

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 16th June 2008 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr D. Monteath-Wilson, Chairman, in the Chair
Cllr J. Byford
Cllr J. Dumelow
Cllr G. Ellis
Cllr G. Knights
Cllr R. Savage

In attendance: County Councillor J. Garvican
PC Liz Keenan
PCSO Jamie Harwood
5 parishioners
P. Ayers Clerk

Public Questions

1. Mr Hurwood complained about litter strewn onto a wall and the pathway along a section of Rope Walk. PC Keenan would view the site to provide advice, and the Chairman undertook to visit the location with Cllr Charlton to assess the situation. Wealden DC would be able to take action against littering if the act was observed by a witness.
2. The Chairman invited PC Keenan to advise the meeting about Lorrywatch in the light of Cllr Charlton's report at the May meeting. A meeting had taken place between Cllr Charlton, PC Keenan and PCSO Neve. The Police recognised that heavy lorries passing through the village were an important issue locally. PCSO Neve visited at least weekly and dealt with any lorry registration numbers provided. The majority of these proved to be under the 7.5 tonne limit because modern lightweight materials allowed larger size vehicles which still complied with the law. 5 overweight vehicles had been reported, their owners had received a letter from the Police and no repeat observations had occurred. PC Keenan suggested a meeting involving Ian Johnson from ESCC to discuss an in-depth survey of vehicle weights, times and stops to provide statistics as to the size and weight of lorries passing through. That might allow consideration of lowering the permitted weight limit. The Police were pleased to be involved in Lorrywatch, and proud of what it had achieved.
Cllr Byford asked how problems caused by satellite navigation systems could be addressed. She also emphasised the importance of driving standards, and vehicle lengths and widths in securing an acceptable solution. PCSO Neve had been investigating satellite navigation system problems and would be asked to let the Clerk have his findings. The Police were able to assist with speed enforcement and ESCC could assist on width restrictions. The Chairman recalled hearing that Ordnance Survey had been requested to address the problem with the Government looking at routes which should be used by heavy vehicles. She would raise the matter at the next SLR meeting in September.
Mr Wilson commented that if cars were moved off the double yellow lines many of the congestion problems would be eased. Others felt this would encourage higher speeds as well as near collisions with pedestrians near Chestnuts. A 20mph limit was advocated.
Mr Wilson also drew attention to the possible abuse of disabled parking permits, which would be passed on for investigation.

194.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Charlton had apologised for absence due to work commitments. District Cllr Whitehead had written tendering apologies as he was in France. Incoming Clerk Stephen Smith had also tendered apologies as he was on a pre-arranged holiday.

195.0 MINUTES

195.1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th May 2008 had been published and circulated previously. They were taken as read and there were no amendments. Acceptance as a true record was **proposed** by Cllr Dumelow, **seconded** by Cllr Ellis and **agreed**. The Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

196.0 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Garvican had been copied into a strong exchange of correspondence between the Clerk and County officers as a result of the complaint about the lack of actions by May Gurney. This had been refuted by County staff and their latest response to the Clerk's complaints was handed to him for copying to Councillors.

As a member of the Transport & Environment Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Garvican had attended its meeting on 13th June. A new structure was being put in place, which he would copy to the Clerk for members' information once he could add names to the relevant posts. In future, there would be 4 Assistant Directors covering Policy, Resources, Delivery and Innovation. Below them, there would be 8 Heads of Service. The new structure would cause some redundancy amongst existing staff, yet also allow some recruitment from outside. A new policy had also been adopted covering the provision of school crossing patrol personnel by ESCC. In future, where light or zebra controlled crossings were provided, the County would withdraw funding for personnel and they could only be retained if paid for by local subscription.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Religious Education, Cllr Garvican would be working over the next year to produce an agreed syllabus for religious education, which could then be implemented for the following 4 years.

Cllr Dumelow asked him about progress with the draft Traffic Regulation Order for the Old Coach Road, which was supposed to be subject to a decision by the Lead Member on 23rd June. Cllr Garvican scrutinised the Agenda for that meeting but could not trace the item.

The Clerk would provide him with background, which extended back over a number of years.

