

# ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 19 April 2010 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.30pm.

**Present:** Cllr R Savage (in the Chair)  
Cllr J Byford  
Cllr S Charlton  
Cllr J Dumelow  
Cllr G Ellis  
Cllr M Hogestijn  
Cllr D Monteath-Wilson  
District Cllr A Watkins

**In attendance:** 30 Parishioners  
S Smith – Parish Clerk

### Public Questions

*The Chairman opened the Meeting by reminding those present that the Meeting was scheduled to cover many topics and that Councillors, as part of the community, gave their time freely to help all members of the community.*

1. Mrs Peacock noted that work to control the vegetation surrounding the Dene Car Park, as well as repairs to a damaged flint wall needs to be undertaken. She also advised that there is excessive ivy growth in Sloe Lane near Rose Cottage. Cllrs Charlton and Ellis will take forward
2. Mr Thomas complained about the delay in allocation plots on the allotments. Cllr Savage advised that the matter would be dealt with under Agenda item 7.3
3. Mrs Salmon reported that a handle on the see-saw in the play area of the Recreation Ground had become detached and that the roundabout did not rotate properly. She also voiced concern at the lack of seating on the Recreation Ground. Cllr Byford will take forward the equipment repairs. Cllrs noted her concerns about lack of seating.
4. Mr Wilson noted that some street furniture was missing opposite the close in West Street. Cllr Charlton will take forward.
5. Mr Lion enquired whether Councillors had received his recent letter concerning the future of Alfriston Post Office. Cllr Savage advised that the matter would be dealt with under Agenda item 15.1.
6. Mrs Peacock asked for an update on the condition of the path on the North East of the White Bridge. The Clerk undertook to update her separately in due course as the location falls within Cuckmere Valley Parish.
7. Mr Goodchild thanked Cllr Dumelow for her assistance with in taking steps to combat the illegal use of a bridleway which adjoins his property in Winton Street. He also thanked Cllr Savage and the Clerk for attending a site meeting with a representative of the South Downs Joint Committee at which a potential resolution to the problem was adopted.
8. Mr Dalgleish enquired when damage to grass on the highway outside Rose Cottage by a Morrisons lorry during the bad Winter weather would be remedied. Cllr Charlton will follow-

up. He further enquired when some kerb stones which were damaged when BT laid a Broadband cable through the Dene Car Park would be reinstated. Cllr Ellis will follow-up.

## The Meeting

### 502.0 APOLOGIES for ABSENCE

502.1 County Cllr N Bennett.

### 503.0 MINUTES

503.1 Unadopted Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 March 2010 had been circulated previously. Acceptance of the Minutes as a true record was **proposed** by Cllr Dumelow, **seconded** by Cllr Ellis and **agreed**.

### 504.0 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The Clerk read extracts from a report submitted by County Cllr Bennett taken from the ESCC website detailing the formation of the South East Seven (SE7) Partnership. SE7 is an alliance of seven councils from the South East Region who have committed to work together to achieve potentially significant cost savings whilst improving the quality of services.

### 505.0 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

District Cllr Watkins provided further details of the WDC Transformation Programme which is designed to cut costs by, *inter alia*, reducing the number of Council meetings held in a year. He advised the Crown Caddy scheme for recycling would be introduced into the village in October, following a leaflet drop and a Public Meeting in September. WDC have recently published details of their Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment which reveals 2 identified sites in the village, namely the Allotments and land in West Street. APC Cllrs noted that the West Street site is Glebeland which the landowner had previously advised was not for sale and also confirmed that APC have placed on record that they have decided not to make the Allotment site available for housing. Cllr Savage asked if details of the Crown Caddy system could be made available to residents before the scheduled time. He further noted that the infrastructure of the village needs to be enhanced before any further development is permitted. As Cllr Watkins apologised he would have to leave the Meeting following his Report to attend to urgent problems with his computer access, the Clerk advised that Cllrs had previously indicated that they would be seeking assistance from Cllr Watkins with their proposals for an electricity supply for the Willows Car Park and toilets.

### 506.0 FINANCE – The Clerk

#### 506.1 Statement of Finances

The Clerk advised the summary of bank account balances as at 19 April 2010.

Precept Deposit account	22,096.61
Current account	7,832.23
Savings Account	5,484.27
Car Park Account	<u>23,012.54</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£58,425.65</u></b>

#### 506.2 Invoices for Payment

The Clerk presented the following cheques for payment. Copies circulated to all Councillors.

