ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

**CLERK TO THE COUNCIL** 11 Highfield Road

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

**held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 20th May 2019**

**Present:**

Cllr J Watkins [Chair] Cllr S Daw

Cllr N Beechey [Vice Chair] Cllr S Rabagliati

Cllr V Cooper Cllr R Savage

**In attendance:**

Victoria Rutt - Parish Clerk

Approximately 16 members of the public

**14. Chairman’s Welcome**

Cllr Watkins welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Public Questions**
2. Mr John Hurwood asked whether the Council were aware that the water fountain was not working again. Clerk reported that they are aware, it was only fixed recently but the tap is faulty so a new tap will be fitted within the next few weeks.
3. Mr John Hurwood asked if the tree that had been planted at the top of Weavers Lane that is awaiting a plaque is now actually dead. It was agreed that the Council’s tree warden would be asked to look at the tree and see if anything can be done. A discussion took place about the two trees that appeared on the Glebeland, one as you look out the Hall window and one near the mine. The tree warden will look at them also and one could be moved to replace the dead tree if needed. It was also agreed that a guard would need to be placed around the tree as it is believed to have died due to the strimmer damaging it. Action.
4. Mrs Katie Salmon raised the white line along Furlongs. Clerk will raise this at the Strengthening Local Relationships [SLR] meeting this coming Friday. Action.
5. It was raised that a tree in the Dene car park which is believed to be linked to the Queens Jubilee requires some work on the plaque. Clerk to speak to Chair about this as she knows a lady who may be able to help. Action.
6. **Report from Maria Caulfield MP**

Maria Caulfield sent in a written report. Regarding the traffic lights she recently met with the Leader of East Sussex County Council to discuss the plans post the traffic light trial in the village. While the decision is yet to be made, she got the feeling that the trial of traffic lights did not go as expected and the County Council have some concerns about introducing them as a permanent arrangement.

There has also been a reshuffle at the County Council and there is a new cabinet member for transport, Cllr Claire Dowling. Maria hopes to meet with her soon to discuss many of the concerns that residents have.

Residents may have heard about the plans for a new medical hub in Seaford on the site of the Wave Leisure centre. This medical hub will include room for more doctors and extra services to be provided for residents in Seaford. Maria has been contacted by residents in Alfriston concerned that their GP services may be transferred to the new hub. She has made enquires and has been reassured there are no plans to change GP services in the village.

Maria has met with a number of town, district and parish councils about the litter on the A27. While this is the responsibility of the district they have struggled to do regular clean ups as the road is under the control of Highways England and so they can only gain access when allowed to do so by them. Maria is looking to see if Highways England could take on the maintenance as well as the access and she is organising a meeting with local councils who are interested in this.

It was agreed that Cllr Rabagliati would lead on the litter issue along the A27.

1. **Report from Cllr Stephen Shing [ESCC]**

No update or report.

1. **Report from Cllr Michael Lunn [WDC]**

Cllr Michael Lunn expressed his thanks for making him feel so welcome and said that he is happy to be here. He reported that he has been nominated onto the SDNP board which is expected to be endorsed on Wed. There are two parts, planning and policy/scrutiny, he will be focusing on the latter. Cllr Lunn has also asked the leader of WDC to be put on the Pevensey and Cuckmere Water board to look at the management of the levels, shingle etc. He has submitted a Freedom of Information request to see what has been done over the past 5yrs and to see what budget and plans they have for the coming year. Traffic issues came through loudly during the election process, the transition of moving Cllr Nick Bennett is welcomed but do need to get in front of Cllr Claire Dowling to put points ahead before the meeting. The Willows car park toilets are now open, they will be closed again in Winter months. Recycling and waste management is shifting to Biffa, there has been reassurance for the transition. Charging for green garden waste, £50 surcharge, there is no capability of refunds for missed collections as processing the refund would cost more than the refund. If there are any missed bins, please report straight away and copy in Michael. Cllr Savage wanted to raise that the village did not want traffic lights, and it remains the formal position of APC that it is opposed to traffic lights. Cllr Rabagliati mentioned the recycling point in the Deans Hotel car park had not been emptied for at least a month. Clerk to report to Wealden’s waste team.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Adcock.

1. **Declaration of interests**

No Councillors had anything to declare.

1. **Minutes**

Cllr. Beechey proposed and Cllr. Cooper seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2019 were a true and accurate record. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cllr. Watkins duly signed the minutes.

1. **Finance**

22.1 To approve the Statement of Finances and sign invoices for payment

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

[Appendix A]. **MOTION CARRIED**

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

22.2 To approve Q4 audit paperwork

Cllr. Beechey proposed and Cllr. Savage seconded a motion to approve the Q4 2018-19 audit paperwork.

