

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 22nd April 2003 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr J. Rackham (in the Chair)
Cllr Mrs C. Adcock
Cllr A. Banham
Cllr Mrs E. Foulkes
Cllr G. Knights
Cllr Ms D. Monteath-Wilson

In attendance: P. Ayers Clerk
15 parishioners

Public Questions

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting, the following points were raised:

1. Old refrigerators outside The Wingrove Inn were visible from the road. The Clerk would seek their removal.
2. Late evening noise from public houses and hotels had been an issue last year. Patrons or staff leaving may have caused it. The Clerk would request the co-operation of all establishments in reducing late evening noise to a minimum.
3. Vegetation growth along the Twittens was something that the Parish Maintenance Team could be asked to deal with by strimming and possibly the application of weed killers.
4. The High Street was in a better condition with some attention to sweeping and litter, but it was felt that there was room for further improvement, and the Clerk would pursue the matter with Wealden DC.

147.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

County Councillor Shing had tendered apologies due to attending another meeting; District Councillor B.M.P. Hubbard had also tendered apologies.

148.0 MINUTES

- 148.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2003 had been published and circulated previously. Two corrections were made:
- 138.1 was amended to read ‘..all residents **who had replied** wished to see..’
 - 138.2 was amended by the addition of a sentence prior to the voting. This read ‘If that was not the case, the old paint would be burnt off then’.
- 148.2 Subject to those amendments, it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman signed the Minutes as a true record.

149.0 PRESENTATION BY SUSSEX POLICE

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow for a presentation by the District Commander, Chief Inspector Grenville Wilson of Sussex Police in which all present could participate.

Inspector Wilson introduced Sergeant Neil Dean who was in charge of the Neighbourhood Policing Team responsible for the Parish and stated that overall there had been a 3% reduction in crime.

The new Chief Constable had undertaken a comprehensive review of policing in the County, and had placed more officers onto front-line policing work to create a more visible

presence. 100 additional officers were being recruited, all of whom would be on front-line duty, bringing the Force total to 3,100. 16 of the new officers had been allocated to East Downs as uniformed officers, and whilst some were still in training, all would be on duty later in the year. A Major Crime branch had been established, covering the whole County, enabling more efficient and quicker deployment of staff, and improving detection rates. Despite an increase in precept amounting to 54pence per week for a band D property, the policing precept was still the second lowest in the English shire counties. 38pence of the increase was needed to stand still in view of the switch of Government resources from the South to the North. The balance would enable a further 40 officers to be recruited onto front line duties, increase the investigative capacity of the Force, provide better police safety and be used to establish the new Airwave communication network. The Computer Crime Unit had been increased in size, giving more specialist officers to undertake detailed analysis of records held on PCs.

Neighbourhood Policing addressed the Chief Constable's concerns that Police Stations should be open for longer hours, and in future the Stations at Hailsham and Seaford would be open from 1000 – 2000hrs on Mondays to Fridays, and from 1000 – 1800 on Saturdays and Sundays. There was a more focussed direction of staff, Hailsham was now manned throughout every day and there was a better Victim Support scheme. The team was committed to achieving a high standard of performance and was held to account in dealing with local problems effectively.

As District Commander, Inspector Wilson was responsible and accountable for all policing within the Wealden District Council area. He was able to buy in specialist support services from crime and traffic teams. However, the area comprised 192 sq. miles and needed help and guidance from local people, especially the Neighbourhood Watch teams. Sgt. Dean would look to liaise closely with people to provide an improved local presence.

The Chairman opened the session for questions, and problems with parking were raised, in the High Street and The Furlongs. Inspector Wilson was aware of these. Sgt Dean was addressing the problem in The Furlongs with the Clerk. Inspector Wilson was looking at how to increase capacity to help monitoring the High Street, but government funding was restricting this. When police were visiting or passing through, they were being asked to keep an eye open to parking issues and he would try to arrange irregular visits to tackle the problem by a random presence.

The validity of a 20mph zone was raised and it was agreed that any scheme needed to be restricted in scope and capable of self-policing, since increased enforcement action was not likely to be available. Similarly, although there was a weight restriction on the road, this too was sometimes abused. Inspector Wilson would involve the Traffic Police unit from Polegate if specific enforcement action were needed in this area.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Wilson and Sgt Dean for coming along and providing such an interesting insight into the new policing structure. The Council meeting then resumed.

