ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

[www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk)

**CLERK TO THE COUNCIL** 11 Highfield Road

Victoria Rutt Horam

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**Minutes of a meeting of Alfriston Parish Council (APC)**

**held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 19th February 2018**

**Present:**

 Cllr. J. Watkins – Vice Chair

Cllr. K. Halliday

Cllr. N. White

Cllr. V. Cooper

Cllr. R. Savage

 **In attendance:**

Victoria Rutt - Parish Clerk

 Approximately 20 members of the public

164. Chairman’s Welcome

Cllr Watkins welcomed everyone to the meeting and went straight into public questions.

1. **Public Questions**
2. Mrs Sylvia Daw requested permission to use the Tye for a party to celebrate the Royal wedding in May, it is unsure what it will look like at present but Mrs Daw will let the Council know in due course. Councillors discussed and permission was granted.
3. Mr Adrian Butcher wanted to confirm that the Tye rules would be placed on the March agenda for discussion, Clerk confirmed that it is.
4. Mrs Sylvia Daw raised the issue that those seated at the back, and even sometimes at the front can’t hear what Councillors say. She asked if Councillors would consider using microphones again. Mrs Daw explained she knew where they were stored and how to set them up and would be happy to do so. Councillors discussed and it was agreed. Clerk to speak to AWMH about the charging of the batteries.
5. Mrs Nicky Vassell asked if the Tye parking issue was going to be discussed at this meeting. Clerk confirmed that as previously explained, the Tye rules will be discussed at the meeting in March. Mrs Vassell asked why this is as she had not heard the bollards were the agreed option. Clerk confirmed that this was agreed at the November 2017 meeting.
6. Mrs Janet Banham asked if the letter had been received from the lady re parking for the Art Club. Clerk confirmed she had received and it has been responded too.
7. **Report from Maria Caulfield MP**

No attendance or report.

1. **Report from East Sussex County Councillor Stephen Shing**

Cllr Shing sent his apologies as he was unable to attend the meeting. Clerk reported on his behalf that since his newsletter earlier this month, Cllr Shing has met with Highway Officers about the traffic trial in Alfriston. An official report will be submitted to the lead member for the traffic trial later in the year.  In the meantime, a Highways Officer will invite stakeholders to a meeting about the trial traffic proposal. The County Council have set the council tax on 5th February to increase by 5.99 % and the proposal to close seven libraries and mobile library will be going to cabinet on the 5th March.

Cllr Shing would like to take this opportunity to wish all a very happy Chinese New Year

1. **Report from Wealden District Councillor Phillip Ede**

Cllr Ede reported that the Council Leader Bob Standley brought forward a proposal about parking enforcement, however the proposals have fallen at Cabinet. Cllr Standley is now going to arrange a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner [PCC] Katy Bourne to discuss Police enforcement as they are still responsible for policing parking. It is possible that Wealden District Council [WDC] will give funding for a PCSO to be appointed for Wealden. Cllr Savage informed Cllr Ede that PCC Bourne did attend a meeting over a year ago and stated that there are no funds for Police to help with parking, Cllr Ede confirmed that is why WDC will put up the funding. Cllr Ede went on to update that a full council meeting is being held later this week when they will vote on the budget.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Beechey.

1. **Minutes**

Clerk updated that since the draft minutes were published, Mr Vernon Reynolds asked for wording to be added as it had been missed out of the minutes. These have been amended by the Clerk.

Cllr. Halliday proposed and Cllr. Savage seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2018 were a true and accurate record. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cllr. Watkins duly signed the minutes.

1. **Finance**

171.1 To approve the Statement of Finances

Cllr. Savage proposed and Cllr. White seconded a motion to approve the Statement of Finances

[Appendix A]. **MOTION CARRIED**

 171.2 To approve and sign Invoices for Payment

Cllr. Cooper approved and signed Invoices for Payment. **MOTION CARRIED**

171.3 To approve Q3 finance audit

Cllr. Watkins proposed and Cllr. Savage seconded a motion to approve the Q3 finance audit. **MOTION CARRIED**

1. **Casual Vacancy Election Costs – to identify where costs can be found from the existing budget**

Clerk updated that since the January 2018 meeting, Cllr David Bell had resigned. When a Councillor resigns, the Clerk needs to inform Wealden District Council [WDC] who will issue a notice for the Clerk to publish. The Clerk published this notice which stated if 10 or more residents wanted an election they need to write to WDC. Clerk received confirmation from WDC within the deadline that an election had been called. The notice for the election will be going up on the 6th March, application packs can be requested from the Clerk and the election date has been arranged for the 12th April.