• Wages – M Honisett	£291.33
• Wages – D Skertchly	£348.52
• Wages – S Smith	£806.41
• HMRC – Tax and NI	£382.57
• Trowell Building Co – Various	£11,975.96
• Rob Field – Allotment Clearance	£1,220.00
• Aon Limited – Insurance Premium	£948.24
• EDF – Pavilion (estimated reading)	£558.64
• Viking Direct – Stationery	£283.99

- Sussex & Surrey Association of Local Councils – Subscription £208.35
  - EDF – Jubilee Clock £66.84
  - Samuel & Son – Printing Charges £64.43
  - Stuart Foord Fencing Supplies – All'ts £63.95
  - South East Water – Pavilion / Allotments £60.99
  - W'lden Dist Assoc Local Councils – Sub £18.00
- Total** **£6,933.14**

Cllrs asked for further details of the dates of the estimated readings of the electricity bill for the Pavilion, which they felt was excessive. Cllr Ellis volunteered to read the meter so that an amended bill could be obtained.

A proposal to accept the Finance Report (less the payment of £558.64 to EDF) was **proposed** by Cllr Ellis, **seconded** by Cllr Hogestijn and **agreed**.

**506.3 Any other Finance matter - None**

## **507.0 Planning – Cllr Charlton**

### **507.1 To receive Minutes from the Planning Committee meetings held since last Parish Meeting.**

- WD/2010/0269/F: Cedar Cottage, The Broadway, BN26 5XH – Erection of replacement dwelling with attached garage. *Objected to on the following grounds*
  - *Cllrs feel the proposed dwelling is far too near the neighbour's boundary.*
  - *The position of the garage and turning circle will be in line with the neighbour's back garden, causing distress from exhaust emissions.*
  - *The dwelling line is out of line with most of the properties in that road.*
  - *The position of the dwelling is a long way from the road.*
- WD/2010/0406/LB: 10 North Street, BN26 5UG – Installation of mains gas to the property. *No objections.*
- WD/2010/0580/LB: Candle Cottage, High Street, BN26 5SZ – Kitchen refurbishment. *No objections.*

### **507.2 Matters for consideration by Planning Committee after the meeting**

- WD/2010/0677/F: Rose Cottage, North Street BN26 5UQ – Provision of a detached double garage block with first floor studio.
- WD/2010/0706/F: Little Stow, BN26 5XS – New Dormer to West (rear) elevation, new entrance porch, extension to hall and internal alterations.

### **507.3 Decisions notified**

- WD/2010/0163/F: The Rails, BN26 5TX – Two-storey extension, conservatory and front porch. *Granted 30/3*
- WD/2010/0269/F: Cedar Cottage, The Broadway, BN26 5XH – Erection of replacement dwelling with attached garage. *Granted 25/3.*

### **507.4 Other Planning matters**

a. Introduction of Electronic format for Planning Applications from WDC – The Clerk that WDC would cease sending paper copies of Planning Applications to Town and Parish Councils and transmit data electronically with effect from October 2010. This will probably have a financial impact on APC as it is likely that new equipment will have to be bought to enable parishioners to view the Plans at Public Meetings. In common with other WDC Clerks the Clerk will investigate the possibility of obtaining grants to assist with the purchase of any additional equipment required.

b. Notification of Appeals to Planning Inspectorate

- WD/2009/2606/O: Land at Riverbank, River Lane BN26 5SX – Outline planning permission for 2/3 bedroom chalet style house in separate garden area (owned by the applicant) adjacent to existing dwelling also owned by applicant. Planning Inspectorate ref: APP/C1435/A/10/2124276/WF.

- WD/2009/2544/F: Quince Cottage, Sloe Lane, BN26 5UT – Erection of single storey garden room extension and formation of one car parking space within the curtilage.  
Planning Inspectorate ref: APP/C1435/A/10/2125640/WF.
  - WD/2009/2545/LB: Quince Cottage, Sloe Lane, BN26 5UT – Erection of single storey garden room extension and formation of one car parking space within the curtilage.  
Planning Inspectorate ref: APP/C1435/E/10/2125639/WF.
- c. Any other matters
- None.

## **508.0 ALLOTMENTS and RECREATION GROUND – Cllr Byford**

### **508.1 Allotment Clearance**

Cllr Byford reported that the clearance was almost completed. Cllr Savage advised that the gate would be closed once the mound of spoil was cleared.

