

# ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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## Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2005 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.30pm.

**Present:** Cllr G. Knights, Chairman, (in the Chair)  
Cllr Mrs J. Apps  
Cllr Mrs S. Charlton  
Cllr J. Kegg  
Cllr A. Lloyd  
Cllr Ms D. Monteath-Wilson, Vice Chairman

**In attendance:** Cllr K. Whitehead      Wealden DC  
P. Ayers                              Clerk  
13 parishioners

### Public Questions

1. Mrs Salmon enquired about the introduction of recycling collections in Alfriston as had already occurred in Wealden's towns. Information would be sought from the District Council.

In the absence of any other questions, the Chairman invited Mr Graham Beattie from East Sussex CC to make his presentation about the forthcoming Road Safety Week.

### Presentation on Road Safety Week

The event, which is organised in conjunction with the village school, would be launched on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March and Parish Councillors were all invited. Lead Member for Transport, Matthew Lock would open the week together with representatives from Sussex Police and other organisations. Children were busy designing posters at present, and these would be judged and gift token prizes awarded to each year group on the day. The Parish Council would issue press releases to local contacts to encourage press attendance. There would be a range of different activities for each age group during the week, including cycling proficiency, 'footsteps' and use of the speed indication device. The Council Meeting itself would consider a request to display the speed commitment posters at car park exits during the promotion.

Mr Beattie was thanked for his presentation.

### 309.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Banham had apologised for absence due to holidays. His reason for absence was accepted by Councillors.

Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Shing.

### 310.0 MINUTES

- 310.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005 had been published and circulated previously. They were taken as read, **accepted** as a true record on the **proposition** of Cllr Mrs Charlton, **seconded** by Cllr Apps, and signed by the Chairman.

### 311.0 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

In Cllr Shing's absence, the Clerk read his written report covering setting the rate of Council Tax for the coming year, which had not yet been confirmed. Divisional boundary changes meant that the Willingdon Division would no longer exist, and Alfriston would form part of the new one member Division named Alfriston, Hailsham and Hellingly. Cllr Shing had not

decided which Division he would stand for in the May elections, but had enjoyed serving the Parish over the past four years.

### **312.0REPORT FROM DISTRICT CONCILLOR**

Cllr Whitehead reported that the non statutory draft Local Plan was under consideration at Wealden following receipt of over 3,000 representations during the consultation period. Comments about Affordable Housing would be considered at a meeting in March, and would then pass through the Council's normal processes towards approval in July. There had been a High Court challenge to development boundaries and the outcome was awaited. Most new street nameplates had now been affixed, but Cllr Whitehead was attending a site meeting with the officer responsible to review the difficulties at the north end of Sloe Lane, and draw the matter to a conclusion. They would review The Laines at the same time. Affordable Housing schemes had raised a number of problems, and some Parishes that had welcomed schemes had now changed their view. Cllr Whitehead confirmed that Wealden DC did not wish to inflict unwanted affordable housing schemes onto villages, and if the necessary criteria were not in place, schemes would not proceed. In Alfriston, no suitable alternative site had yet been found for the allotments.

### **313.0ALLOTMENTS**

#### **313.1Renewals**

The Clerk confirmed that only three tenants had not renewed to date and only one had terminated his tenancy. Cllr Apps had visited the site, and noted those plots that appeared untidy. Once the deadline had passed, letters requesting a tidy up would be sent as appropriate.

#### **313.2Water supply**

The supply was due to be turned on again from 1<sup>st</sup> April.

### **314.0CAR and COACH PARKS**

#### **314.1Dene Car Park spaces**

The posts, chains and new padlocks would be ready for collection later in the week. Trowell Building Co had been contracted to install them, and would collect the materials from the supplier. Once the new posts were in place, new keys for the padlocks would be issued. The Clerk would write to the space holders seeking their co-operation during the installation process.

#### **314.2Proposed revisions to the 'A' permit system**

Cllr Lloyd hoped to introduce the new system from 1<sup>st</sup> April, although a period of parallel running would be necessary to ensure that new permits were issued to all that needed them. The Clerk would place a note in Cuckmere News.

#### **314.3Parking charges**

Wealden DC had been advised of the Parish view, but nothing further had been heard to date.

#### **314.4VAT on car parking charges**

The Custom and Excise Officer had suggested that the Parish took account of the Isle of Wight test case, currently under appeal at the High Court (that VAT should not be paid on car parking charges). Courses of action available were either to continue paying VAT under a voluntary disclosure, or cease VAT payments. Either way, once the test case had been determined, a settlement would be made with interest payable either way. Cllr Lloyd **proposed** that VAT continued to be paid under the voluntary disclosure arrangement, Cllr Knights **seconded** the proposal, which was **agreed** unanimously.