However due to this decision, Alfriston Parish Council are now in a position to re look at their budget as there is a cost involved if it does go to election. If one candidate comes forward and there is no election it is £400, however if there is more than one it is either £1900 or £2500, the difference being if we request poll cards or not. As the cost is high, Clerk confirmed that once a decision is known the budget will need to be looked at closely and the playground budget, AEG container and section 137 grants may well be affected.

172.1 To consider the use of poll cards

Clerk reported that Wealden District Council need a decision as soon as possible on whether APC want to use poll cards if an election is required. Cllr Savage proposed that we do not request poll cards as it is a lot of money. Cllr White stated that he would like for us to have them as would not like to be accused as being undemocratic like it has been accused recently. Cllr Halliday agreed with Cllr White. However, after discussion it was agreed that we would not have poll cards from WDC but we would design some of our own and volunteers could hand deliver around the village.

1. **Update on Alfest 2018**

Cllr’s Watkins and Cooper confirmed that a meeting was held to discuss the possibility of arranging Alfest 2018, however it was agreed that there was not enough time or the funding for it to be feasible.

1. **To discuss the Village website**

Clerk updated that Mr Exley was unable to attend the meeting this evening, however he had met with Cllr’s Beechey and White with the information of running the website, the time and costs involved. There have been some expressions of interest and it is known there is a few more. No decision can be made today without more information known so Clerk is going to gather all the information from the interested parties, put it all together in a comparison document and circulate to Councillors. It is hopeful that a decision can be made at the March meeting.

1. **To discuss and fill the vacancies on the Planning Committee and as a Tye trustee**

Following the resignation of Cllr David Bell, it left two vacancies within the Parish Council. Cllr Cooper volunteered to become a member of the Planning Committee, Cllr White proposed and Cllr Halliday seconded this. **MOTION CARRIED**

The vacancy as a Tye Trustee was discussed, Cllr’s Watkins, Halliday and Beechey declared an interest previously. Cllr’s Halliday and Watkins stated they were happy not to be. Cllr Watkins proposed Cllr Beechey to be a trustee, this was seconded by Cllr Cooper. **MOTION CARRIED**

1. **Possible changes to coach park and closure of Willows car park toilets**

Clerk updated that following the Q3 finances and the loss of income identified from the Willows car park, WDC were spoken to about the possible change to the layout of the coach park. At present there are 8 coach bays and it is believed we only need half this so could have more spaces available to cars. WDC are happy to look into this, however it is likely it would mean the closure of the Willows toilets. Clerk sent out a request for feedback on this matter a few weeks ago, she confirmed that she had receive 8 responses, 6 being for the closure and 2 against. The Clerk and Cllr Savage are meeting with WDC on the 9th March to discuss the car parks.

1. **Report on Highways & Twittens – Cllr. Halliday**

177.1 Replacement bins for Market Square

The Clerk advised that since the quote for a new bin was so high, she had spoken with Kier to see if an additional bin collection could be done at a weekend. Kier have confirmed this can be done but is yet to come back with a cost.

177.2 Market Cross update

The Clerk reported that Heritage Lottery Fund now accept applications all year round, it is lengthy application form which Cllr Beechey is going to help Clerk complete. Once the form is submitted APC will get a response within 8 weeks. Historic England have confirmed we can submit an application for a grant but first the Market Cross needs to be on their ‘at risk’ register which also requires a lengthy application form. This is work in progress.

177.3 High Street traffic update

Cllr Halliday updated that the update is the same as Cllr Shing and we await an invite to a stakeholders meeting.

1. **Report on Allotments – Cllr. Cooper**

Cllr Cooper reported that the allotment renewal invoices have gone out. It was reported to the Clerk that one of the plots near the fence have fence posts coming out of the ground and the brambles are affecting the fence. The plot holder has stated in email to Clerk that they would be happy to help. Cllr Halliday stated that this is something Councillors could look at fixing due to the lack of finances available.

1. **Report on Rights of Way and Countryside – Cllr. Watkins**

Cllr Watkins reported that there is nothing to update.

1. **Report on Car Parks and Public Transport – Cllr. Savage**

180.1 Replacement bins in Willows car park

Clerk reported that this will not be progressed until the new budget year when we know the exact finances for 2018/19.

180.2 Bus Shelter

It was agreed that this would be removed from the agenda as there are no funds for this.

1. **Report on Strategic Planning – Cllr. Watkins**

Cllr Watkins updated that nothing new to report.

1. **Report on Tye and Recreation Ground – Cllr. White**

182.1 Playground refurbishment – Cllr. Cooper

Cllr Cooper reported that she went to a cheque presentation, accompanied by Cllr Watkins at the Tesco branch in Lewes on Monday 12th February where they were presented cheque for £1000 following the grant application. With the hopefully £5000 we have set aside for the playground project, two options have been drawn up and sent to the school and pre school. So far the majority have favoured option 2. Copies of the options were available at the meeting or from the Clerk on request. Cllr Watkins expressed her thanks to Cllr Cooper for all the hard work that has been done on this project. Cllr Savage said he had a resident express his thanks to him recently for the works that have been completed on the gates to ensure they are secure.