### **508.2 Allotment Fees**

Cllr Byford reminded those present that an increase in fees had been mooted last year, but it was decided to defer implementation, pending refurbishment. The new fees of £30.00 for a full plot and £15.00 for a half plot for a calendar year remain below the national average. Existing plot holders have been offered renewal at £20.00 and 10.00 for a half plot for 2010. The water supply has been improved and a Notice Board has been commissioned.

### **508.3 Any other Allotment matter**

Cllr Byford advised that whilst allocations for new plots had been made in principle, firm offers of new plots could only be made once it was established that certain existing holders did not wish to continue. It was hoped that confirmation of the new plots would be made very shortly, with written confirmation to follow. A small amount of land which had been reclaimed has not yet been offered for rent, as it is not yet suitable for immediate cultivation.

### **508.4 Licence for Clubs Using the Pavilion**

The Clerk has received a response from the Council's solicitors and will provide an update next month.

### **508.5 Recreation Ground – Play Area/Fencing**

Cllr Byford is arranging for repairs and maintenance to be carried out. The sub-committee are investigating the provision of additional seating.

### **508.6 Any other Recreation Ground matter**

Cllr Byford recommended that a sapling grown from the Chestnut tree which used to grow in Market Square, should be planted in the Recreation Ground. Cllrs were in agreement.

## **509.0 RIGHTS OF WAY and COUNTRYSIDE – Cllr Dumelow**

### **509.1 Winton Street Bridleway**

Cllr Dumelow referred to the earlier Public Question and advised that a collapsible post will be put in place which should solve the problem.

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

None

### **509.3 Delineation between the Spots and Glebeland**

Cllr Savage reported that the Church Authorities had indicated they would be content to have the boundary marked by posts rather than the fence and asked the Clerk to take this option forward with a local contractor.

### **509.4 Any Countryside matter**

Local Councils have been invited to a meeting next month in Lewes to discuss the impact of the South Downs National Park.

### **509.5 Any report from Tree Warden**

No report. Cllrs formally extended their best wishes to Richard Bartlett on his Marriage to Emma which will take place later in the month.

## **510.0 The TYE - Cllr Monteath-Wilson**

### **510.1 Access to AWMH and Parking on the Tye**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson referred to the letter previously received by Mr Gulland on the subject, noting that it contained many well set out items for discussion. Copies of his letter have been distributed to all Cllrs, together with detailed proposals for discussion to find a way forward prepared by Cllr Monteath-Wilson, with a view to making a response next month. Historically there has been some flexibility concerning the parking of cars conveying disabled people to Sunday Church services and for contractors' vehicles. A local society has advocating clamping, but Cllr Monteath-Wilson is not keen to go down this route. Previous correspondence with the Charity Commissioners regarding the responsibilities of the Trustees of the Tye Charity will be revisited.

### **510.2 Parking Spaces on Tye Road**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson confirmed that the Tye Road could not be regarded as primarily for the use of residents and reiterated that APC 'police' the road.

### **510.3 Condition of Tenaxed Area**

The area is continuing to be monitored. To be reviewed in conjunction with item 510.1.

### **510.4 Any other matter relating to the Tye**

A request has been received to plant a small Chestnut tree on the South edge of the Tye, this will be referred to the Tree Warden.

## **511.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING – Cllr Hogestijn**

### **511.1 Parish Plan**

Carried forward to May meeting.

### **511.2 United Reformed Church**

Separate Planning Applications for the Church and the Church Hall have been submitted to WDC, but copies have not yet been provided to WDC.

### **511.3 Any other Strategic Planning matter**

None.

## **512.0 HIGHWAYS and TWITTENS – Cllr Charlton**

### **512.1 Report on April meeting with SAFE**

The Clerk read a Report from SAFE advising that a copy of a document prepared by SAFE following the Traffic Experiment last year and the Questionnaire that followed will be distributed to everyone in the village shortly. This had previously been advised to APC Cllrs at the joint meeting earlier this month.

### **512.2 Update on March Strengthening Local Relationships Meeting with ESCC**

Cllr Charlton reported that ESCC still seek a liaison officer with whom they can liaise when persistent inclement weather occurs, to enable warning signs to be placed on the C39 on the approaches to the village. Cllr Savage urged caution in accepting the transfer of Highways Department responsibility, in view of the problems which had occurred in the last few months.

The grit bins have not yet been refilled.

It appears unlikely that a summer traffic Survey will be commissioned by ESCC who cite lack of funds as a contributory factor.

Previously requested 'SLOW' signs to be painted on the roads have not yet been applied.