**MOTION CARRIED**

22.3 To ratify and approve annual return 2018/19

Cllr. Beechey proposed and Cllr. Savage seconded a motion to approve the annual return 2018/19.

**MOTION CARRIED.** Cllr. Watkins duly signed the relevant paperwork.

22.4 To approve and adopt Finance Regulations and Risk Assessment documents 2019

Cllr. Savage proposed and Cllr. Beechey seconded a motion to approve the Finance Regulations and Risk Assessment documents 2019. **MOTION CARRIED**

22.5 To approve Standing Orders 2019

Clerk reported that this is going to be deferred to the June 2019 meeting.

22.6 To approve insurance renewal with BHIB insurance brokers for 2019/20

Cllr. Cooper proposed and Cllr. Beechey seconded a motion to renew for 2019/20 with BHIB insurance brokers. **MOTION CARRIED**

1. **To consider/determine the ambit of a public consultation for proposed sculpture**

A discussion took place about the public consultation required for the proposed sculpture. It was agreed that questionnaire will be placed on the website, noticeboard, email to subscribers and placed in the Cuckmere News to get wide coverage. The points that need to be asked are;

* 1. Do people want the sculpture?
  2. Location?
  3. If they want the Sculpture but not on the Tye, what other location?

It was agreed that question C would be a tick box, areas suggested were the Recreation Ground and top of Star Lane. The Clerk will draft something and circulate to Councillors. It was discussed that the Sculpture Group could arrange a small exhibition and APC’s consultation deadline could be after this so people can go and look at the information. Clerk will liaise with the Sculpture Group about this. Action.

1. **To discuss and agree potential nominations for the People’s Choice Award [SDNPA]**

Further to Cllr Adcock raising these awards at the last meeting a discussion took place about who APC should put forward for nomination. It was agreed under the ‘Commercial’ category it would be Rathfinny and Much Ado Books. Under the ‘Gardens’ category it would be Follers Manor. Clerk to speak to the owners to get the nomination form completed along with the photographs. Action.

1. **To discuss and agree if there is a requirement for a Housing Needs Survey**

Clerk reported that following recent discussions where the need for a survey was agreed but APC had no funds, the Clerk has been informed by Alfriston Community Land Trust [CLT] that they have obtained funding for this in order for the survey to go ahead. With this fantastic news, the Council agreed that we should move forward with commissioning Action in Rural Sussex to undertake the survey. Cllr Beechey proposed and Cllr Rabagliati seconded this decision.

1. **APC’s response to planning application for Drusillas roundabout / A27 proposals**

Cllr Beechey reported on the proposed changes to the A27 at the Drusilla’s roundabout. The changes are to make the A27 two lanes coming up to the roundabout from all directions. It was felt this might increase the flow of traffic making it harder to get off the roundabout at the Berwick and Alfriston junctions. Cllr Adcock raised in an email that proposed widening may give the wrong message and make it look as if this is more of a major road than it is so there needs to be signage to deter large vehicles coming through the village. The pedestrian crossing will remain. Cllr Michael Lunn stated that proposed lights are being placed onto the A27 near Polegate at Folkington and he thought this would not ease flow at the roundabout. It was agreed that Cllr Rabagliati would lead on APC's response to the proposal, to be circulated to Councillors. Action.

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

Following the earlier update that there is a new Lead Member for Transport, it was discussed whether it would be a good idea to see if Cllr Claire Dowling would attend a ‘special meeting’ prior to the Lead Member Meeting on the 17th June to hear the concerns from the Council and residents. It was agreed that Clerk would ask. Action.

Clerk reported that Speedwatch is on hold due to not having enough volunteers.

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

Cllr Cooper reported that the Clerk is just chasing the final few people who have not returned their renewals. There are 4 people on the waiting list for a plot so need an up to date list of the vacant ones.

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

Cllr Beechey raised the white bridge needed repainting. Clerk to chase this as it was reported back in February 2019. Action.

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

Clerk reported that Cllr Adcock has raised concerns about a wooden sign in the Willows car park which needs some attention. Cllr Savage said he will look into it. Action.

The wooden board on the folly in the Dene car park has been damaged so Clerk to speak with Wealden District Council about this. It was also suggested that the follow needed clearing of dead vegetation. Action.

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

Nothing to report.

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

32.1 Update on Tye footpath

Cllr Beechey reported that the planning application has been submitted for the Tye path and now awaiting decision. Cllr Beechey confirmed a chain will be going up at the Wingrove end of the Tye as it is believed the bin lorry may be driving on the Tye from this access causing damage.