150.0 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Shing had provided a written report thanking the Council for their support over the past two years, wishing those not seeking re-election well, and looking forward to working with the new Council.

151.0 THE STAR INN LION

151.1 Latest situation

A report from the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting was reviewed. The informal vote there had gone heavily in favour of returning the restored Lion to a position outside The Star, and it was now understood that the Manager of The Star and the Rector shared this view. An alternative and less vulnerable location had been found to the right of the hotel entrance (when viewed from the front). English Heritage had confirmed a desire to become involved and to provide advice. Cllr Knights **proposed**, Cllr Mrs Foulkes **seconded** and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that the Parish Council supported the actions of The Star Inn's owners in going ahead with the restoration of the figurehead and its installation in a place to be agreed outside the Inn.

152.0 ALLOTMENTS

152.1 Lettings

Cllr Banham reported that several allotments were not let, and that advertisements had been placed in the Post Office and Friday Ad, with some success already. The water supply had not been turned back on automatically as promised, but it was now available again.

152.2 Allotments Competition

Mr Archie Skinner had kindly agreed to judge the Competition again this year and would start his assessments later in April.

152.3 Native Tree Nursery

The Tree Warden, Mr Michael Charlton was keen to establish a nursery in which to rear native trees, particularly the more unusual varieties. Cllr Banham had visited the allotments with Mr Charlton and they had earmarked two plots as suitable for such use, provided that this received approval from the Parish Council. Members were delighted to receive such a positive proposal from Mr Charlton, accepted the proposal from Cllr Banham and agreed to waive the allotment charge for the two plots involved.

153.0 CAR & COACH PARKS

153.1 Benches

Wealden DC had removed a damaged bench.

154.0 FINANCE

154.1 Invoices for payment

The Clerk presented invoices for payment, which were approved and signed by Cllr Rackham and Cllr Mrs Adcock:

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

		£
Clerk:	admin and travel	
	wages	27.00
		280.23
Inland Revenue		
		133.60
HM Customs & Excise		
	448.74	
Sussex Association of Local Councils – annual subs.		252.57
Sankey Pest Control – mole treatment		
	282.00	
Cale Briparc Ltd – car park meter		537.61
Seeboard - clock		
		6.11
South East Water – allotment water supply		
	7.42	
Wealden DC – litter bins		
	271.13	
		dog bins
	216.91	

Viking Direct	2,204.76	
	54.59	
R.W. Green Ltd – Black Poplar report and surgery	1,010.50	
Allianz Cornhill – annual insurance		587.89
Cash – replacement of petty cash spent	<u>75.85</u>	
TOTAL		

6,398.81

CUCKMERE VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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

138.49

WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

		£
P. Ayers – wages		91.98
D. Crouch – wages		281.02
W. Newman – wages		240.00
Inland Revenue		<u>54.08</u>
TOTAL		

667.08

The inclusion of Cuckmere Valley Parish Council was to assist them, and now that the Parishes shared a Clerk, it made sense for one authority to take responsibility for payments, recovering the amounts due from the other authority. A similar

arrangement would be made between the new Chairmen of the two Councils to cover sharing equipment and stationery.

154.2 Statement of Finances

The balance in accounts held by the Parish Council on 1st April 2003 was as follows:

	£
Precept deposit account	
Current account	1,085.72
Savings account	311.09
No.2 account	6,658.68
Car Park Account	524.27
Mine Account	6,705.05
TOTAL	<u>784.70</u>
	<u>16,069.51</u>

154.3 Bank Mandate

The Clerk would arrange for a new Mandate form to be supplied in order that the new Council could determine its signatories at the May meeting.

154.4 Annual Accounts

The Clerk advised members that he had commenced work on the Annual Accounts, but expected the task to take some time. He had assumed responsibility for the Accounts eleven months into the financial year, and there had been no requirement for an independent audit at the changeover.

154.5 Internal Auditor

The Clerk enquired about an Internal Auditor, since it was a requirement of the new financial regime and audit arrangements. Mr Leslie Weaver had apparently been appointed Internal Auditor in Minute 185.1 of 15th April 2002. The Clerk had been unable to trace any correspondence relating to Mr Weaver, or providing contact details for him. Members were similarly unable to assist. The Clerk would ascertain whether Mr Weaver might be known to other local clerks, and if not, he would make approaches to Cuckmere Valley Parish's Internal Auditor to undertake the checks required, since otherwise significant costs could be incurred if the Annual Return could not be completed and confirmed by the Internal Auditor.