197.0 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

In Cllr Whitehead's absence, there was nothing to report. He had written in response to the Clerk's enquiry, explaining his lack of attendance in the past year and Members were provided with a copy of his comments. The Clerk advised Members that a cabinet reshuffle at Wealden seemed to have affected Cllr Whitehead's position. It was hoped that he would be present at the July meeting to explain the situation.

198.0 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Dumelow had considered how best to deal with the vacancy and requested an advertisement in on the Parish Noticeboards, a short note in *Cuckmere News* and possibly an approach to local tree surgeons.

199.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING

199.1 Housing in Alfriston

Cllr Knights reported that the outcome of the highway assessment on the site near the entrance to Pleasant Rise Farm was still not known, and ESCC needed two months to deal with the request for a survey of the road for access. Because the site could be important for a possible southern car park as well as replacement allotments, it remained important to have the work carried out. Members expressed concern at another example of a lack of urgency at ESCC. Cllr Savage suggested that an outline planning application was lodged, since that required prompt comments from ESCC. The Clerk urged caution because if any such application was refused, it could complicate matters for the future.

199.2 Draft Homelessness Strategy

Cllr Knights had studied the document and concluded that there was no direct effect upon Alfriston.

199.3 Car parking at Surgery

Cllr Knights would provide details of the third contact to enable the Clerk to instruct solicitors to register the allotment land.

199.4 Parish Plan

Cllr Knights had re-drafted the questions with assistance from Mr Lloyd, who hoped to assist analysis of the results by providing access to software that could read the responses. Once questions had been finalised, these would be circulated amongst Members for comment, and a test audience of 10 – 15 volunteers used to detect possible problems. The aim was still to issue the questionnaire generally in September.

199.5 South East Water Management Plan

Cllr Knights reported that there was nothing to affect Alfriston directly [*the aim to require fitment of water meters generally was noted*].

199.6 Sussex Rural Affordable Housing conference

Cllr Knights would represent the Parish Council at this event in Hassocks on Thursday 25th September.

199.7 Emergency Planning

Cllr Knights would also represent the Parish at Wealden DC's conference on 28th October.

200.0 THE TYE

200.1 Damage to surface of Tye

Cllr Savage had concluded that the lack of rainfall had affected the new turf adversely, and there had also been a very large number of vehicles (20) along the Tye path over the last weekend during the Flower Show. He would continue to monitor the situation and discuss it with Mr Trowell with a view to remedial action in the autumn if necessary. The Clerk confirmed that he had issued an invoice to St Andrews Church for their agreed contribution towards the work. Payment was awaited.

200.2 Litter bins on Tye

Cllr Savage had made regular checks and noted that the bin close to the Wingrove was often overflowing, perhaps needing more frequent emptying. He would continue to make regular checks before making a firm recommendation.

200.3 Memorial Bench, Glebeland

The seat was in manufacture and was expected to be fitted during July.

200.4 Other benches

Cllr Byford had requested additional benches for the Recreation Ground. Members agreed that memorial benches would have to remain on the Tye, but others could be moved to the Recreation Ground. One had been identified, in need of refurbishment. Cllr Savage had sought a price for the work and refitting on the Recreation Ground and Mr Trowell had quoted £175. Cllr Savage **proposed** acceptance of this price and this was **seconded** by Cllr Byford. **All agreed.**

200.5 Request for new Memorial Bench

The Clerk read out a request for a further memorial bench and this was agreed. Cllr Savage would undertake an audit of all memorial benches to check numbers, condition and dedications. From this, Members would consider setting a policy as to the number acceptable and how they should be fixed.

201.0 ALLOTMENTS and RECREATION GROUND

201.1 Allotment rents – 2008

Cllr Byford confirmed that two of the three vacant half plots had been taken and she would pass payment and the signed Agreement to the Clerk. She would follow up on the one outstanding plot. Two names were now on the waiting list.

201.2 Allotment noticeboard

Cllr Byford still hoped to place a noticeboard on the allotment garden, but accepted that funding was not available in the current year.