32.2 Update on Playground

Cllr Beechey reported that there is a budget set aside for the playground. After a discussion with a local farmer’s wife there could be some good ideas for cheaper equipment. Cllr Beechey is going to look into this in more detail.

Cllr Watkins raised a concern about a tree at the bottom of the Rec along the Furlongs and a concern about the fence, Clerk will speak to tree warden about the tree and will look at the fence with Cllr Beechey. Cllr Beechey expressed his thanks to Roger Cooper for fixing the gate post in the playground and to the Clerk for meeting with the grass contractors again to try and resolve some of the issues there have been. As a result we are hoping for a better season with them this year.

1. **Report from Planning Committee – Cllr Adcock**

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

33.2 Applications considered by APC Planning Committee since last meeting

**SDNP/19/01852/TCA** Orchard House, West Street, Alfriston, BN26 5UX Not supported

**SDNP/19/01153/HOUS** Sloe Cottage, West Street, Alfriston, BN26 5UN Supported

**SDNP/19/02012/LIS** Cinders Cottage, 3 West Street, Alfriston, BN26 5UX Supported

**SDNP/19/01919/CND** Goodings, Sloe Lane, Alfriston, BN26 5UT Supported

33.3 Applications notified or awaiting decision from SDNPA

33.4 Enforcement Updates

Cllr Adcock sent an update that SDNP have spoken with the new owner of the old Steamer Trader building and he is now working with South Downs and has ceased all work for the time being. SDNP were not particularly worried about the removal of the shop fittings, however a source of concern to them is the application of a proprietary sealant/primer to the timber-frame inside the building. This does need listed building consent. SDNP are not familiar with the particular product used and its potential long-term impact on the timber frame, therefore have sought the technical advice of Historic England in this regard and where they go from here will depend on that advice.

**34.**  **Reports from Outside Bodies**

*34.1 Lorrywatch:* Further to the Annual Meeting, Ms Goodfield has now stood down from this role. There were a few incidents read out which will be reported to Sussex Police via Operation Crackdown by the Clerk. It was asked whether the Clerk could write to serial offenders who insist on always parking in the Square. Clerk said if she is informed who is doing it, letters can be sent out.

*34.2 Heartstart*: Mr David Watkins reported that there are now no responders due to Cllr Watkins resigning due to health reasons and David having a bad back. There has been a recruitment drive in Eastbourne recently. Heartstart will carry on but not with any responders in the village at the moment. Equipment and clothing will be given to the Eastbourne group, any remaining funds will be spent on setting up more defibrillators in the village and their ongoing maintenance costs. They will also continue running familiarisation courses.

*34.3 Alfriston Emergency Group*: Mr Vernon Reynolds reported the water mains work coming up in January 2020. They wondered whether there would be a role for AEG to guiding traffic, or signage. Happy to offer services if needed/wanted. Clerk explained that the water board will be working with the Parish Council and the local businesses in the coming months. When more detail is known this can be discussed. It was raised by Cllr Savage that a total resurface should be done post these works. This will be raised at the upcoming SLR meeting.

*34.4 Flood Forum* – Mr John Hurwood reported that a Flood Forum meeting was held in April. There has been no flooding of Alfriston by water from the Cuckmere this winter. Thank you to the Environment Agency for providing the pump over the winter period, which prevented flooding by ground and surface water along the road into the village, as well as keeping The Willows car park open. Sadly, somebody has been regularly interfering with the pump controls, effectively disabling it, so the EA had to visit more often to overcome this, which made their operation more difficult. The river level is higher than normal because the mouth is blocked by shingle, diverting the river to the East at a higher level. Whilst this has not resulted in any problems in Alfriston, it has been causing problems from Litlington down to the river mouth, as the higher water levels have not allowed the normal drainage sluices to operate, resulting in flooded fields. There are no immediate plans to clear the shingle. Milton Lock is also not operating at present, apparently the hydraulics need to be repaired, at a cost of around £20,000, and in the meantime the lock is stuck in the summer position, sending more water down the freshwater stream, which is making the problem detailed in 3 above much worse. The EA is looking into their options concerning the lock.

*34.5 Neighbourhood Watch* – no report

34.6 *Twinning Committee* – no report.

34.7 *Alfriston and Cuckmere Connect* – Ms Byford reported that work is being done on the village map and that they have a meeting next week.