155.0 FLOOD FORUM

155.1 July Meeting

Cllr Mrs Adcock reported on the most recent meeting, and sought permission to invite the Forum to hold its next meeting in the War Memorial Hall on 28th July.

Some expenditure would be incurred, as refreshments were normally provided. Although she would no longer be a Parish Councillor in July, she would take responsibility for the meeting arrangements and provision of refreshments, to be reimbursed by the Parish Council. It was agreed that the hall charge would not apply, as this was a meeting arranged under the auspices of the Parish Council, and that reasonable out of pocket expenses on the provision of refreshments would be authorised.

156.0 HIGHWAYS AND TWITTENS

156.1 Liaison meetings with County Transport & Environment officers

The Clerk had been advised that the County officers would be unable to attend the next meeting, arranged for 14th May. As this was scheduled between the elections and the date of the first meeting of the new Council, the Clerk had agreed to a postponement, and would raise the matter at the May meeting to secure possible dates for a re-scheduled meeting. It was agreed that meetings with officers were more likely to achieve results on routine items, and that a Public Meeting with County Councillors would be more appropriate when persistent problems arose. This was not felt to be the case at present.

156.2 Coaches in the High Street

Some coaches in the High Street were causing congestion and damage. The Clerk advised that any agreement by coach operators would be informal, and impossible to impose, but that the Tourism without Traffic project intended to draw up a voluntary code of conduct, and he would ask the Project Officer to bring this forward more speedily.

157.0 PARISH CLERK

157.1 Parish Election

The Clerk reported that seven nominations had been received for seven places, and accordingly there would be no parish election on 1st May. The new Council would comprise Cllrs Banham, Mrs Charlton, Kegg, Knights, Lloyd, Ms Monteath-Wilson and Robson.

157.2 Annual Parish Meeting

Draft Minutes had already been prepared and would be circulated shortly. There were no urgent items to be pursued.

157.3 Appointment of Clerk

Mr Ayers enquired whether or not the draft Contract of Employment and Job Description had been approved. The Chairman would review the documents again.

158.0 PLANNING

158.1 Applications considered during the month

WD/03/0484/F Little Stow, The Furlongs two storey side and rear extension.
No objection, materials to match existing. The Council was aware of an objection from a neighbour, but did not consider this to be sufficient in planning terms to justify refusal (garden overlooked).

158.2 Applications to be considered by Planning Committee

WD/03/0900/F 4, Deans Road
construction of summerhouse.

158.3 Decisions notified

The Parish Council had been notified that the following applications had been granted:

- The Star Inn (listed building consent for restoration of the Lion).
- Somerset House.
- Little Dene, North Street.
- 2, Deans Road.

158.4 Internet access to planning applications

All applications could now be viewed, plans inspected and progress monitored on the Wealden DC website at www.planning.wealden.gov.uk

159.0 RECREATION GROUND

159.1 Purchase of new roundabout

The roundabout was on order with delivery and installation expected in early June.

159.2 Damage to Pavilion

Cllr Banham reported that there had been a break-in at the Pavilion, but as nothing of value was kept there, only damage had been caused. There was evidence of damage suggesting the consumption of alcohol in the vicinity and the Police had been notified.

159.3 Mini-football and netball net

Plans were being developed for the possible purchase and installation of a mini-football and netball net for use by older children. The Cricket Club had accepted a possible location, and the Youth Club were currently being consulted. A proposal would be brought to a future meeting, if appropriate.

159.4 Additional dog bins

Cllr Banham had investigated the possible installation of additional dog bins on the opposite side of the Recreation Ground to the existing one. The cost would be around £300 per year for emptying, and he recommended that the matter be passed to the new Council for consideration.

160.0 RIGHTS OF WAY and COUNTRYSIDE

160.1 Signage for South Downs Way

SDCB would be visiting the sites shortly and would propose a course of action thereafter.

160.2 Old Coach Road

Repairs to three sections had improved the surface and drainage to the worst sections. Many areas remained rough. The problem of scramble bikes on the top of the Downs had receded with revised signage, and eventually completion of the works.

160.3 Proposed South Downs National Park

Seven of the fifteen statutory authorities had objected and a Public Inquiry seemed likely to proceed in the autumn, possibly lasting eighteen months.