201.3 Pavilion refurbishment

Members of the Cricket Club had undertaken some timber staining, but no further work was anticipated before the autumn. Cllr Byford would take stock of the situation at that time, as little funding remained unspent.

The Cricket Club had nominated two representatives for the Committee, but a response from the Stoolball Club was still awaited.

201.4 Licence for Sports Clubs

A draft lease had just been received from Hedleys (solicitors) for initial comment once it had been scrutinised.

201.5 Annual Playground inspection

Work following the 2007 inspection was now complete. The report from the 2008 inspection was awaited.

201.6 Fencing adjacent to The Furlongs

Cllr Byford reported that sections of the fence alongside The Furlongs were very dilapidated, and in need of replacement on safety grounds. Mr Trowell had indicated the need to acquire some new stakes, but the netting could be re-used. Cllr Byford **proposed** acceptance of Mr Trowell's recommendations upto a ceiling price of £500. This was **seconded** by Cllr Savage and **agreed unanimously**.

202.0 COACH and CAR PARKS and PUBLIC TRANSPORT

202.1 Litter bin replacement

Completion of the work was still awaited.

202.2 VAT on parking charges

Recent reports suggested that the Isle of Wight test case might be lost. The Clerk had accounted for and paid VAT throughout, so there was no adverse financial implication from such a decision, if confirmed.

202.3 White lines in Dene car park

The work was still out-standing.

202.4 Lamp standards in Dene car park

The work had not yet been completed.

202.5 Car park clearance

The Clerk had checked out prices for petrol strimmers had sought authority to purchase a Stihl product at a cost of £159 plus two face protectors for the Attendants. Cllr Ellis **proposed** acceptance of these prices, and was **seconded** by Cllr Dumelow. **All agreed.**

202.6 Charges for parking

Cllr Ellis had written to Mr Crone at Wealden DC, who appeared sympathetic to the Parish position, but had indicated the need to discuss the suggestion with others at Wealden DC. He would respond in due course.

202.7 Service 125 Alfriston – Lewes

There was still no news from ESCC, so the Clerk would follow up to ascertain what was being proposed.

203.0 FINANCE

203.1 Invoices for payment – May

The Clerk presented invoices from May for ratification as follows:

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

	£
Clerk: admin and travel	41.69
wages	483.82
Inland Revenue	158.74
Allianz Insurance plc. – annual insurance premium	808.08
Viking Direct – stationery	290.53
East Dean & Friston Parish Council – training course for Cllr Savage	52.88
EDF Energy – Pavilion	43.67
Trowell Building Co – Tye surface re-instatement	2,346.47
Sussex Rural Community Council – subscription	40.00
Taylor's Plumbing & Heating Services Ltd. – pavilion plumbing	1,586.25
D & S Building Services (UK) Ltd. – pavilion plastering etc.	7,322.99
F. Fox-Wilson – horse chestnut carving (over 100 hrs work)	750.00
TOTAL	<u>13,925.12</u>

CUCKMERE VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	193.52
Inland Revenue	63.50
	<u>257.02</u>

WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	129.02
C. Burden – wages	305.54
D. Skertchly – wages	278.00
Inland Revenue	146.08
Cale Briparc – ticket rolls	<u>233.20</u>
TOTAL	<u>1,091.84</u>

203.2 Invoices for payment – June

The Clerk presented invoices for June for consideration as follows:

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

	£
Clerk: admin and travel	41.69
wages	483.82
Inland Revenue	223.39
Trowell Building Services – playground work from 2007 inspection	567.17
D & S Building Services (UK) Ltd. – pavilion plastering etc.	264.38
Mint – purchase of microphones for Hall	229.92
Petty Cash	79.02
British Telecom – phone account	73.89
Wealden District Association of Local Councils – annual subscription	<u>9.00</u>
TOTAL	<u>1,972.28</u>

CUCKMERE VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	193.52
Inland Revenue	<u>89.36</u>
	<u>282.88</u>

WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	129.02
C. Burden – wages	278.00
D. Skertchly – wages	296.36
Inland Revenue	203.17
Wealden DC – quarterly settlement to March 2008	<u>3,755.12</u>
TOTAL	<u>4,661.67</u>

Approval for both sets of payments was **proposed** by Cllr Savage, **seconded** by Cllr Dumelow and **agreed unanimously**.