#### **314.5Overhanging trees**

Cllr Lloyd had inspected the car parks the previous weekend, and concluded that a number of overhanging trees needed attention. The Tree Warden would be asked to recommend a course of action.

A dead tree adjacent to the Willows car park was causing an obstruction into North Street, and the landowner would be approached to remove it.

#### **314.6Litter Bins**

The work required on the concealed litter bins had been completed and an invoice was awaited.

### 315.0 FINANCE

#### 315.1 Invoices for payment – February

The Clerk presented invoices for payment in February:

##### ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

	£
Clerk: admin and travel	39.50
wages	297.50
Inland Revenue	130.15
R.W. Green – tree surgery on Tye and Cricket Field	446.50
Sportsmark Group Ltd. – goal mouth	390.24
Wealden District Council – litter bin emptying Oct – Dec 2004	286.41
Clarity Copiers Ltd. – toner cartridges and photocopying	98.47
Petty cash	87.47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>1,776.24</u></b>

##### CUCKMERE VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	108.20
Inland Revenue	47.33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>155.53</u></b>

##### WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

P. Ayers – wages	97.91
J. Lumley – wages	213.60
W. Newman – wages	234.96
Inland Revenue	42.85
Petty cash	9.58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>598.90</u></b>

February payments were **approved unanimously** on the **proposal** of Cllr Knights, **seconded** by Cllr Monteath-Wilson.

#### 315.2 Statement of Finances

Councillors examined the Statement of Bank Balances on 20<sup>th</sup> February provided by the Clerk, and accepted them as follows:

	£
Precept deposit account	8,476.11
Current account	2,578.16
Savings account	4,958.21
Car Park Account	4,169.74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>20,182.22</u></b>

### 316.0 HIGHWAYS and TWITTENS

#### 316.1 Damage to Star Inn

The matter was to be discussed at the March SLR meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

#### 316.2 Risk analysis, High Street

This matter too would be discussed at the SLR Meeting.

#### 316.3 Street name signs

The signs for Rope Walk had now been erected, although one needed relocating. Signs were possible for The Laines if permission was obtained from the owner. Cllr Apps confirmed that this had been notified to Wealden, and the Clerk would send a follow up letter.

#### 316.4 Frog Firle Traffic Management scheme

The Clerk would take the matter up again with the appropriate officer at East Sussex, and the matter would also be raised on 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

#### 316.5 C39 North Street – approach to County Council

The Clerk had reported the outcome to a meeting of the Tourism without Traffic Steering Group, and a different section of the County felt that they may be able to assist in respect of road widening / flint wall repair. The Clerk would take the matter up again.

### **316.6 Speed Management conference**

Cllr Mrs Charlton may not be able to attend the meeting in Uckfield and would seek an alternative delegate if necessary.

### **316.7 Alfriston Road Safety Week**

The Clerk would circulate copies of the timetable and programme so that as many members as possible could attend on 14<sup>th</sup> March. He would send a press release to local reporters. Members agreed to the erection of one speed commitment sign at each car park exit for the duration of the Road Safety Week, and would review the matter at the next meeting.

### **316.8 SLR Meeting – 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

The Clerk had provided Agenda items from previous Council meetings. Cllrs Knights, Apps and Banham were expecting to attend, together with the Clerk. The meeting would be held in the Committee Room commencing at 0900hrs.

### **316.9 Minor roadworks in village**

Holes had been filled outside Hicks and the George Inn. Further work was needed outside the north entrance to Deans Place Hotel. Benches in the Market Square had been re-secured. Paviers needed relaying in West Street. Kerbs outside 4, Kings Ride had been replaced, whilst those outside 1, Kings Ride were in hand. A bollard at the High Street end of a tway was to be relocated slightly off centre. Cllr Mrs Charlton would speak with residents of a Broadway property where construction vehicles had caused damage to the grass verge.

## **317.0 OUTSIDE BODIES**

### **317.1 A.D.A.P.T.T.**

Cllr Mrs Charlton reported that a membership drive was under way, and the website was being updated. The new name was due to be adopted at the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> April.

### **317.2 Cuckmere Community Bus**

Cllr Mrs Charlton reported on continuing problems with the low floor bus. The AGM had re-elected all existing officers and she remarked upon the high standard of reports being produced.

### **317.3 Cuckmere Flood Forum**

Cllr Lloyd and Mr Cookman had attended the February meeting. Details of the Catchment Flood Management Plan were available on the website, and Cllr Lloyd was in touch with the appropriate officer to provide feedback. Work on dredging the river mouth had been completed, assisting flow upstream. There had been no progress on the planning application to raise the banks south of the Golden Galleon.

Peter Blackmore had confirmed that funding would be very limited in future due to new expenditure criteria concentrating resources onto areas where houses were at risk.

