

# ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2003 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.15pm.

**Present:** Cllr A. Banham  
Cllr Mrs S. Charlton  
Cllr J. Kegg  
Cllr G. Knights  
Cllr A. Lloyd  
Cllr Ms D. Monteath-Wilson  
Cllr A. Robson

**In attendance:** P. Ayers Clerk  
15 parishioners

### The Clerk in the Chair

#### **1.0 Code of Conduct for Members.**

The Clerk welcomed all councillors and congratulated them on their election. He asked that they complete and sign their Declarations of Acceptance of Office and Written Undertakings to abide by the Code of Conduct that had been supplied previously. All completed both documents, which were witnessed by the Clerk. The Register of Members Interests for each Councillor had to be completed within 28 days of the date of the election, and the Clerk asked for these Registers to be completed and returned by the end of May. Some were dealt with immediately.

#### **2.0 Election of Chairman.**

The Clerk called for nominations as Chairman of the Parish Council.

Cllr Knights was proposed by Cllr Banham and seconded by Cllr Ms Monteath-Wilson.

There were no other nominations, and the Clerk declared Cllr Knights duly elected as Chairman for the 2003-4 Council year. He offered his congratulations to the new Chairman, and all members echoed that view.

Cllr Knights completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman and the Clerk witnessed this.

The new Chairman thanked members for their confidence in him, and promised to work for the benefit of the village. Although no election had been necessary on this occasion, he was pleased that seven people had volunteered to serve on the Parish Council, so that co-options had not been necessary. He thanked them all for standing and looked forward to working with them during their term of office.

### The new Chairman in the Chair

#### **3.0 Election of Vice-Chairman.**

Cllr Ms Monteath-Wilson was proposed by Cllr Banham and seconded by Cllr Mrs Charlton. There were no other nominations, and the Chairman declared Ms Monteath-Wilson duly elected. She completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Vice-Chairman, which was witnessed by the Clerk. All members congratulated Ms Monteath-Wilson on her election.

#### **4.0 Apologies for absence.**

There were none.

#### **5.0 Annual Accounts.**

##### **5.1 Progress with Annual Accounts.**

The Clerk reported that the Annual Accounts had been reconciled to within 1 penny, and Councillors accepted this. Documentation had been received from Mazars, the External Auditors, for completion and return by July. A number of questions and assurances had to be given by the Council, and the Clerk described these. Assurances spot checks and system checks also had to be confirmed by the Internal Auditor, and the Clerk reported that, despite a search of the records, and enquiries in the Parish and area, he had not been able to trace the previous Internal Auditor, Leslie Weaver (whose name appeared in Minute 185.1 of the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2002).

##### **5.2 Appointment of Internal Auditor.**

The Clerk advised that Mr N. Butten, a qualified Accountant who fulfilled the role of Internal Auditor for Cuckmere Valley Parish Council, was prepared to take on the post in Alfriston. He had not confirmed arrangements in case members might be aware of a suitably qualified person in Alfriston, who might be prepared to offer their services on a complimentary basis. Members expressed the view that it would be preferable to employ the services of a person with some experience, as the audit might not be straightforward on this occasion. The Clerk was instructed to negotiate an hourly rate with Mr Butten, but members accepted that the number of hours required to complete the work was difficult to estimate in this first year.

#### **6.0 Allocation of Portfolios.**

The Chairman asked Members to declare their interest in particular portfolios, which had to be fulfilled by Members. They would be expected to lead the Council's involvement in matters covered by that portfolio, liaising with the Clerk to ensure their efficient execution. After some discussion, agreement was reached on the following allocation of portfolios:

- Allotments – Cllr Banham.
- Coach and Car Parks – Cllr Lloyd.
- Finance – Cllr Knights.
- Highways and Twittens – Cllr Mrs Charlton.
- Planning – Cllr Robson.
- Public Transport – Cllr Lloyd.
- Recreation Ground – Cllr Banham.
- Rights of Way and the Countryside – Cllr Ms Monteath-Wilson.
- The Tye – Cllr Kegg.
- Tourism – Cllr Mrs Charlton.

Two committees were formed:

- Finance (4 members): Cllr Knights (Chairman), Cllr Banham, Cllr Lloyd and Cllr Ms Monteath-Wilson.
- Planning (3 members): Cllr Robson (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Charlton, and Cllr Ms Monteath-Wilson.

All appointments outlined above were agreed unanimously on the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Ms Monteath-Wilson.

#### **7.0 Appointments to outside bodies.**

Councillors considered the appointment of representatives to the following outside bodies, and agreed to the nomination of the members indicated.

- Governor of Alfriston Primary School – Cllr Lloyd.
- Cuckmere Community Bus – Cllr Mrs Charlton.
- Cuckmere Flood Forum – Cllr Robson.
- Sussex Association of Local Councils (to attend autumn AGM) – Cllr Knights.
- Village Hall – Cllrs Banham and Ms Monteath-Wilson.
- Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Cllr Kegg.