*34.8 St Andrew’s Church* – Ms Diana Monteath-Wilson reported that work has commenced on the Spire. It is due to finish end of June/beginning of July. They have drawn up restoration plans for the next project, the south transept exterior pointing & windows. Tender and costings to be done and then the restoration committee will go ahead sourcing grants. The current scaffold will be removed on wedding days.

*34.9 Clergy House* – Mrs Sylvia Daw reported that they have welcomed 6026 visitors so far this year. They will be opening on Fridays in July and August in addition to their normal opening hours, so six days a week.  Reminder that it is free entry to the gift shop, as a charity income via the shop or fundraising is so important as without it they wouldn’t be able to conserve the property. The next event is a family half term trail from 25th May to 2nd June. They have dendrochronology work in the house on the 18/19th June which will determine at last the actual build date of the Clergy House which at the moment they estimate at 1350.

*34*.*10 Cuckmere Buses* – Mr Rod Young sent in a report. Appendix B.

**35**. **Correspondence to The Clerk**

1. South East Water have confirmed the work they are undertaking between 27th June – 5th July will happen between the hours of 19:00 – 06:00 to avoid congestion. They have stated that they are undertaking radar survey works so there should be minimal noise and disruption for residents.
2. A board permission granted on the Square for the Art Club to promote their exhibition on the 25th, 26th and 27th May 2019.
3. Emails have come in disappointed with the decision that APC made about the white lines at Whiteway. It has been explained that the decision has now been made and Standing Orders state that a decision will not be looked into again within 6 months unless three Councillors put in writing that they want it on the agenda.
4. Permission granted for an A board to promote the South Downs Summer Music Festival and for the Folkington Mobile Bar to be placed on the Tye in the evenings. The festival is 23rd – 28th July.
5. The Smugglers building has been hit again by a car. The owner would like to request some bollard protection. It was agreed that she would need to speak to ESCC about this.
6. ESCC have confirmed that a bollard is going to be placed on North Street outside the Badgers Tea Room entrance to stop cars mounting the pavement.
7. A board permission granted to the Alfriston Horticulture Society for their early flower show which is being held on June 6th.
8. A lady who is getting married in the Old Chapel Centre in August has asked if guests could go onto the Tye after the ceremony to play large garden games such as Jenga and Connect 4 and have drinks. It was agreed that those games can be played but no ball games, drinks can’t be served on the Tye but can be taken down but caution required with glasses. Clerk to ask they ensure everything is left how it was found, clean and tidy, and any donations in the mine would be greatly appreciated.
9. Clerk reported that a lot of signage and bins have appeared on the Tye again. There is a byelaw [number 11 under Trading] which prevents promoting a business on the Tye. In April the Clerk had to speak to: the Wingrove about their bins being out (they quickly took them in); Tavern on the Tye - an A board and two wheelie bins; The Shot Coffee House - two A boards; the Clergy House and the Pre School a flag each. It was stated that the Clergy House is well signposted however both the Pre School and Clergy House have said they need the flags up in order to show people where they are. It was discussed and it was agreed that there can’t be one rule for one and one for another and The Tye is a beautiful space that should not have signage everywhere. It was resolved that in line with the byelaw no flags, A boards or bins are to be put out on the Tye. Clerk to write to businesses involved.

**36. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Council will be held at 7.15 pm on **Monday 17th June 2019** in 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**

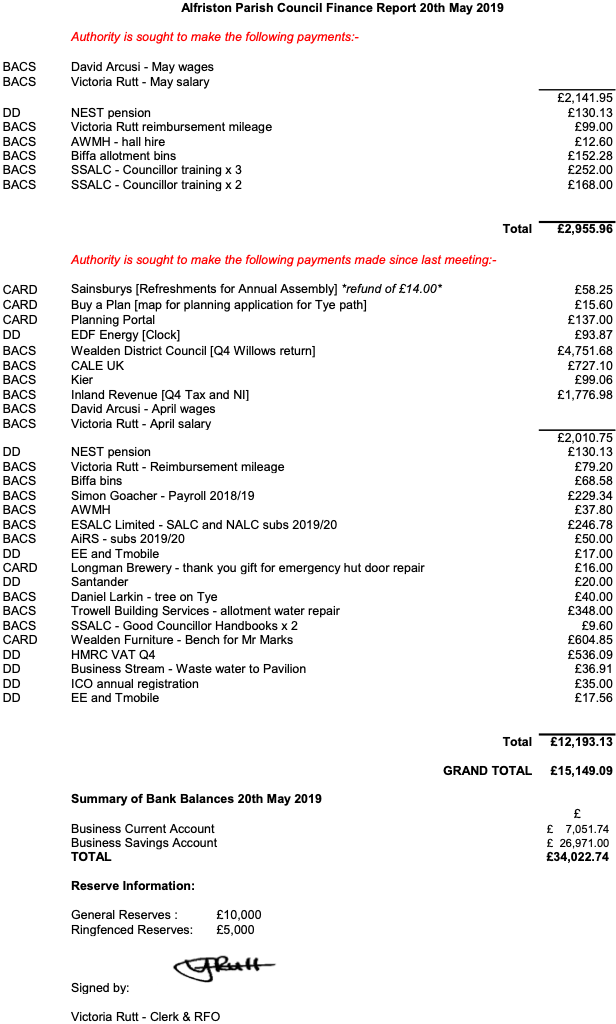
1. Martin from Shot Coffee House asked about A board permission being granted in the meeting. It was explained that these are for A boards on the Square, not the Tye and there is a policy about these and they are for community events and workshops only, not for commercial use. Martin understands that the aesthetic of the Tye is important but disputes not being able to put out his A boards due to one explaining there is disabled access if required and the other one pointing out the Heritage Centre being above the café. Martin asked would the Council consider a looser structure on the Tye? It was explained that APC has just taken a decision; it is APC’s administered land, not common land, the Tye is a held in trust and the Council is the Trustee.