### **512.3 Lorry Watch / Police Enforcement**

The PCSO advises that she and her colleagues continue to be robust with their ticketing of illegally parked vehicle, with 12 tickets being issued so far this month. The incidence of lorries contravening the 7.5 ton limit restrictions remains lower than earlier in the year.

### **512.4 Proposal for Parish Assembly Traffic Meeting – Tuesday 25 May 2010**

To be updated at May APC Meeting.

### **512.5 Any other Highway matter**

**a.** The A259 will be closed overnight on weekdays near Exceat Bridge during the last week of the month. Details and map already on Notice Board in Dene Car Park.

**b.** Cllr Charlton advised that following representations from APC, the Village Maintenance Team from ESCC will be visiting the village to carry out small works next month, rather than in November when originally scheduled, which will benefit tourists, residents and businesses alike.

c. Cllr Savage revisited item 512.1, noting that a member of the SAFE Committee had previously held negotiations with an urban planner who had obtained in principle the allocation of a £6,500 Grant from English Heritage to look at the planning issues which affect the whole village, as opposed to concentrating on the effect of traffic lights situated in the High Street. It is understood that the planner concerned had to take time off from work as result of a serious medical condition and that in his absence no-one was able to take the project forward. Happily, he has now returned to work and it is hoped that the project will shortly be back on track. Cllr Savage confirmed his support for a holistic appraisal of the traffic problems in the village and pledged APC's will work for a solution to benefit the whole village, as detailed in the Parish Plan

## **513.0 CAR and COACH PARKS and PUBLIC TRANSPORT – Cllr Ellis**

### **513.1 Renewal of Posts in Dene Car Park**

The new posts are still awaited.

### **513.2 Willows Car Park**

#### **a. Proposed extension and improvement to facilities**

Initial indications from WDC were that the proposals suggested by APC were not acceptable, on legal and economic grounds. A formal response is awaited, but in the meantime District Cllr Watkins will be kept appraised.

#### **b. Proposed use for commercial enterprise**

WDC have received an application to use the Coach Park as a base for operating carriage rides around the village. Cllrs have been circulated details of the proposal and the view of ESCC has been sought. In the meantime, a sub-committee comprising Cllrs Charlton, Ellis, Monteath-Wilson and the Clerk will undertake further investigations and report back to Council.

### **513.3 Any other Car and Coach Park Matter**

a. Cllr Ellis reported that following an interview, Mr Michael Honisett had been offered the position of weekend Car Park Attendant, subject to ratification. Councillors noted that he had undertaken the duties to a high standard on a temporary basis since August. A **proposal** to offer the job on a permanent basis was made by Cllr Ellis, **seconded** by Cllr Monteath-Wilson and **agreed** by all Councillors.

### **513.4 Any Public Transport matter**

None.

## **514.0 PARISH CLERK**

### **514.1 Publication of Minutes**

The Clerk noted the desire of various people to be a party to the Minutes prior to ratification by APC at the following Meeting. After discussion, it was agreed that draft Minutes would be prepared by the end of the Tuesday following the monthly meeting, forwarded to the Chairman for approval and then circulated to Councillors, who would make any comments prior to these unadopted Minutes being made available to the public at least a week prior to the following Meeting.

### **514.2 Notice Board refurbishment**

The board attached to the Village Stores is expected to be reinstated by the end of the week.

### **514.3 Car Park Attendant vacancy**

Although no applications for the position of Monday / Relief Weekday Attendant were received prior to the closing day, a candidate has subsequently come forward. Councillors indicated their willingness for the Clerk to proceed with the selection process.

### **514.4 Proposed Comforts and Joys Donation**

To be carried forward to next month.

### **514.5 Grasscutting Contract**

A discussion took place on the merits of the bids received. Councillors elected to pass to the Finance Committee for further discussion.

### **514.6 Any Other matter**

None

## **515.0 Reports from Outside Bodies**

a. **Festival Committee** – Cllr Monteath-Wilson advised that preparations for this year's Festival were progressing smoothly; however, more volunteers were needed.

- b. Cuckmere Community Bus** – Cllr Charlton advised the AGM would be held on 21 April.
- c. Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Partnership** – The Clerk had received a report advising that the Partnership had decided to allocate funds towards the re-design of its website [www.alfriston.info](http://www.alfriston.info) and its regular maintenance. Quotes were being obtained with a view to a launch before the summer. This information was received for the February Meeting, but was not included in error, for which apologies were given.

## **516.0 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE**

### **516.1 Any Correspondence Received**

**a.** The Clerk revealed he had received an anonymous letter concerning *inter alia* dog fouling. He advised that he would not act on such a letter, but if the writer contacted him in the correct manner, he would take further action.

