

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 18th April 2005 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr Ms D. Monteath-Wilson, Vice Chairman, (in the Chair)
Cllr A. Banham
Cllr Mrs S. Charlton
Cllr A. Lloyd

In attendance: P. Ayers Clerk
County Councillor S. Shing
District Councillor K. Whitehead
19 parishioners

Public Questions

1. Mr Ray Savage raised questions about the Parish Council's response to his recent planning application at The Stables, Pleasant Rise Farm. Because of a previously declared interest at the site, the Chairman stood down and requested Cllr Lloyd to take the Chair, as other members present were directly concerned as members of the Planning Committee. Mr and Mrs Savage complained that the response to their recent amendment application contained eight inaccuracies, which they proceeded to outline one by one. The Clerk requested a copy of the prepared statement to ensure accuracy in recording the matter, and this is awaited. Mr & Mrs Savage contended that the Council's comments were based on conjecture, not fact, and had caused them some degree of anxiety. The farm was registered with Defra, and housed over 100 animals including goats and sheep. Since the comments had appeared on the Agenda, Mr Savage contended that they had suffered from increased trespass and damage. He called for the resignation of the Chairman of the Planning Committee. Cllr Banham responded to the allegations confirming that the Planning Committee now accepted that animals were kept at the farm, and accordingly he had asked the Clerk to seek an amendment to the Parish comments to delete the third sentence, which had suggested that no animals were kept on the farm. The Parish Council and its Planning Committee were guardians of the village and its character, and thus had a duty to report any problems to Wealden District Council, as the competent authority to investigate such matters and take appropriate action. An application had been made three years previously at the Stables, and even at that stage, the then Parish Council had expressed concern that the structure appeared more like a house than a store, so comments on the present application merely mirrored those earlier remarks. That application had been granted with the provisos that the building should be used for purposes ancillary to the enjoyment of Pleasant Rise Farm, and for purposes associated with agriculture and forestry. When construction took place, it had not complied with the latest plans seen by the Parish, in that windows and doors were larger, and the roof pitch was different. Enforcement action had resulted, both in connection with the structure itself as well as its use. The present application sought to regularise the structural aspects of the matter, and in the Parish Council's view, made it even more likely than before that the building, or parts of it, would not be used for the stated purposes. He noted that the electoral roll showed Mr and Mrs Savage as resident at the Stables, which tended to reinforce that opinion. If the comments about the lack of animals at Farm, which were now accepted as inaccurate, had inadvertently caused anxiety, Cllr Banham offered his apologies.
Cllr Monteath-Wilson then resumed the Chair.

2. Mr Wilson expressed concern at the fencing, locked gate and signs that now surrounded Spring Dick, for very many years a popular spot for local youngsters, and enquired as to the reasons for the unexpected action. He appreciated that the location was just outside the Parish, but asked that the matter was pursued with the Environment Agency.

345.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Apps (family bereavement), Knights (away on personal business) and Kegg (on holiday). Their reasons for absence were accepted by Councillors.

346.0 MINUTES

346.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2005 had been published and circulated previously. They were taken as read, **accepted** as a true record on the **proposition** of Cllr Banham, **seconded** by Cllr Lloyd, and signed by the Chairman.

347.0 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Shing's report covered the recent independent audit of work at Frog Firle, which would result in a number of amendments in line with requests made by the Parish. He was disappointed to report the loss of funding for the Berwick Way, which he hoped would be re-instated again in 2006/7. The change in county divisions meant that he would not be County Councillor for Alfriston, even if re-elected on 5th May, and he thanked the Parish for all their help and assistance during his four years in office. Cllr Banham responded thanking Cllr Shing for all his efforts on behalf of the Parish.

348.0 REPORT FROM DISTRICT CONCILLOR

Cllr Whitehead gave details of the Wealden Local Plan which had been lost at a recent judicial review. This decision was being appealed and work was proceeding on the Plan working towards approval by Wealden District Council on 27th July.

349.0 ALLOTMENTS

In Cllr Apps' absence, the Clerk read her report.

349.1 Renewals

Two whole and two half plots were not yet let. The Tree Warden had given up his two whole plots, and it was accepted that these should be re-let, once they had been tidied up and re-marked to take account of a large amount of garden waste that needed clearing in the future.

349.2 Water supply

The water supply had been turned back on, but it appeared that a leak had developed over the winter months. Mr Trowell was filling the tanks on a weekly basis, whilst Cllr Apps resolved the problem.

349.3 Maintenance

Clearance work had started and overhanging hedges would also be trimmed. Ivy encroaching into adjoining properties would be removed.

