Dene Car Park was difficult to read. Cllr Charlton said she would speak to ESCC Highways to rectify the position.
5. Mr Hurwood also observed that the problem of dog fouling around the Recreation Ground and Rope Walk had increased. The Chair agreed with his comments and requested the Clerk to make further comment in Cuckmere News and to bring the situation to the attention of the Wealden District Council Dog Warden.
6. Mr Phillips expressed his ongoing concerns over the state of cleanliness of the High Street. Cllr Charlton advised that whilst a full cleaning had been undertaken prior to Christmas, she would again take the matter up with Wealden District Council.

***Prior to the Meeting the Chair extended a welcome to the following Parish officials and visitors and invited them to address those present:-***

**PC Keenan** advised that PCSO Matt Neve will shortly be taking up new duties in Heathfield and will be replaced PCSO Mick Morter. Our new PCSO will have access to CCTV and a mobile phone. She announced that other officers will visit the village from time to time to support the police presence and that the targeting of repeat offenders who park illegally will be a priority.

**PCSO Neve** gave an update on crime figures, which remain low, and thanked everyone in the village to the support he had been given. The Vice Chair and Chair, on behalf of the Parish Council, thanked PCSO Neve for his work in the village and wished him well in his future career.

**Prof Reynolds** gave an update on the Parish Plan, noting that the process had started in 2005 under the stewardship of Andrew Lloyd. A village meeting in January 2006 had produced several ideas, many of which had remained on the table and had been taken forward by Geoff Knights until November 2008. Last month a bridging template had been filed with Wealden District Council. A village meeting has been convened for the War Memorial Hall on Sunday 8 February 2008 to which all villagers have been invited.

**Mr Hurwood** spoke about the Environment Agency's announcement last month that it will be withdrawing from maintenance of the Lower Cuckmere Valley from 2011 and that this will be a major topic at the Cuckmere Flood Forum which is to be held in the War Memorial Hall on 23 March. He suggested that the Parish Council may wish to support Cuckmere Valley Parish Council in their stance on this matter. The Chair duly reiterated the Parish Council's support for our neighbouring Parish Council.

## **The Meeting**

### **278.0 Apologies for Absence**

**278.1** The Clerk had received an apology for absence from Cllr Garvican who had other commitments.

### **279.0 Minutes**

**279.1** Unadopted Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 November 2008 had been published and circulated previously. Acceptance of the Minutes as a true record was **proposed** by Cllr Charlton, **seconded** by Cllr Savage and **agreed**.

### **280.0 Report from County Councillor**

**280.1** The Clerk read a message from Cllr Garvican that since his report at the last meeting there had been no developments at County level to report to the Parish Council.

### **281.0 Report from District Councillor**

**281.1** Cllr Watkins advised the following points of interest to the village which had come to his knowledge since the November Parish Council Meeting.

- The location for a possible recycling point in the village continues to be discussed. Sites under review included The Willows Car Park and The Star Inn.
- Affordable Housing is still moving forward but made no further comment as it is the subject of an Agenda item.
- The Local Development Framework is still expected to reach the consultation stage in May 2009. A recent meeting at Wealden District Council was subject to the 'Chatham House Rule' meaning that the details of that meeting cannot be disclosed at this stage.

### **282.0 Appointments to Outside Bodies**

None – Although the Chair noted that a volunteer would be required for work associated with the Local Development Framework and requested Councillors give this consideration.

### **283.0 Allotments and Recreation Ground – Cllr Byford**

#### **283.1 Allotment Availability**

No vacant plots at present

#### **283.2 Re-letting of Plot 22**

The plot still needs rotovating; the Clerk will provide Cllr Byford with details of the Tree Warden, who may be able to assist.

#### **283.3 Allotment Competition 2008**

Carried over to February's Meeting.

#### **283.4 Any other Allotment matter**

Arrangements will be made to have the skip removed, as detailed in Public Questions.

### **283.5 Pavilion Progress Report**

The Parish Council have received a request from the Cricket Club to fund certain electrical works which have already been completed. A sum of £1,370.00 remains in the Parish Council's Reserve and a further £2,250.00 will be added to the Reserve this year. Accordingly £3,620.00 will be available to Alfriston Cricket Club to help pay for refurbishment of the Sports Pavilion. Cllr Byford **proposed** that a grant of £3,620.00 be made to ACC on the understanding that no more money will be forthcoming from the Parish Council for this project. The proposal was **seconded** by Cllr Dumelow and **agreed**. The Clerk advised that the necessary VAT invoices will need to be made out to Alfriston Parish Council and dated prior to 31 March 2009 to ensure that VAT will be able to be reclaimed by the Parish Council.