203.3 Statement of Finances

Councillors examined the Statement of Bank Balances on 15th June provided by the Clerk, and accepted them as follows:

	£
Precept deposit account	22,118.72
Current account	7,092.99
Savings account	5,484.27
Car Park Account	<u>19,930.43</u>
TOTAL	<u>54,626.41</u>

203.4 External Audit

The Clerk had submitted a bulky file of additional documents for consideration by the auditors.

203.5 Bank mandate

The Clerk would revise the bank mandate to take account of his imminent departure, replacing his details with those of his successor.

204.0 HIGHWAYS and TWITTENS**204.1 White lines in Winton Street**

As far as was known, these had still not been removed. *[updating note: the lines had been removed earlier that day].*

204.2 Monitoring of traffic volume

Members had reflected on the charges mentioned in May, and concluded that a survey would not be of any value. The discussion also covered the hiring of speed guns (cost £3,000 and with only limited locations suitable). Members views on the extent of the problem varied, but those living or working near the High Street agreed that the problem was a serious one especially at particular times of day. It was agreed to discuss the matter further at the September SLR meeting to seek advice from County officers about possible solutions.

204.3 Lorrywatch

Members were pleased to have received the re-assurances from PC Keenan and agreed to ask Cllr Charlton to proceed with the meeting suggested with Mr Johnson of ESCC to assess options.

204.4 Road markings at Star Lane/Weavers Lane/Kings Ride junction

These had been repainted that day.

204.5 Village Maintenance Team

Cllr Charlton had confirmed that all jobs requested had been completed.

204.6 Sunken manhole

ESCC was still seeking the co-operation of the utility company responsible.

204.7 Proposed closure of C39 Manse Corner

Still no date was available from ESCC, although markings had appeared on the carriageway.

204.8 Berwick Way phase 2 – letter from Berwick Parish Council

There was still no response from ESCC.

204.9 Double yellow lines

The narrow primrose lines outside Steamer Trading had still not been repainted, in either location affected.

204.10 C39 flint wall

There was nothing further to report at present.

204.11 Pedestrian crossing at Willows exit

There was still nothing to report.

204.12 Drainage problems

Nothing had been heard about the additional work needed with a pressure push to improve the situation at the junction of Deans Road and The Broadway.

204.13 Firework display

The Clerk had written to all accommodation establishments and received two replies, which had been copied to Members. He had responded thanking them for their responsible attitude. It was understood that the establishment where the incident was thought to have occurred had changed its policy to prevent a recurrence, although nothing had been heard officially.

204.14 May Gurney

The Clerk had reported the Council's view strongly to ESCC, who had refuted the suggestions. The Clerk had taken issue strongly with ESCC and Cllr Garvican had handed him the latest response earlier in the evening. Clearly that need to be digested and would be circulated for Members information. In the meantime, Members noted the action now taken by ESCC in those areas which had given the cause for strongest complaint.

204.15 'A' Board request

A request had been received from the organisers of an art exhibition to be held in the URC Hall on Saturday 28th June to place an 'A' board in the Square. Members felt that the authorisation of 'A' boards needed to be done sparingly, given the delegated authority for local not for profit organisations already given to the Portfolio Holder. Accordingly, they did not feel able to accede to this request and the Clerk would advise the applicant.

205.0 PARISH CLERK

205.1 Amplification equipment

The new equipment had been installed, but the speakers had been turned down low that evening to avoid feed-back. New, individually switched speakers were due to be installed shortly, and these should allow a better volume to be used from September.

205.2 Village of the Year competition 2008

Four representatives from Alfriston would attend the announcement of those through to the next stage due to take place on Friday 4th July.

205.3 Vacancy for Clerk

The Clerk had commenced the hand-over process and was involving Mr Smith in Parish affairs to an increasing extent. The equipment agreed in May had been delivered and the change-over of computers had commenced, with a view to completion by the end of July. The in-coming Clerk would need some lee-way to procure additional items as he took stock of the situation (new filing hangers, folders and minor items of stationery) over the coming months.