182.2 Repainting and signwriting the mine

The Clerk updated that the mine has been cleared out, fixed with a catching plate and is now secure. A large bag of coins was collected and they will be cleaned, counted and given to Heartstart in due course. Once the finances are known for 2018/19 it will be decided whether the mine can be repainted.

1. **Report from Planning Committee - Cllr Halliday agreed to be chair for this meeting.**

183.1 Applications to be considered by APC planning committee at this meeting

**SDNP/18/00377/FUL** Timbers, Sloe Lane, Alfriston, BN26 5UU

Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of new replacement dwelling.

*Mr Davy explained that since the refusal, the plans have been changed by the architect in conjunction with a meeting held with SDNPA. APC have supported this application previously.*

*DECISION – All Councillor’s on the planning committee support this application.*

**SDNP/18/00197/HOUS** Frog Firle Barn, Whiteway, Alfriston, BN26 5T

Porch extension

*APC previously did not support this as would change the character of the building too much, the new revised proposal has been taken into account the comments.*

*DECISION – All Councillor’s on the planning committee support this application.*

183.2 Applications considered by APC Planning Committee since last meeting

183.3 Applications notified or awaiting decision from SDNPA

**SDNP/17/06412/FUL** 7A Chestnut Cottages, High Street, Alfriston, BN26 5TB

Change of use of the former hair salon to a one-bedroom holiday let

*DECISION - SDNPA have refused this application.*

1. **Reports from Outside Bodies**

184.1 Lorry Watch – Dr June Goodfield sent a report to Clerk that still ongoing problems but nothing new to report.

184.2 Heartstart – Mr David Watkins reported that Heartstart is still ongoing just about, only 2 responders at the moment. Would really like to have more responders. There is a great Heartstart in Eastbourne but they can’t always attend Alfriston incidents. If Heartstart is going to carry on existing they need to have more responders, if anyone is interested, please contact Mr Watkins.

184.3 Alfriston Emergency Group – Mr Vernon Reynolds updated that they are getting a new petrol driven pump and it will be used at Deans Corner. They have just taken delivery of 10 new barriers. The big pump in the Harmers field is very successful and has been in action again recently. AEG are hoping that Alfriston Court may work with them to erect a new aerial in order to use walkie talkies to have Valley wide communications. Mr Reynolds updated that AEG are still awaiting donation from Alfriston Cuckmere Connect for their work at the ‘Deck the Halls’ event.

184.4 Flood Forum – Mr John Hurwood updated that the pump is fully automatic, so it can start itself and is working extremely well.

184.5 Neighbourhood Watch – no report received.

184.6 Twinning Committee – Dr June Goodfield reported to Clerk that nothing new to update on.

184.7 Alfriston and Cuckmere Connect – Cllr White passed over to Ms Jilly Byford who is the new Chair of Alfriston Cuckmere Connect [ACC]. Ms Byford confirmed that a meeting is taking place the following day to see if ACC can offer assistance with the village website.

184.8 Cuckmere Buses – Mr Rod Young sent in a detailed report, this is attached under Appendix B. He raised some of the key points from the report provided and wanted to ensure that this report is still helpful.

184.9 St Andrews – no report received.

1. **Correspondence to The Clerk**
* Permission request from the Pre-school to use the Tye on the 9th June 2018 to hold Sussex Day and to use the Recreation Ground for parking. All Councillors agreed and permission granted.
* Permission request from Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Historical Society to use the A board on the 15th March and 19th April 2018. Permission granted.
1. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 19:15 on Monday 19th March 2018 in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall. The meeting will be suspended after the Chairman’s welcome to allow Public Questions and Reports from County and District Councillors.