### **283.6 Licence for Clubs using Pavilion**

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

### **283.7 Rating Assessment - Pavilion**

The Cricket Club have been dealing direct with the District Valuer

### **283.8 Recreation Ground – Dog Fouling**

The Clerk reported a positive response to his article in Cuckmere News, which had resulted in a request that the Parish Council arrange for additional dog litter bins from Wealden District Council.

### **283.9 Any other Recreation Ground matter**

A request has been received from the organisers of the PhotoPLOD charity event to use the Recreation Ground (as in previous years) on 6 June 2009. This was agreed.

## **284.0 Planning – Cllr Charlton**

### **284.1 Minutes from Planning Committee meetings held since last Parish Meeting**

None

### **284.2 Matters for consideration by Planning Committee this evening**

None

### **284.3 Enforcement Action to be Reported**

None

### **284.4 Local Development Framework**

Nothing to report

### **284.5 Liquor Licence applications**

None

## **285.0 Highways and Twittens – Cllr Charlton**

### **285.1 Matters arising from SLR Meeting 12 September 2008**

All points have been aired at subsequent Parish Council Meetings. To be removed from the Agenda.

### **285.2 Flint Wall**

No progress - to be followed up next month

### **285.3 Pedestrian Exit at Willows Car Park (possibility of pedestrian crossing)**

East Sussex County Council has carried out a survey, which revealed low volumes of pedestrians. It is expected that a new survey will be carried out in the Summer.

### **285.4 Illegal Parking**

This item has previously been covered under Reports from Parish Officials.

### **285.5 Monitoring Traffic Volumes**

The survey planned for November did not take place. Details of the new dates for the survey to be undertaken by ESCC are awaited.

### **285.6 Lorry Watch**

Cllr Charlton confirmed that the scheme is continuing.

### **285.7 Frog Firle**

The improvement scheme has been completed. The item will be removed from the Agenda.

### **285.8 Drainage Problems connected with leaves**

These have been resolved and the item will be removed from the Agenda.

### **285.9 Potholes in the High Street and Weavers Lane**

Cllr Charlton confirmed that ESCC are aware of the problems, but that resolution has been delayed by the adverse weather conditions of the last couple of months.

### **285.10 Siting of Cones**

The Chair confirmed that the cones had not been reinstated pending the Clerk's findings regarding their legality. The Chair advised Council that she has received a petition from 12 traders who are not in favour of their reintroduction. A debate ensued in which it was noted that a previous survey in 2007 had not consulted residents nor taken account of the views of all High Street village traders. Councillors agreed that just because this issue had been previously debated and voted upon, it did not mean that if it was brought to the attention of the Parish Council again, it could not be re-debated or voted upon. The Clerk advised he had not yet concluded his findings about the legality of placing cones, but in that any event, the placing of cones did not override the enforcement of any parking restriction which may be in place (yellow line). It was decided that Councillors will revisit this matter in February.

### **285.11 Any other Highway matter**

Cllr Charlton reported there had been changes in personnel at ESCC, although there was no indication of any changes in policy.

## **286.0 Rights of Way and Countryside – Cllr Dumelow**

### **286.1 Condition of White Bridge**

Cllr Dumelow confirmed it was satisfactory at present

### **286.2 The Old Coach Road**

Cllr Dumelow reported that the ESCC review concluded that progress in resolving this issue had been too slow and that a conclusion on the future of the Old Coach Road was expected within the next six months.

### **286.3 Any other Rights of Way matter**

None

### **286.4 Manure Heap at Winton Street Stables**

The Clerk advised that this is part of a wider planning issue and that he will report further in February.

### **286.5 Condition of Fence between the Spots and Glebeland**

The Clerk is to establish the ownership of the fence with the ecclesiastical authorities and report in February.

### **286.6 Any other Countryside matter**

None

### **286.7 South Downs Campaign**

Cllr Dumelow reported that a decision on the boundary of the South Downs National Park remains likely to be taken in the summer.

### **286.8 Any National Park Matter**

None, except as in 290.7 above.

### **286.9 Any report from Tree Warden**

Cllr Dumelow reported that the Tree Warden had completed a survey of the Car Parks which will be passed to Wealden District Council.