Mr Smith had been booked for some forthcoming SALC courses as agreed in May with a view to securing a professional qualification which would enable the Parish to consider Quality status in future.

205.4 Village Directory 2008

The Clerk had written to all those organisations that had appeared in the 2007 publication, and some had responded already. He had also approached other organisations that had come to his attention since the first edition had been published, and several had accepted the invitation promptly. The Clerk hoped to publish the 2008 edition prior to concluding his term of office, but was concerned that late responses might prevent this.

205.5 Carving from former Market Square horse chestnut tree

The Church Wardens had agreed in principle that the carving could be displayed in the Gallery at St Andrew's Church, and the Archdeacon was now considering the request. The Clerk provided all Members with a copy of a letter of thanks from Rev'd Fox-Wilson in recognition of the payment for his carving.

205.6 Councillors' Address List

The Clerk had distributed a revised list of contacts for confirmation. One Councillor asked for it to be sent again for checking, but most had responded with confirmation or changes. The Clerk would re-issue as soon as final confirmation had been received.

206.0 PLANNING

206.1 Planning Committee meetings – 19th May and 11th June

Members received Minutes from the meeting on 19th May and 11th June (draft). They noted the Committee's decisions on applications as outlined below:

WD/2008/1139/F Winton Street Farm Stables and Cottage, Winton Street: replacement of existing roofing materials on both properties with plain clay tiles. *No objections.*

WD/2008/1180/F Greyholm, Cuckmere Road: replacement of existing double garage with triple garage. *No objections.*

WD/2008/1154/F Tuckvar, West Street: amendment to scheme previously approved at WD/2008/0008/F to include installation of 6 x photovoltaic panels on garage extension. *No objections.*

WD/2008/1195/LB The Chaise House, West Steet: removal of downstanding beam within living room and installation of new beam within depth of floor joists. *No objections.*

WD/2008/1298/F Friston Way, 8, Deans Road: single storey extension to provide a third bedroom, a bathroom and a study. *No objections.*

WD/2008/1367/LB 2, High Street: removal of side window and insertion of new door. *No objections.*

206.2 Decisions notified

WD/2008/0627/F 14, Kings Ride: erection of conservatory to rear of building and rebuilding of porch to side. *Granted with conditions.*

WD/2008/0784/F Cedar Cottage, The Broadway: erection of replacement dwelling with attached double garage. *Granted with conditions.*

206.3 Local Development Framework – update

There was nothing further to report.

206.4 Progress with appeals

Pailin House, 6, Kings Ride – appeal allowed.

206.5 Alfriston campsite

The Clerk reported receipt of several letters from previous users of the campsite enquiring about its apparent closure. He had responded indicating that the closure had nothing to do with the Parish Council.

207.0 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

207.1 Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Partnership

The AGM on 19th May re-elected the existing Management Committee and three others, who had expressed interest in standing were being approached for the future.

A meeting with members of the Festival Committee had also taken place to discuss ways in which ACVP members could support the 2008 programme.

Work was progressing on a completely re-designed map and brochure for 2009, which should be available from the New Year.

Not only did Alfriston have 2007 category winners in both the Best Independent Bookshop and Best Independent Cookshop in the UK, but Much Ado Bookshop appeared at No 3 in the *Independent* newspaper's 50 best bookshops in Britain.

The Chairman congratulated the winners and emphasised how successful businesses helped to ensure that the village would continue to be economically vibrant to the benefit and enjoyment of local residents.

207.2 Cuckmere Community Bus

The next meeting would be held on 30th June.

207.3 Festival

Cllr Savage reported that arrangements were running well so far.

207.4 Heartstart

Cllr Dumelow reported that the group was representing Responders at the 999 Display and Exhibition in Eastbourne on 5th and 6th July.

207.5 Safer Wealden Partnership

Capt. Palmer was pleased to take reports of forthcoming fireworks displays so that these could be circulated throughout his e-mail network, so that prior warning of events was disseminated better.

