ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

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25th April 2018

**Minutes of The Annual Parish Assembly of Alfriston Parish Council (APC)**

**held in Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 16th April 2018**

**Present:**

Cllr. N. Beechey - Chair Cllr. N. White

Cllr. J. Watkins – Vice Chair Cllr. C. Adcock

Cllr. R. Savage

Cllr. K. Halliday

**In attendance:**

Victoria Rutt - Parish Clerk

Approximately 20 members of the public

**1. Welcome by the Chairman, Cllr Nick Beechey**

Cllr. Beechey welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending the Annual Parish Assembly. He welcomed Cllr Caroline Adcock to the Council as this is the first meeting in her new role.

The Annual Assembly is usually a run through of the past year and future year. Cllr Beechey reported that we have nearly achieved the partial playground refurbishment to make it more exciting for local and visiting children, this will be happening in mid-May. We have seen the start of the volunteer group, with thanks in the first instance to Cllr Halliday and Mrs Heather Hurst for repairing the fencing at the allotment over the weekend. There is a lengthy list of tasks around the village so the more volunteers the better! Cllr Beechey is sad to report that even though the council tax bill increased, East Sussex County Council [ESCC] have cut some services, one of them being the grass cutting service. They used to do 6 annual cuts, they have now reduced to 2 meaning the APC have had no choice to pay for the other four to get it back up to the 6 cuts, as well as the APC paying a contractor for extra cuts in the year to ensure the village remains presentable for our visitors and residents.

Cllr Beechey thanked his fellow Councillors for all their hard work this year; Cllr Watkins as Vice Chair, Cllr Cooper for allotments, Cllr Halliday for Highways, Cllr Savage for Car Parks / Transport and Cllr White for the Tye. Thank you to those who represent our outside bodies; to David Lewis, Vernon Reynolds and all in AEG who help constantly around the village. Thank you to Richard Bartlett for being our Tree Warden, he is stepping down in May and Dan Larkin has been approached to take over. Richard has been our tree warden for a very long time so all Councillors wanted to express their sincere thanks to him for his hard work. Thank you to Heartstart, there may just be the two of you now but it is still going and hopeful that one person may join them soon. Thank you to Nick Cattell for continuing to send out all the Neighbourhood emails. Thank you to Rod Young for being our Cuckmere Buses representative and to June Goodfield for Lorrywatch and Twinning. Thank you to Nick White and now Jilly Byford for representing ACC and finally thank you to the Clerk. She has been in post for just over a year now and for someone to come with no Parish Council experience she has taken to the job very well and has not run off yet! All Councillors agreed and expressed they’re thanks to the Clerk.

Cllr Beechey stated that in the past year we have come closer to resolving the issue of parking on the Tye; walking down to the Tye and seeing no cars parked on the grass and being able to see the surrounding area is lovely and enjoyable. APC continue to oppose the ESCC traffic light scheme and hope they realise that traffic lights will not work in the village. If the traffic light scheme is killed off it is hoped that will provide the opportunity for a more suitable, sensitive and sensible traffic calming scheme.

Finally, thank you to those who have been extremely generous towards the ‘There but Not There’ WW1 commemoration fund. The plan is to reach £1300 to purchase 25 perspex silhouettes with name blocks. We are currently at £1054 so we are getting close. A piece is going in the next edition of Cuckmere News. It was discussed that if we hit our target and get extra we could either purchase one of the large life-sized silhouettes to go on the Tye or in the Churchyard, or give the extra to other churches in the benefice to help them to take part. All Councillors supported this.

Cllr Watkins wanted to thank Cllr Beechey on behalf of all her fellow Councillors for the past year as Chairman and for all his hard work.

**2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 24th April 2017 and matters arising.**

Cllr. Savage proposed and Cllr. Watkins seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2017 were approved as a true and accurate record.

**3. Presentations for village website**

Cllr Beechey started by explaining that Alfriston Cuckmere Connect have chosen to no longer put a presentation forward as they want to proceed with a website of their own to cover a larger catchment area. There is just the one presentation this evening from Mr Nathan Pope.

Mr Pope delivered a detailed presentation, it is attached as Appendix A, and then questions were asked.

Mrs Sylvia Daw asked about phone signal in the village ensuring they can get the website on phones? She asked if Rathfinny ever put the mast up. Cllr Beechey stated that the mast has been put up but there appears to be no improvement to service locally. Mr Pope stated he would like to help the community with getting technology to the village. Mr Vernon Reynolds asked about the ownership of the website. Mr Pope confirmed that APC should own the domain and that he would manage the site. Mr Reynolds asked if Mr Pope would send emails out to the local groups to see if they wished to place anything on the website. Mr Pope confirmed that is exactly what he would be doing, he wants to work closely with all the groups and get them represented on the website. Mrs Heather Hurst asked what the overlap would be with the new website that ACC have suggested they will be designing. Mr Pope stated that it is good for the businesses to cover a wider catchment area, an opportunity to build income and that he would work together with them so the two websites can cross over. Mrs Hurst and Ms Monteath-Wilson asked why ACC and Mr Pope are not working together on one website as they think this is a real shame. Cllr Beechey read out the reasons why as sent by Ms Jilly Byford:

*After several meetings of the ACC, we have decided not to submit a proposal for taking up a website with a domain name owned by the Parish Council.  We are grateful to the APC for offering the opportunity and wish to thank the APC for their offer of time at the AGM next week, but we will not expect to be addressing the meeting. As traders, we are mindful of our place in the Alfriston community, and we are determined to make our site beneficial for residents as well as for visitors. But we are also mindful that our businesses rely on a wider community, extending well beyond the bounds of the Parish. Further, local traders’ groups have historically embraced membership from a larger region than the Parish. So it seems to us sensible that we should develop a site with goals that may vary from the concerns and focus of the Parish Council, even though we share the Council’s desire to support, encourage and build a vibrant local community.*

Mr Pope was asked whether ACC pulling out of the process will affect the income from advertising. Mr Pope feels positive that it will not and Cllr White agreed that he felt that businesses would pay to advertise on both websites; he will do with his personal business. Cllr Savage stated it is a shame they are not working together but has worked with Mr Pope previously and knows that he will focus on the community element and that the websites will cross link. Cllr White declared an interest as being a member of ACC but has not been involved in the website discussions. He stated that ACC have pulled out of the process as they have lost trust in the Parish Council as a decision was made at the last meeting and since then emails happened to transfer the domain name sooner. Cllr White stated that had he not put his foot down the transfer would have happened. Cllr Beechey expressed his displeasure of this comment. It was Mr Exley who had wanted to proceed with the domain transfer sooner rather than later and had it been transferred to APC there was nothing to stop APC then transferring the domain to whomever they chose to take over. If ACC had issues they could have attended the meeting this evening but they have chosen not to. It is not a fair statement to make.

Mr Pope stated that he wanted to get all the information up to date on the website and the information on all the upcoming events. Anything that Mr Exley has committed on, Mr Pope will take over and can then negotiate at a later date. It was asked how soon Mr Pope can get going on the website. He explained there are a few technical processes that need to be sorted but possibly by end of week. Mrs Heather Hurst asked a question about a cost he mentioned in his presentation which related to the Wix fees; it was agreed we did not need an explanation as very technical. Mr Pope thanked Councillors and residents for their time. Cllr Beechey thanked Mr Pope and explained it would be discussed under item 219 in the Parish Council meeting.

**4. Questions from the Floor**

There were no public questions.