Mr Cookman had queried the adequacy of the water supply if additional houses were built in Alfriston or elsewhere in the area, but no satisfactory answers had been provided.

### **317.4 Police Liaison**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson had attended the inaugural meeting. Inspector Matthews had confirmed the low crime rate in Wealden. Many agencies were involved in the Partnership which aimed to pinpoint types of crime and develop projects to combat them. Only a few projects could be developed each year because of tight funding, and it was clear that Town Councils had different priorities to Parish Councils. She had not been provided with a quicker link through to the local Community Support Officer (who had not been seen in the Parish for a number of weeks). She planned to attend the April meeting before taking a view on the value of the meetings.

As Neighbourhood Watch schemes were not included in the Police Liaison meetings, the Clerk would pursue Alfriston's concerns through his regular Police contact.

### **317.5 Tourism without Traffic**

The Steering Group was continuing to meet, but the Clerk was unsure of the implications of this for the Alfriston Group, as he had had to leave before the matter was discussed.

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

Cllr Kegg had not been able to attend the February meeting, and its Minutes were awaited to provide details of the discussions that had taken place.

## **318.0 PARISH CLERK**

### **318.1 Parish Plans**

The Clerk had received 8 responses to the letter sent to 31 organisations and individuals seeking comments on the proposal. Six had offered support, some strongly, and a couple seeking involvement, whilst two others saw no need. The responses would be copied to Councillors for consideration in advance of the March meeting.

### **318.2 Standing Orders**

The Clerk had circulated copies of the most recent set of Standing Orders, and suggested the need for a committee to be established to develop a new set for consideration by full Council. The Chairman would discuss the matter with Cllr Banham on his return in view of his legal expertise, and bring a proposal to the March meeting. Standing Orders could be suspended if there were exceptional circumstances that needed to be taken into account before the new version of Standing Orders was adopted.

### **318.3 Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting**

The meeting was re-arranged to Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, commencing at 7.30pm because of a prior booking for the Hall. It was agreed to seek presentations from the Police District Commander and the Community Support Officer to explain recent developments in policing and from Wealden's Planning Dept to explain the basic planning process and conservation.

## **319.0 PLANNING**

### **319.1 Proposed development at White Lodge Hotel**

WD/04/3139/F White Lodge Country House Hotel, Sloe Lane: change of use and extension to provide 13 dwellings with associated parking. Three public exhibition sessions had been held to give parishioners the opportunity to view the proposals, with each session being attended by a member of the Planning Committee to receive comments. A response reflecting those views had been despatched within the three week deadline, but with a caveat that additional comments may be necessary following the February meeting of the full Parish Council. There were no additional comments to make, and the Clerk would write confirming that position, stressing that the earlier objections were maintained. *A copy of the objection letter would be placed in the Minute Book.*

### **319.2 Matters considered under the urgency procedure**

WD/04/3180/F Tile Barn Cottage, Frog Firle: replacement of existing pre-cast concrete garage with old style timber frame cart shed. *No objections.*

### **319.3 Decisions notified**

WD/04/3031/F Lindridge, North Road: erection of PVCU Conservatory to rear elevation. *Granted.*

### **319.4 Update on previous applications**

WD/04/2855/LB The Clergy House, The Tye: re-thatch the property changing from water reed to long straw thatch. A detailed consultants report had been received, justifying the use of straw thatch. This had been accepted by the conservation bodies, and, under those circumstances, the Planning Committee accepted the change.

WD/04/3096/F and WD/04/3097/LB The Smugglers Inn, Market Cross: change of external wall materials, re-instatement of damaged structure, re-exposure of original window in north elevation and removal of inserted ceiling in ground floor bar to expose original joists. Following discussions, weatherboarding would be used, but the original white and black panels would be re-instated. The Planning Committee accepted the compromise.

### **319.5 Enforcement action**

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

## **320.0 PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

### **320.1 Bus stop sign in Market Square**

The re-tendering result was still delayed.

## **321.0 RECREATION GROUND**

### **321.1 Cricket Pavilion**

Revised plans were still awaited.

### **321.2 Annual Playground Inspection**

Most of the work had been undertaken, with odd items still to be completed. New swing seats and chains were to be ordered. Mr Trowell would be asked to repaint the yellow sign. Concern was expressed that dog excrement had been found in the playground area, and the situation would be monitored carefully, as such a situation was not acceptable. The possibility of surrounding the playground with fencing was mooted, but members would prefer not to have to adopt such a drastic course of action.

### **321.3 Goal mouth**

Cllr Apps understood that the equipment had been delivered, and awaited installation.

## **322.0 RIGHTS OF WAY & COUNTRYSIDE**

### **322.1 Winton Fields footpath**

The matter had to await the end of the financial year to ascertain whether or not the Conservation Board had any surplus funds, to assist with the replacement of stiles with gates

### **322.2 Old Coach Road**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson read extracts of a letter from Defra purporting to explain Government policy in relation to tracks such as the Old Coach Road. Both she and the Clerk felt that it was intended to be helpful and to aim at a reduction of motorised traffic on such tracks generally, but the wording was quite ambiguous.