**287.0 Strategic Planning** – The Chair reminded Council that this was previously the portfolio held by Cllr Knights and asked the Clerk for an update on the vacancy caused by his resignation. The Clerk confirmed that Notices advising that a casual vacancy for a Councillor had arisen had been displayed on the Notice Boards. Unless the prescribed number of electors writes to the Returning Officer by 30 January, the vacancy will be filled by co-option.

### **287.1 Affordable Housing**

The Chair reported that the landowner of the Cuckmere Road site had now indicated to Wealden District Council officials a willingness, in principle, to sell the site. A meeting has been convened for next month to discuss options at which the Chair, the Clerk and District Cllr Watkins will see officials from Wealden's Housing and Planning Departments to establish the potential feasibility of Affordable Housing at that location. The importance of a representative from the Planning Department being present was noted as that Department has previously indicated their opposition to the development of the site. The Chair will inform the next Council Meeting of the outcome of that meeting.

### **287.2 Draft Homelessness Strategy 2008 - 2013**

No update available

### **287.3 Registration of Allotment land**

The Clerk reported that a further Statutory Declaration had to be obtained but that registration was proceeding.

**287.4 Any other Affordable Housing matter**

The Chair reported that Cllr Knights had previously been in correspondence with Dr Adcock concerning a plot of land adjacent to the surgery, which could have an impact on future Affordable Housing in the village. As this is at an exploratory stage, it remains in abeyance.

**287.5 Parish Plan**

Already dealt with under reports from Parish Officials.

**287.6 Any Website matter**

The Clerk confirmed that James Knights will continue to manage the website and that he will be provided with copies of the Agendas and Minutes.

**287.7 Emergency Planning Conference**

Following on from the Conference, a sub committee comprising Cllrs Dumelow and Savage was formed to update the Parish's emergency plans. Cllr Savage outlined their progress and reported that they have visited several sites to establish the facilities available. They expect to be in a position to report fully in March.

**287.8 Collection of Green/ Garden Waste**

The Clerk reported no further progress with Wealden District Council. In the circumstances, given the recycling initiatives already going ahead, the Chair agreed that the item be removed from the Agenda in the short term.

**287.9 Future of United Reformed Church and Hall**

The Chair asked Cllr Ellis to be the Council's point of contact in these consultations which are ongoing.

**287.10 Additional Surgery Car Parking**

As reported in 291.4 nothing further to report.

**288.0 The Tye – Cllr Savage**

**288.1 Update on “Tenaxed” area of grass**

Cllr Savage reported that he is happy with the performance of the new underlay for the grass. There are no ruts, the grass is not cutting up and the surface has held up well despite poor weather conditions. Whilst there may be some imperfections, they are superficial and should disappear once the growing season begins.

**288.2 Any matters relating to the Tye**

Cllr Savage suggested that consideration should be given to the removal of the remaining fence between the Spots and the Glebeland as it appeared to fulfil no useful purpose. The Clerk will take forward in conjunction with item 290.5.

**289.0 Car and Coach Parks and Public Transport – Cllr Ellis**

**289.1 White Lines and Entry and Exit Markings in Dene Car Park**

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

**289.2 One Way System in Dene Car Park**

The blue exit sign in the Dene Car Park is to be replaced by a red sign by Wealden District Council in an attempt to curb abuse of the one way system, although this work remains to be done.

**289.3 Lights in Dene Car Park**

Cllr Ellis has spoken to Wealden District Council to get the timing changed to stop the lights coming on during the day.

**289.4 Willows Car Park – Potential Recycling Point**

The Parish Council has been requested by Wealden District Council to identify a suitable point for the Recycling Point which is to be established later this year. Apart from the Willows, a site at the rear of the Star Inn has been suggested. Following a debate on the merits of various sites, Cllr Ellis was requested to pursue the matter with Wealden, noting the preference for the Willows.

**289.5 Any other Coach and Car Park matter**

Cllr Charlton noted that a large crack in a privately owned wall adjacent to the Willow had appeared following the recent icy weather. Cllr Ellis will pursue with the owner.

**289.6 Any Public Transport matter**

None

## 290.0 Finance – The Clerk

### 290.1 2009 / 2010 Precept

The Clerk presented a copy of his Report which was agreed by the Finance Committee in December. This detailed a Precept of £22,570 which represents an increase of £635.00 on 2008 /2009 or 2.89%. This is below the Wealden increase which is reported to be 3.9%.