160.4 Beachy Head Marathon

Cllr Monteath-Wilson had been advised of this event, due in October, which crossed the High Street. Appropriate arrangements would be made nearer the time.

160.5 Flooding at The Spots

Flooding outside Star Cottage appeared to be caused by seepage and was creating difficulties with access. The Environment Agency would be consulted.

161.0 THE TYE

161.1 Tye Road – parking

Cllr Knights had no progress to report except that there was the possibility of financial assistance with funding the new locks.

161.2 Black Poplar tree

The work had been undertaken and a report prepared. This suggested that there was no serious deterioration in the tree, and that a further report was recommended in four years time.

161.3 Wayleave Agreement – B.T.

A compromise had been reached so that one new manhole would be created in the footpath leading to the Church, whilst the second would remain covered after the work had been undertaken. In return, The Parish Council would forego a payment of £745 due as a wayleave for the work. Cllr Knights **proposed** acceptance of the compromise, this was **seconded** by the Chairman and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

161.4 Moles

The work had been undertaken.

161.5 Proposed football tournament

A proposal to hold a five-a-side football tournament on The Tye was considered, but members agreed to ask the organisers to hold any tournaments of this nature on the Recreation Ground.

162.0 TOURISM WITHOUT TRAFFIC

162.1 Improvements to C39 at Frog Firle

Cllr Knights reported that revised plans had just been received. It was now agreed that the anti-skid surfaces should be in black tarmac and that the number of repeater signs would be reduced. The revised proposals were under consideration.

162.2 20MPH zone

A scheme including the entire village was not a priority, but plans for the High Street were under consideration, with the possibility of resources being allocated for work. This might comprise cobbles to slow traffic, but it had been agreed that lights and traffic humps would not be acceptable.

162.3 Berwick Way

It was understood that work between Berwick Station and Drusillas Roundabout would proceed in the current financial year, and that funding to upgrade a further section from Drusillas Roundabout to Winton Street was being included in the five-year bid.

163.0 TREE WARDEN

163.1 Report from Warden

Cllr Monteath-Wilson introduced the report from Mr Michael Charlton, which had been circulated to all Members. It was agreed that this was an excellent document, which Mr Charlton was congratulated upon. The Tree Nursery had already been approved, and Mr Charlton was approaching various bodies for permission to collect seeds or take cuttings to be reared in the Nursery for subsequent use within the Parish.

163.2 Dangerous Tree south of The Wingrove

The Clerk had just received notification from ESCC of the removal of a dangerous tree south of The Wingrove. The Tree Warden would seek further information.

164.0 CORRESPONDENCE

164.1 Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: minor amendments to proposed Byelaws – approved, initialled and to be returned.

164.2 ESCC Commons Registration Act 1994: formal notice that land at Dukes Green and The Tye were included (this resulted from the destruction of the original records by fire) – noted.

164.3 Letter from local resident complaining at inconsiderate parking by a business in The Square – noted and raised with Police.

164.4 WDC letter concerning Cuckmere Estuary project: requirement for planning permission for proposed work now needed – noted.

164.5 Letter from Chairman of Alfriston Festival Committee seeking permission to use The Tye throughout the Festival (August 17th to 25th), to use the Recreation Ground for a Boot Fair and parking on Monday 25th August, permission to park collectors' cars on The Tye, near The Clergy House and use of the sandwich board in The Square to advertise events throughout the week – all agreed.

164.6 There were numerous items of a routine nature, which the Clerk would seek to circulate to members of the new Council on a regular basis, to save time at the meeting.

165.0 THANKS

165.1 Farewell messages

Three members of the present Parish Council were not standing for re-election. Cllr Mrs Foulkes, Cllr Rackham and Cllr Mrs Adcock all wished to place on record their thanks and appreciation for their time on the Parish Council, the manner in which proceedings had been dealt with, the understanding of parishioners and public attendance at meetings. Those Councillors remaining in office congratulated their colleagues on the service they had provided to the Parish, and in particular to

Cllr Rackham for his time as Chairman. The messages of goodwill were greeted with public acclaim.

166.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The first Annual Meeting of the new Parish Council would be held on Monday 19th May 2003 in the War Memorial Hall, Alfriston, commencing at 7.15pm. An ordinary meeting of the Parish Council would follow it, and Public Questions would be taken at the end, on that occasion only, as a new Chairman had to be elected before other proceedings could commence.

Signed:

(Chairman)

Date: 19th May 2003.