### **322.3 New powers for Parish Councils**

Defra had written to advise of new powers being made available to Parish Councils covering a range of activities including litter, anti-social behaviour, abandoned vehicles and dog fouling. Cllr Monteath-Wilson felt that these needed careful consideration before adoption and asked Councillors to read the documents that had been circulated with a view to discussion at a future meeting. She stressed that the proposals were powers, not duties, and not therefore mandatory.

## **323.0 THE TYE**

### **323.1 Original Tye covenants**

These 19<sup>th</sup> century documents had been returned to the Clerk, but would be available for loan to interested parties.

### **323.2 Tye Road parking**

The refuse collection had taken place satisfactorily in the previous week, although a supervisor had been present. Members were not satisfied with the response received from Wealden, and felt that a meeting would become necessary if further problems arose. It was noted that the private waste collection service employed by businesses in the Tye Road did not suffer the same problems, despite having a similar sized vehicle.

It was understood that a large number of vehicle emblems stolen from vehicles in the area had been recovered by the Police, and could be collected from them.

### **323.3 Moles**

The recent upsurge in mole activity had continued, but action was being taken to control it.

### **323.4 Mine**

The Mine had been emptied and a sum of money banked that day.

## **324.0 TOURISM**

### **324.1 Parish Tourism Without Traffic Policy Statement**

The Clerk had written to the Conservation Board again seeking information in respect of consultants' fees incurred, to be supplied under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Conservation Board had replied, suggesting an approach to East Sussex CC, which would be pursued.

### **324.2 Village of the Year competition**

Cllr Mrs Charlton reminded members that the Parish would be eligible to enter the competition again this year, and she was keen to get things in place in good time.

Accordingly, she would be approaching ADAPTT to seek the assistance of their members in arranging good floral displays outside their establishments.

## **325.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

### **325.1HOPE Project update**

Wealden DC expected to progress those sites where agreement had been reached, and to follow up on other sites later. The two officers involved would be leaving their current posts in March, and it remained to be seen how the project would then be taken forward.

### **325.2New terms and conditions for Clerks**

The Clerk had obtained an electronic copy of the various Agreements and Procedures from the National Association of Local Councils, and had personalised them to Alfriston. A draft had been provided for the Chairman's perusal. The Clerk recommended the establishment of a small working group to consider and develop the proposals, and bring them back for ratification at full Council in due course. Members would consider the matter and come to a decision at the March meeting.

### **325.3Erection of 'A' Boards for Art Show**

A request had been received from an Eastbourne based club to erect three 'A' Boards to promote their event already booked into the War Memorial Hall on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> May. The boards would be erected on the cobbles in the Dene Car Park, beside the Mine on the Tye and beside the entrance to the Hall, and on that basis, members did not feel that local traders would be prejudiced, and approved the request.

### **325.4Electric blanket testing**

Wealden DC had approached the Parish in connection with their autumn programme of testing electric blankets, particularly for older people. Members agreed that the War Memorial Hall could be put forward, but asked to be told the extent of usage on the last occasion that testing had been undertaken in the village.

### **325.5Long Man Morris Men**

A request had been received for the group to dance in the Square on Easter Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> March for approximately 30 minutes, starting at 2.30pm. This was approved.

### **325.6Amenity Society request for meeting**

The request had been distributed to members previously, allowing consideration prior to the meeting. Members expressed differing views and were keen to keep any such meetings as open as possible. On balance, the request was approved and the Clerk would reply accordingly, drawing attention to the fact that members would not be able to express opinions on items discussed to ensure that they were not prejudiced in any subsequent Council discussions.

### **325.7Standards Board for England**

A questionnaire was circulated reviewing the Code of Conduct for consideration and discussion at the March meeting.

### **325.8Sloe Lane – GIS system problems**

Cllr Lloyd raised the problems being experienced with the Emergency Services trying to access Sloe Lane from its narrow (North Street) end. This appeared to be caused by some inaccuracy in the GIS navigation systems in use. On a previous occasion, it had been established that there was no common system in use by all Emergency Services, and the Clerk would approach all three services with a request to ensure that a note was placed on the addresses in Sloe Lane directing vehicles to approach via the Market Cross and West Street.

## **326.0DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2005 at 7.30pm in the War Memorial Hall, preceded by Public Questions from 7.15pm.

## **Public Questions**

1. A new section of fencing had been erected on the west bank of the river between White Bridge and Long Bridge, near one of the sluices. Cllr Monteath-Wilson would investigate its purpose.

Signed: (Chairman)

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> March 2005.