350.0 CAR and COACH PARKS

350.1 Dene Car Park spaces

The posts and chains had now been installed and the new padlocks would be issued once licensees had paid their rent for 2005/6. Wealden had just accepted that renewal notices should be issued at the existing rate, and the Clerk would now deal with the renewals.

350.2 Proposed revisions to the 'A' permit system

Cllr Lloyd was putting the finishing touches to the new programme, which would be introduced over the coming months, initially for new applicants.

350.3 Parking charges

The proposal for increases had not yet been taken forward within Wealden DC, who now hoped to introduce new charges from late May.

350.4 VAT on car parking charges

The Parish disclosure had been acknowledged, and would be dealt with once the Isle of Wight test case had reached a conclusion.

350.5 Overhanging trees

Wealden were checking to ensure that there were no tree preservation orders or issues before confirming their agreement to the work being carried out. Cllr Lloyd had discovered that some work also needed to be done on trees in the Dene Car Park, and this would be done at the same time.

351.0 FINANCE

351.1 Invoices for payment – April

The Clerk presented invoices for payment in April:

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL		£
Clerk: admin and travel		39.50
wages		316.43
Inland Revenue		141.18
Allianz Cornhill		717.25
Wealden D.C. – litter bins		286.41
Wealden D.C. – dog bins		224.72
Sussex Association of Local Councils – annual subs.		198.92
Clarity Copiers – photocopying		21.37
Seaboard Energy – Clock		6.22
Viking Direct		49.85
Trowell Building Co. – erecting goal posts		<u>109.27</u>
TOTAL		<u>2,111.12</u>

CUCKMERE VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	115.04
Inland Revenue	<u>51.32</u>
	<u>166.36</u>

WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	107.87
J. Lumley – wages	448.56
W. Newman – wages	288.36
Inland Revenue	62.97
Cale Briparc – annual contract	570.35
Trowell Building Co. – new posts and chains in Dene	<u>1,120.95</u>
TOTAL	<u>2,599.06</u>

The Clerk drew attention to the large increase in insurance premium (£642 in 2004/5). Cllr Lloyd suggested that alternative quotes were obtained for the next financial year (2006/7). April payments were **approved unanimously** on the **proposal** of Cllr Lloyd, **seconded** by Cllr Banham.

351.2 Statement of Finances

Councillors examined the Statement of Bank Balances on 17th April provided by the Clerk, and accepted them as follows:

	£
Precept deposit account	7,411.61
Current account	4,127.95
Savings account	4,958.21
Car Park Account	<u>651.71</u>
TOTAL	<u>17,149.48</u>

351.3 Annual Accounts

The Clerk had almost finished preparing the Annual Accounts and expected to bring them to the May meeting for approval. As no invoice had been received for grass cutting, the surplus of nearly £6,000 was misleading. If the grass cutting costs were taken into account a small deficit would have been recorded.

351.4 Review of Finances

The Clerk reminded members of the need for a review, which might be combined with consideration of a Parish Plan. Members agreed.

352.0 HIGHWAYS and TWITTENS

352.1 Damage to Star Inn

A photomontage showing the position of the proposed vertical beam was considered. Members noted that it was underneath the vertical tiled overhang in Star Lane, and thus could not prevent damage to those tiles. As such, it served no purpose, and the proposal could not be supported. Members requested that Cllr Mrs Charlton re-opened the possibility of an extended kerb drawing vehicles further into the High Street, repositioning the sarsen stones and placing a bollard on the extended corner. This would be taken up again with ESCC Highways.

352.2 Street name signs

Signs for Rope Walk were now in place. A request had been received from West Close.

352.3 Frog Firl Traffic Management scheme

The audit report had now been received, and the Clerk itemised work to be undertaken, which would alleviate many of the concerns expressed. Once the work had been undertaken, Cllr Mrs Charlton would monitor the situation again to check whether or not further improvements were needed.

352.4 Kings Ride kerbs

A site meeting to consider the type of material to be used was to be held on Wednesday 20th April, and a report would be given to the May meeting.

352.5 Sloe Lane GIS system

The Clerk was meeting a representative of the Fire Service shortly, but had no further information from the Police.

352.6 Local highway matters

Cllr Mrs Charlton had requested action to prevent noise from a manhole cover in North Street, but the criteria for attention had not been met, so East Sussex had declined to raise the cover.

Repainting of the yellow lines in Smugglers Close had not been completed due to the presence of parked cars. A return visit to complete the work was expected soon.

Cllr Mrs Charlton had requested that obsolete sign posts in Weavers Lane and Star Lane were removed.

Streets throughout the village would be swept in the near future.