207.6 Wealden District Association of Local Councils

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 2nd July in Uckfield commencing at 7.30pm, as usual. No Members expressed interest in representing the Parish.

208.0 RIGHTS OF WAY & COUNTRYSIDE

208.1 Condition of White Bridge

Cllr Dumelow reported that ESCC had noted the damage for future action.

208.2 Winton Street signposts

ESCC had indicated that the sign would be replaced once a decision had been made about the proposed Traffic Regulation Order. The matter would be removed from the Agenda until that decision had been made.

208.3 Fencing in Cuckmere Road

As there was nothing further that could be done, the matter would be removed from the Agenda.

208.4 Old Coach Road

It appeared that the proposed Traffic Regulation Order was not on the Agenda for the Lead Member's meeting on 23rd June. The Clerk would provide background information for Cllr Garvican.

208.5 Mounting block

The netting had been completed.

208.6 Rights of Way network survey

ESCC would be undertaking a complete survey of the condition of the Rights of Way network soon. The work was expected to take 6 months to complete.

208.7 Application by Newater Plc

Cllr Dumelow had sought clarification as to whether the application by Newater had been refused or withdrawn and received written confirmation that the application had been refused. It was not known whether or not an appeal would be lodged.

208.8 Possible bleeding canker

The Clerk had advised the school bursar and awaited a response.

208.9 South Downs campaign

Cllr Dumelow had reflected on the discussion in May, and visited the campaign's website. It appeared that joining the campaign could cost upto £50, which she felt was worthwhile. Cllr Savage expressed concern that planning administration might become more remote under a

National Park, but accepted that it was preferable to lobby for change to accommodate his concerns from within the Campaign rather than outside it. Accordingly, Cllr Dumelow **proposed** that the Parish Council sought to join the South Downs Campaign at a cost not to exceed £50. This was **seconded** by Cllr Savage and **agreed unanimously**.

208.10 Conserving the Elm population

The updated figures on the local elm population had still not been received.

209.0 CORRESPONDENCE

209.1 Parish Guide

The Partnership had thanked the Clerk for involving them in considering the Guides, but concluded that they preferred to produce their own document, as reported at Minute 207.1 above.

209.2 Public toilets

There had still been no response from Wealden DC.

209.3 Improving School Buildings

Cllr Ellis had responded to the consultation document on behalf of the Parish Council. The policy included the maintenance of small schools in rural areas, and on that basis he had expressed general agreement with the proposed policy.

209.4 Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2009.

The Clerk had circulated details to Members. If a nomination was to be considered, he requested e-mail contact, so that the matter could be considered without alerting any possible recipient at this early stage.

209.5 Wealden DC Agendas and Committee Papers

The Clerk had been advised that these would be circulated electronically in future to save paper. He would follow suit.

210.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday 21st July 2008 at 7.30pm in the War Memorial Hall, preceded by Public Questions from 7.15pm.

Public Questions

1. Mr Hurwood asked whether or not a timetable for the changed 125 bus service had been received. The Clerk confirmed that it had not and would pursue urgently with ESCC.
2. As an allotment holder, Mr Hurwood was concerned about any possible new site being suitable for cultivation. Cllr Knights confirmed that this was being taken into consideration as part of the overall package. Currently, there was a need to be clear about the suitability of a possible site on highways grounds. If that was confirmed, soil surveys would be the next item to be considered, and a meeting with allotment tenants would be arranged once the appropriate time had been reached. There were other hurdles to be overcome before that became critical.
3. Mr Hurwood also confirmed that the Amenity Society had been members of the South Downs Campaign for some years.
4. Mr Phillips reminded Members that the South East Water Management Plan did contain an aspiration to fit meters to the majority of properties (as noted in Minute 199.5 above), and hoped that this proposal would not be overlooked.
5. Mrs Parkinson sought assistance from the Parish Council in the retention of journeys on the 125 bus service to ensure that it provided a reasonable service to and from Lewes for those in full time employment. The Clerk confirmed that he would speak with the appropriate department at ESCC the following day to ascertain the current position.

Signed: (Chairman)

Date: 21st July 2008.