### 290.2 Statement of Finances

The Clerk advised the summary of bank account balances as at 17 November 2008

Precept Deposit account	16,511.00
Current account	4,277.54
Savings Account	5,484.27
Car Park Account	<u>29,580.18</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£55,852.99</u></b>

### 290.3 Invoices for Payment

#### December 2008

The Clerk presented the following cheques for payment

- £ 203.76 – Wages – C Burden
- £ 148.08 – Wages – D Skertchly
- £ 707.21 – Wages – S Smith
- £ 371.13 – HMRC – Tax and NI
- £1,107.00 - HMRC - VAT

**Total** **£2,537.18**

#### January 2009

The Clerk presented the following cheques for payment

- £ 229.21 – Wages – C Burden
- £ 166.84 – Wages – D Skertchly
- £ 707.21 – Wages – S Smith
- £ 381.93 – HMRC – Tax and NI
- £ 310.21 – Wealden District Council – Litter Bin Emptying
- £ 150.97 - HMRC - VAT
- £ 124.09 – Wealden District Council – Dog Bin Emptying
- £ 111.64 – BT – Internet Services
- £ 82.96 – BT – Telephone Services
- £ 50.60 – EDF – Sports Pavilion
- £ 49.99 – P Ayers (Reimbursement of Payment for McAfee Protection)
- £ 6.66 – EDF - Clock

**Total** **£2,372.31**

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

### 290.4 Any other Finance matter

None

## 291.0 Parish Clerk

### 291.1 Advertising on BT Telephone Kiosk

Nothing further to report – to be removed from Agenda

### 291.2 Carving from Old Chestnut Tree

The Chair advised that the carving was now displayed in the Gallery of the Church, where it would remain for 15 months.

### 291.3 Sussex Express

The Clerk reported that he had been advised by the Content Editor of the Sussex Express that the word Alfriston was removed from the masthead, due to space restraints when the Newhaven and Seaford editions were merged last year. Its reinstatement will be considered on any future redesign.

#### **291.4 Dog Fouling update**

The Clerk reported that his article in Cuckmere News had generated message of support, which included requests for further bins and new signs. The Wealden District Dog Warden has been contacted. This will be an Agenda item next month under Allotments and Recreation Ground.

#### **291.5 Electoral Register**

The 2008 / 2009 Register of Electors has now been received.

#### **291.6 Any other matter**

None

### **292.0 Reports from Outside Bodies**

#### **292.1 Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Partnership**

The Clerk read a report received reviewing the Comforts and Joys held in December, which had been a success. Work has already commenced on preparations for this year. The AVCP thanked the Parish Council and in particular Cllr Savage for their support.

#### **292.2 Cuckmere Community Bus**

Cllr Charlton reported that there is to be a small increase in fares for the Rambler bus together with pending service alterations. Their next meeting is to be held on 6 April.

#### **292.3 Cuckmere Flood Forum**

No further meeting

#### **292.4 Festival**

Nothing to report.

#### **292.5 Heartstart**

Cllr Dumelow advised that Heartstart received 97 calls for assistance during 2008. A new Responder has started training. A Valentine's Day Dance will be held on 14 February to raise funds.

#### **292.6 Safer Wealden Partnership**

Nothing to Report. The Chair noted that Mr Palmer will attend the next meeting on behalf of the village.

#### **292.7 Village Hall Committee**

The Chair read out a letter sent by the Parish Council to the former caretaker, Mrs Apps, thanking her for her hard work in ensuring that Parish Council meetings always take place in such pleasant surroundings. Cllr Ellis will report next month.

#### **292.8 Wealden District Association of Local Councils**

No Report

#### **292.9 Any other Outside reports**

None

### **293.0 Clerk's Correspondence**

#### **293.1 Wealden Police Commander's Messages**

These have contained no items of specific local note

#### **293.2 Other Correspondence**

None

#### **293.3 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 16 February 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 observed that the Glebeland was formerly farmed by the owners of Bank House Farm, which could be a point of interest in the question of maintenance of the broken fence between the Spots and the Glebeland.

- Mr Phillips reminded the Clerk that he had not corrected an error in the October Minutes in the final Public Questions session where it was stated that “Mr Phillips also reminded Councillors that Steamer Trading still does not have a No Waiting sign fixed outside”. In fact he drew attention to the fact that the removal of the No Waiting sign, some two years ago, with the resultant loss of paint and render, had never been made good by East Sussex County Council. He did not want reinstatement. The Clerk apologised for this oversight and is happy to set the record straight. The wall has now been made good.
- The question of the recycling facilities at Deans Place was raised. This will be considered along with the other options under review.
- Mrs Phillips requested consideration be given to the siting of ‘A’ Boards in the Square to publicise the Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Historical Society’s 2009 programme. This will be an Agenda item next month.