The SpeedWatch campaign was to be discussed at the May meeting.

353.0 OUTSIDE BODIES

353.1 A.D.A.P.T.T.

Cllr Mrs Charlton reported that the name had been changed at the AGM to become the Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Partnership. A new management committee was to be formed.

353.2 Cuckmere Community Bus

A meeting was to be held on 21st April.

353.3 Festival

Councillors were concerned to ensure adequate policing for this event, and the Clerk was requested to write to Chief Inspector Matthews to seek the assistance of special constables throughout the Festival.

It was understood that the Festival Committee would be approaching the Parish Council to arrange one location for the sale of raffle tickets, and for the display of bunting throughout the High Street. Both matters would be considered once the formal approach had been received.

353.4 Police Liaison

A meeting was due to be held in late April to consider anti social behaviour. The meeting would provide an opportunity to raise again the lack of a local police presence as there had still been no sittings of Police Community Support Officers in the village, and the Police were no longer responding to requests from the Parish Council.

353.5 Amenity Society

It was understood that the AGM was to be held on 21st April, although at present, the Parish Council was not formally represented.

353.6 Charter 600 Celebrations

Cllr Mrs Charlton would be representing the Parish Council at a meeting towards the end of April.

353.7 Other anniversaries

The British Legion would be approached to ascertain whether any ceremonies were being planned to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of WW2 in July.

The Clerk had just received a brochure concerning possible events to mark the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar in October. This would be circulated for consideration and also raised with the British Legion.

354.0 PARISH CLERK

354.1 Parish Plans

The Clerk reported on correspondence from Wealden DC indicating that grants of up to £1,000 (but usually of £500) could be made towards the preparation of Plans.

Two possible lines of enquiry were being pursued to find a champion to lead the work, and this would be discussed at the Annual Assembly meeting on 3rd May.

354.2 Standing Orders

The work was not yet complete.

354.3 New model Terms and Conditions Agreement

Members had considered the draft circulated and acceptance was **proposed** by Cllr Monteath-Wilson, **seconded** by Cllr Banham, and **agreed unanimously**. The Clerk would draw the documents up for signing. The Chairman had queried the salary level paid to all employees and sought clarification. The Clerk confirmed that the rate for car park attendants was tied to a grade at Wealden DC. An increase was due from 1st April, but had not been paid, because the new hourly rate was not yet known. He would make enquiries.

As far as his own salary was concerned, again the rate was in accordance with a national scale, and progression along that grade was automatic. Currently, he was required to work 11 hours per week, which members considered may have been exceeded on a regular basis. The Clerk did not maintain a record of the hours worked, so that the matter could not be proved.

355.0 PLANNING

355.1 Matters considered under the urgency procedure

Cllr Monteath-Wilson vacated the Chair, which was assumed by Cllr Lloyd.

WD/02/0685/JF The Stables, Pleasant Rise Farm, Cuckmere Road: Extension to existing farm store providing a three bay garage/store and first floor store – amended plan showing structure ‘as built’ incorporating raised ridge and revisions to detailing and fenestration. It was clear that the Parish Council’s response needed correction in view of evidence which had come to light after the original submission was made. Whilst the Clerk had prepared the amended response requested by the Chairman of the Planning Committee, this had not yet been despatched since use of the Wealden courier service on Tuesdays was the quickest method of delivery. The concerns of parishioners had been put and their comments needed to be taken on board. Cllr Lloyd **proposed** that the Parish Council withdrew its original comments and that a revised draft was considered and approved by all Councillors and forwarded to Wealden DC within 7 days. The proposal was **seconded** by Cllr Mrs Charlton and **agreed unanimously**. The Clerk would write to Wealden DC straight away to outline the course of action agreed upon.

Cllr Monteath-Wilson resumed the Chair.

355.2 Matters for consideration this evening

WD/05/0519/LB Sadler’s House, High Street: erection of single storey timber framed conservatory.

WD/05/0694/F The Chaise House, West Street: garden room in rear garden.

WD/05/0734/F Burnt House, Seaford Road: basement and first floor extension to south elevation to include lean-to glazed conservatory.

355.3 Decisions notified

WD/04/2855/LB The Clergy House, The Tye: re-thatch the property changing from water reed to long straw thatch. *Granted with conditions and response to Parish Council concerns. Expert advice had accepted the change of material, and in that light, the Parish Council withdrew its objection.*

WD/04/3139/F White Lodge Country House Hotel, Sloe Lane: change of use and extension to provide 13 dwellings with associated parking. *Refused.*

355.4 Enforcement action

Wealden's discussions with the Agent acting for Pleasant Rise Farm were still on-going.