## 8.0 MINUTES.

- 8.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2003 had been published and circulated previously. Two corrections were made:
- 152.3 and 163.1 the Tree Warden's name was corrected to Mr **Martin** Charlton.
- 8.2 Subject to those amendments, the Minutes were approved as a true record, and signed by the Chairman.

## 9.0 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

Cllr Shing offered his congratulations to all new councillors, and particularly to the Chairman, and looked forward to working with them over the coming months. He mentioned a forthcoming Royal Visit, which would be announced fully by the Chairman later in the meeting.

## 10.0 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR.

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Cllr Keith Whitehead as the new Wealden District Councillor covering Alfriston. Cllr Whitehead thanked the Chairman and offered his own congratulations. He advised members that he had some previous experience, having served as County Councillor for the Willingdon division for four years some time ago. He had chaired the Planning Committee of Wealden District Council for the last term, and hoped to continue in that role.

## 11.0 FINANCE.

### 11.1 Invoices for payment

The Clerk presented invoices for payment, which were approved and signed by Cllrs Knights and Banham:

### ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

	£	
Clerk: admin and travel	27.00	
wages	280.23	
Inland Revenue	100.58	
Alfriston Gallery – picture for J. Dorsett	58.00	
Royal Mail Ltd – postal redirection (3 months)		21.00
Cale Briparc	215.03	
J. Rackham – final Chairman's allowance	150.00	
Seeboard	<u>17.41</u>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>869.25</u></b>	

### CUCKMERE VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	101.92
Inland Revenue	<u>36.57</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>138.49</u></b>

### WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	91.98
D. Crouch – wages	295.58
W. Newman – wages	300.00
Inland Revenue	<u>39.52</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>727.08</u></b>

### 11.2 Statement of Finances

The balance in accounts held by the Parish Council on 18<sup>th</sup> May was as follows:

	£
Precept deposit account	7,958.22
Current account	2,036.20
Savings account	6,658.68
No. 2 account	524.27
Car Park Account	4,965.16
Mine Account	<u>784.70</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>22,912.73</u></b>

### 11.3 Discretionary payments

The Clerk described a number of other matters for possible payment, which were dealt with as follows:

	£
agreed. Purchase of Society of Local Council Clerks "Governance & Accountability – a Practitioner's Guide) inserts only.	11.99
agreed. New guide – Local Council Administration	38.50
agreed. Purchase of extra copies of 'The Good Councillors Guide' @ £2.00 each.	14.00
agreed. Donation to the Wealden and Lewes Anchor Handyperson scheme. approved.	<u>50.00</u>
	<u>114.49</u>

Cllrs Knights and Banham also signed cheques for the above amounts.

Two weekend residential courses in Midhurst were available for new Parish Councillors at a cost of £145 each. Details would be circulated to all new Members, and provision should be made in the accounts for all to attend one of the courses if they so wished.

A request had been received from Alfriston Players for a donation of £100 towards to Horatio project. Over £8,600 had been raised elsewhere, but agreement to donate upto £100 from the Parish Council would assist in drawing down those sums. A letter agreeing to a donation of £100 was approved.

A request for a donation to the Wealden Practical Safety Project (formerly electric blanket safety scheme) was deferred for discussion with the Amenity Society, and to consider the possible free use of the Memorial Hall as a donation in kind.

It was agreed not to renew the subscription to the N.A.L.C. Direct Information Service, saving £87.00 per year.

### 11.4 Bank Mandate

A new bank mandate was required to reflect the change in membership of the Council, and it was agreed that members of the Finance Committee and the Clerk would become the new signatories, any two to sign. The necessary forms were completed.

### 12.0 PARISH CLERK.

The Clerk's Contract of Employment, terms and conditions would be circulated to all new Councillors for consideration looking for agreement at the June meeting.

### 13.0 PLANNING.

#### 13.1 Matters dealt with under the urgency procedure

There had been no applications.

#### 13.2 Applications to be considered by Planning Committee

The only application for consideration was correspondence from the Orange mobile telephone company showing photographs of a balloon flown over their proposed site in Cuckmere Valley Parish. Cllr Robson had visited the proposed site during the demonstration and considered that all possible had been done to minimise intrusion of the mast into the landscape.

#### 13.3 Decisions notified

There were none.

### 14.0 URGENT REPORTS.

#### 14.1 Allotments

Cllr Banham reported that three more allotments had been let following advertising.

#### 14.2 Car and Coach Parks

The Clerk reported that he had so far been unable to trace any Contract of Employment for the Car Park Attendants, and Wealden DC was unable to help. He understood that one Attendant had a Contract, but that person had currently mislaid it. There were no records of holiday entitlement or holidays taken, presenting difficulties in agreeing holidays. It was hoped that a copy of the existing Contract would come to light, but it was agreed that if that

did not happen, a new Contract, based on that being considered for the Clerk, would need to be drawn up. Insurance cover for the Attendants would also be checked.

A bench still had to be transferred to the Dene Car Park from the Recreation Ground.

#### **14.3 Highways and Twittens**

Cllr Mrs Charlton would pursue the question of parking on the High Street with the Police.