**b.** The Clerk read extracts from a letter he had received from Mr Robert Lion, sub Postmaster, Alfriston Village Post Office concerning the possible future closure of the sub Post Office. He omitted parts of the letter which in his opinion possibly contained information of a commercially sensitive nature, given the public nature of the Meeting, although the letter in its entirety had been previously been circulated to Councillors, with the consent of the author.

Cllr Savage commented that Councillors had always sought to alleviate the parking problems in the village centre, but that APC was not in a position to subsidise the Post Office. Prior to the May Meeting, the Clerk will contact the Post Office authorities to establish their position and research the position in other villages where the future of the Post Office is threatened. Councillors will take soundings from other shopkeepers to establish if they might be interested in taking over the facility. Councillors were asked in turn for their observations, which were supportive of keeping a Post Office in the village. Mr Lion would be asked to address the Council following the Meeting.

## **517.0 DATE of NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 17 May 2010 at 7.30pm in the War Memorial Hall, preceded by Public Questions from 7.15pm.

The Parish Assembly Meeting will be held on Tuesday 25 May 2010 at 7.30pm in the War memorial hall, The Tye, Alfriston.

*The Meeting was then closed; however, the following further Reports were taken / noted.*

**a. Cuckmere Flood Forum** – Mr Hurwood gave details of the recent meeting at which an official from the Environment Agency gave an update on the state of the Cuckmere river. Mr Hurwood noted that to all intents and purposes dredging was no longer allowed. Work will start in July to clear flaps which affect levels. He will check the position with Southern Water regarding the pumping of sewage into the river. Cllr Savage added that he had also attended the meeting at which it was confirmed that a sluice gate recently installed above the Long Bridge had failed, causing the most recent flooding of the fields.

**b. Heartstart** – Mr Burden reported that 45 calls had been made so far this year, an increase on last year. The organisation is seeking to recruit more volunteers. Fundraising is going well.

**c. Alfriston Post Office** – Mr Lion gave a resume of the present situation, noting that the sub Post Office cost the Village Stores £6,200 more than it received from the Post Office stressing that he wanted to retain the sub Post Office within the Village Stores. He confirmed he acted as an Agent for the Post Office. He noted that he had previously complained about parking enforcement and sought the help of APC, as WDC had declined to get involved and he currently had no contact with ESCC. He said that he was looking for commercial support from local businesses and residents, especially for higher value transactions, such as vehicle licence renewals, insurance, travel money etc, much of which had migrated to the internet. Apart from commercially sensitive information he advised he was happy for the contents of his letter to APC to be made public. He thanked Councillors for allowing him to explain his position and sought support from all.

## Public Questions / Observations

- Mrs Dunstall, who has worked in the village for 17 years, 11 of which have been in the Village Stores / Post Office, requested a copy of Mr Lion's letter, as she feared she might lose her job. *Mr Lion had no objection and would provide one himself.*
- Mrs Peacock wondered how the Post Office at Berwick existed, given the economic climate. *Mr Lion believed this was because the property was owned by the Postmistress who had no employees.*
- Mrs Ball thought it would be interesting to know if Mr Lion had approached other traders about his concerns, especially as all stores operated in the same parking environment. She wondered if a loyalty card might be available
- Mr Hurwood asked for further details of what were considered high value items to the Post Office. *Mr Lion advised that generally any product which was the subject of a promotional poster/ flyer, plus Road Fund renewals.*
- Mr Hurwood was concerned that a letter he had written questioning the need for and the method by which the recent allotment rent increases had been implemented was not mentioned in Clerk's Correspondence. *The Clerk advised that as those concerns had been covered as an Agenda item it was not also included in correspondence and reiterated the process by which the renewals had been conducted. The Chairman then declared the debate closed.*
- Mrs Peacock requested further clarification of the SHLAA. *Cllr Savage explained the detail, concluding that at present there are no viable proposals for Affordable Housing in the village.*
- Mr Gulland noted that the drains in West Street were of a pitch fibre construction, which would have implications for future traffic management plans.
- Mr Dalglish drew attention to a detailed Conservation document which had been produced in 1999, which he considered would have relevance to the current traffic management debate.
- Mr Phillips gave his support to Mr Lion in his efforts to save the sub Post Office, noting that when he operated the business some years ago it was the Post Office which supported the Village Stores rather than *vice versa* as today. He supported a proposal for 20 minutes maximum parking, rather than double yellow lines.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and participating in a constructive Meeting