1. **Public Questions**
2. Ms Gill Chopra asked what is the role of the Tye trustees. Clerk could not answer it at this time as Mr Young has previously requested this information and the documents held by the Clerk and Charity Commission do not give him the answers. Mr Young asked when the last Trustee meeting was held? Cllr Savage explained that he had not known there to be a meeting, however as the Tye is as agenda item for every meeting he would see the monthly Parish Council meetings as a Tye meeting. Mr Young said the contracts that have been sent to him from Clerk and Charity Commission are dated 1879 and 1907, he is going to pull together a summary of everything he has found out. Mr Young does find it odd that the Trustees are 3 named individuals and the Council as a whole. Cllr Halliday confirmed that we do need to look at this to ensure we are doing everything we should as a Tye trustees.
3. Ms Caroline Adcock stated she would be interested to know why loss of Willows income. Clerk said at this time she did not have an answer but feels that it could be due to those attending knowing the working pattern of the car park attendant plus less coaches and visitors attending the village. Initial changes have been put in place by Clerk and a meeting shortly with WDC has been arranged. Clerk will know the exact loss of income in April once end of year has been completed.
4. Mr Adrian Butcher stated that regarding the website he feels it is important that Alfriston Parish Council take ownership of this and maybe manage some of it. He stated that the Alfriston War Memorial Hall [AWMH] website’s is hosted by the village website which AWMH pay a considerable sum for, Mr Butcher wanted reassurance it would not just be turned off. Clerk reported that Mr Exley has confirmed he would not just switch it off but would like to hand it over within 2 months.
5. Mr Rod Young stated that as the finances of the Parish Council are low and there are a number of able bodies in the village, could there be a volunteer list put together and they can be asked to do such things as deliver poll cards, fix the allotment posts etc. Clerk stated that this was an excellent idea and would put something together and circulate it to all.
6. Mrs Heather Hurst explained that she was having problems opening the emails from the Parish Council sent via Mailchimp. Clerk confirmed she is aware of this and has asked Mailchimp to investigate this as it seems to be an ‘Apple’ issue, however in the meantime if anyone having this problem lets the Clerk know she can ensure the emails get sent via another route.
7. Mrs Sylvia Daw asked as the water fountain is still not working and there is no funding to repair, is it possible for local shops and pubs to put a sign up in their premises stating they are happy to fill up water bottles? Clerk did confirm that the fountain was a relatively cheap fix but due to where the leak is, the whole fountain needs switching off which means finding the water cover and reaching the tap which is proving tricky. However, this is something that could be added to the new ‘volunteer list’.

Signed Nicholas Beechey – Chairman

**APPENDIX A**

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**APPENDIX B**

**Cuckmere Buses**

**Report of the Stakeholders’ Meeting held on Monday 15 January 2018**

Points dealt with at the Stakeholders’ meeting which may be of interest to Alfriston Parish Councillors were as follows:

**Finance**

The full-year results for 2017 and the budget for 2018 are:

 Budget 2017 £k Actual 2017 £k Budget 2018 £k

Income 186.3 212.5 203.2

Expenditure (189.5) (209.5) (207.2)

Surplus/Deficit (3-2) 3.0 (4.0)

Passengers 80,000 82,870 83,000

The year-end surplus is largely the result of the sale of a bus at above book value, partly offset by higher than budgeted servicing costs. At the year-end, cash in hand was £120.9k, with a bus purchase planned for 2018.

**Services**

Road works in Hailsham town centre have been completed, although parts of the surface in the High Street are already breaking up, which may require further closures and deviations. With Cuckmere Buses services now largely returned to normal a review of Hailsham town services is under way, to take account of falling passenger numbers on parts of the town routes. Work on the Arndale Centre in Eastbourne is progressing slowly, and future arrangement for town centre bus stops are under discussion.

The Rambler Bus service (No. 47), which brings visitors to Alfriston at the weekends, resumes after the winter break on 24/25 March, and the Cuckmere Buses-operated Sunday 126 service between Eastbourne and Seaford via Alfriston resumes its summer timetable that weekend.

Seaford & District Buses, which operates the weekday 125 service between Lewes and Eastbourne via Alfriston, has announced that from 11 February it is withdrawing from all daytime scheduled services. ESCC have secured Compass Travel to take over the route on weekdays, although this will be on a reduced timetable from 3 April. Cuckmere Buses will continue to operate the service on Saturdays.

**Fares**

Single fares will increase by 10 or 15p from 22 April, with corresponding increases in return fares. Cuckmere Buses policy is to maintain fares broadly in line with other operators.

**Bus Fleet**

The newly announced Mellor Strata low floor bus, which Cuckmere Buses was interested in buying, proved to have a seating capacity in excess of requirements. It is hoped to acquire an alternative Sprinter model in 2018, funded by grant and/or sale of one of the mid-life buses in the fleet. Cuckmere buses needs to maintain a fleet with a balance of smaller buses, which are more economical to operate, and larger buses for the more heavily used routes.

**The Future**

There is continuing confusion over the Dept for Transport’s intentions in relation to bus regulation., amidst concern by commercial bus operators at what they deem to be unfair competition from voluntary service operators. Brexit may further complicate matters. Cuckmere Buses hopes to be able to continue to operate under the permit system, which does not require drivers to obtain full passenger service licences (at considerable expense). New regulations may, however, prevent Cuckmere Buses from bidding for special services (such as the Charleston Festival shuttle) which currently help finance the regular services.

Rod Young

Feb 2018