Dates for a meeting with East Sussex Highways officers would be sought.

The Chairman had received an apology from East Sussex CC for the installation of a new bollard outside Cross House without prior consultation with the Parish Council.

#### **14.4 Recreation Ground**

The new roundabout was due to be installed in June. New locks for the Pavilion would be fitted soon. Cllr Banham was investigating the need for a football/netball net and would discuss the matter with the Rector and the Youth Club in an effort to reduce the incidents of petty vandalism.

Cllr Banham proposed and Cllr Knights seconded a motion that rents for use of the Recreation Ground were set for the forthcoming year at £200 for the Cricket Club, £75 for the Stoolball Club. All agreed.

There was a discussion about the need for a second Dog Bin. This would cost an additional £300 per year, and there was no evidence that the existing bin was full on each occasion.

Cllr Banham proposed and Cllr Ms Monteath-Wilson seconded a motion for the existing bin to be moved to a more prominent location near the junction of The Furlongs, opposite Cuckmere Court. All agreed.

#### **14.5 Rights of Way and the Countryside**

Cllr Ms Monteath-Wilson reported that scramble bikes had returned to the tracks over the top of the Downs. The Clerk would seek assistance from the Sussex Downs Conservation Board.

#### **14.6 The Tye**

Concern was expressed about the abandoned Range Rover on the Tye Road. It was agreed to leave the matter for two weeks as 'Police aware' notices had appeared on the offending vehicle.

The Chairman reported on an approach from a dancing group seeking permission to dance on the Tye on Mid Summer's Day, 21<sup>st</sup> June. He had researched the group's web site and considered that approval could be given. All agreed.

#### **14.7 Tourism without Traffic**

Cllr Mrs Charlton asked that the bollards in the High Street were repainted, as they gave a rather shabby appearance at the start of the summer season. She would approach East Sussex CC.

Cllr Knights had attended a recent seminar attended by around 80 people, which had focussed on road management matters. He questioned the value of continuing support for the project.

He had received an invitation from the project to be present during a visit by the Princess Royal to the area on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June. Details of the visit were discussed, and as the route would pass Alfriston Primary School, it was agreed to seek to involve the pupils in greeting Her Royal Highness as she passed by.

### **15.0 CORRESPONDENCE.**

15.1 Cllr Tim Sparrow the SALC representative on the Wealden DC Local Strategic Partnership was seeking a councillor to act as the focal point for all contacts with the Parish. A meeting of all such representatives would be held in Crowborough on 26<sup>th</sup> June. The matter would be considered on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

15.2 ADAPTT had responded, belatedly, concerning double yellow lines in the High Street. Although the previous Council had decided not to take the matter further, it was clear that there was still concern, and the matter would be reviewed at the next meeting.

15.3 There had been no response yet from the Environment Agency concerning seepage in River Lane.

15.4 Wealden DC were keen to see Parish Emergency Groups reviewed, and possibly taken under the wing of Parish Councils, with the appointment of a Parish Co-ordinator. The matter would be considered in June.

15.5 Entries were sought for the Calor 'Village of the Year' competition by 18<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Mrs Charlton would take the matter on board.

- 15.6 East Sussex CC would be providing a contribution of £1,314 towards the cost of grass/verge cutting this year.
- 15.7 Catsfield Parish Council were seeking support for their campaign to introduce 30mph speed limits in all villages in advance of traffic calming measures. Noted.
- 15.8 Members re-iterated that Mr John Rackham should attend the retirement lunch at White Lodge for Christine Swan, as the Parish representative.
- 15.9 Deans Place Hotel had responded to the Parish letter concerning late evening noise, detailing their policy for dealing with the problem, and looking forward to continued co-operation. Noted.

#### **16.0 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS.**

The next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2003 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing with Public Questions from 7.15pm.

The meeting cycle for the remainder of the Council Year was agreed as follows:

Cllr Knights then closed the formal meeting, opening the meeting to the public.

#### **Public Questions**

1. The question of yellow lines was raised again, and was to be discussed at the Highways meeting.
2. Trees on the north side of the allotments needed lopping.
3. There had been a proliferation of small advertising posters along the roadside in recent weeks. These could be reported to the County Council, and if not properly authorised would be removed.
4. The concrete sign for the South Downs Way on Kings Ride still needed refurbishment, and would be referred to the Conservation Board's volunteer rangers for attention.
5. The mobile phone mast was considered to be very visible from a number of locations within the Parish. The subject would be considered at the following Planning Committee meeting.
6. The grass along West Street beyond the Old Vicarage had not been cut. This would be referred to the contractor.
7. Overhanging bushes at the north end of Sloe Lane were scratching cars. This would be referred to the County Council.
8. Cars were rutting the verge at the junction of North Street and West Close.
9. What were the Parish Maintenance Teams? The Clerk repeated that these were two man teams who could be used by Parish Councils for upto four days to undertake work of their choosing, which was important to the Parish. The Council had written last month with a list of suggested tasks.