170

171 356.0 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

356.1 Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011

Cllr Lloyd sought comments from members and parishioners to assist in any response to the consultation document. This had to be submitted by 26th May.

356.2 Service 125: Lewes - Alfriston

Timetables published still showed this service running to the Market Square, whereas in fact it was terminating in the Willows Coach Park because of rebuilding work at Smugglers Inn.

The Clerk would write to East Sussex CC seeking clarification and a larger notice in the Market Square to prevent people missing the service, as seemed to happen at present.

357.0 RECREATION GROUND

357.1 Cricket Pavilion

It was understood that the Cricket Club was in the process of selecting a new Chairman, and was expected to seek a meeting with Parish Council representatives in the near future.

Cllr Lloyd reported on a scheme of Community Grants from Wealden DC, which might be of use in the future.

Cllr Banham had secured agreement from the Cricket Club to undertake a thorough clean prior to the new season commencing. He had also drafted a new Tenancy Agreement to give more prominence to the duties of tenants, and this would be issued shortly.

357.2 Annual Playground Inspection

The new swing seats had been received and would be installed shortly.

357.3 Goal mouth

This was proving to be a great success, and the concerns expressed by a local resident had been overcome.

358.0 RIGHTS OF WAY & COUNTRYSIDE

358.1 Winton Fields footpath

There had been no response yet from the Conservation Board.

358.2 CROW legislation

Cllr Monteath-Wilson hoped to walk the new permissive path from Kings Ride to Pleasant Rise Farm to see if it was clearly signed.

358.3 Horse chestnut in Market Square

The Clerk had requested a report from the Tree Surgeon. He had recommended an ultrasonic scan, which would not cause any damage to the tree, but would provide a full report on its condition and likely future life expectancy. The Clerk would approach the contact suggested.

358.4 Trees in Haven Road

The Clerk had requested attention from the Conservation Board, and a response was awaited.

359.0 THE TYE

359.1 Flower garden

In Cllr Kegg's continuing absence, Cllr Monteath-Wilson would discuss the matter further with Mr Gulland in order to secure progress before the summer season.

360.0 TOURISM

360.1 Village of the Year competition

Application forms had just been received for submission by July. Cllr Mrs Charlton would take stock of the situation, and the competition requirements and report to the May meeting on how to proceed.

360.2 Gas lamp

New mantles were provided, and Mr Trowell would be requested to install one.

360.3 Trafalgar weekend celebrations

Cllr Mrs Charlton would consider the brochure of suggestions before making any recommendations. She understood that the Flower Club and the Horticultural Society were planning a short term display, and would be approaching the Parish Council for permission.

361.0CORRESPONDENCE

361.1HOPE (Affordable Housing) Project update

Nothing had been heard from Wealden DC.

361.2Amenity Society request for meeting

The meeting would take place in the URC Hall on Wednesday 18th May, commencing at 7.30pm.

361.3Request for permission to use 'A' Boards

The Clerk had received a request from Alfriston School PTFA for permission to use 'A' Boards to promote their event on Bank Holiday Monday 2nd May, and from Wealden Potters in connection with exhibitions and sales in the War Memorial Hall over the weekends of 23/24 April and 10/11 September. Members approved the requests.

361.4Pigeons on Star Inn

The Clerk had received a further complaint concerning this matter. Members concluded that they had pursued the matter as far as they could and it was something which the owners of the Star Inn had to resolve themselves.

361.5Photoplod 2005

A request had been received for permission to use the Willows Coach Park in connection with this year's Photoplod charity walk on Saturday 4th June from 7.30am until 2.30pm. The usual undertakings about clearing the site had been given. Members approved the request.

361.6Electric Blanket testing

The Parish offer of a testing site had not been taken up and the nearest site for local residents would be Hailsham.

361.7Wealden Local Strategic Partnership – networking event

An all day event was being held in Uckfield Civic Centre on Friday 13th May to which all members were invited. The Clerk had full details, which would be circulated.

362.0DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Annual Meeting (and an ordinary meeting) would be held on Monday 16th May 2005 at 7.30pm in the War Memorial Hall, preceded by Public Questions from 7.15pm.

Public Questions

1. Mr Wilson commented that Star Corner was proving to be a difficult site to agree upon, but felt that the suggested move of the sarsen stones and build out of the kerb line had merit. The Star Inn was a noted and historic building, which needed to be considered carefully.
2. Mr and Mrs Phillips commented again on the unsightly nature of the wooden posts used for traffic signs on Seaford Road and hoped that they would be replaced by the usual metal poles which were much less intrusive visually.

Signed: (Chairman)

Date: 16th May 2005.