2. Mr Vernon Reynolds said that he likes the fact that the Tye is a beautiful space and does not want it to see it get cluttered with signage.



Signed: Victoria Rutt – Clerk and RFO

**APPENDIX A**

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**APPENDIX B**

**Cuckmere Buses Annual General Meeting and Stakeholders’ Meeting – April 2019**

The company’s AGM for 2018 (attended by Councillor Watkins), and the quarterly Stakeholders Meeting reporting on the first quarter of 2019, were held on the evening of 29 April 2019. The following combines a summary of the main points from the two meetings which may be if interest to Alfriston Parish Councillors.

**Finance**

The company’s financial position remains satisfactory, with a higher than budgeted surplus of £18k on a turnover of £219k for the year 2018, and performance broadly in line with expectations for the first quarter of 2019. In particular the programme of progressively updating the bus fleet with newer, more efficient, vehicles, appears to be paying off in lower servicing and repair costs and greater fuel efficiency. Cash of £99k held at the bank at the end of 2019 allows for the disposal of a further older bus and its replacement with a new bus in 2019. The aim is to arrive at a position where one bus can be replaced each year, so maintaining tighter control simultaneously over depreciation and cost-efficient operating.

**Passengers Carried**

In the course of 2018 total passenger numbers fell slightly, from 82,778 to 81,222. Within this total, passenger numbers in Hailsham rose by almost 8%, following the introduction of new timetables, but other services continued a pattern of slow decline. This appears to reflect a national trend and may be due to older drivers continuing to use their own cars to a greater extent than in past years, but there remain significant numbers of passenger in the more rural areas who are heavily dependent on our services and very appreciative of them.

**Services**

Roadworks in Hailsham and Eastbourne town centres and disruption of rail services through Berwick caused serious problems during 2018, and the problem persists in Eastbourne, where roadworks associated with the redevelopment of the Beacon shopping centre are still ongoing. The Hailsham Town Service was reviewed and alterations made to focus on providing a more frequent service to those parts of the town which produce most passengers. A special timetable booklet was produced for Hailsham and a door to door drop was organised, the results of which can be seen in increased passenger numbers.

Summer service timetables came into effect from 28 April 2019, with minor changes to a number of services. The Ramblerbus 47 service, which brings visitors to Alfriston at weekends, has been rescheduled to provide better train connections, now that the train timetable has settled down. The Eastbourne-Seaford 126 service on Sundays is retimed half an hour later to provide a better service between Alfriston and Seaford in conjunction with the 47. The 125 Eastbourne-Alfriston-Lewes service is extended to start and finish at Lewes Station and will also operate up the drive to Charleston Farmhouse.

During 2018 Cuckmere Buses provided special services to the Charleston Festivals in May and September, and to the Eastbourne Tennis Week in June. Some 75 private hires were undertaken, all of which help to support the cost of running our regular scheduled services. We expect to provide services to a number of Charleston events in 2019 and to once again provide buses for the Eastbourne tennis, while the private hire side continues at a similar level. The availability of buses and drivers for private hire is, of course, constrained by the priority given to the regular services.

A small increase in fares was applied in the spring of last year, and a similar increase is planned for the autumn of this year, to keep fares in line with those of the commercial operators.

**Vehicles**

The new Mercedes Sprinter vehicle, Bus No. 24, which went into service in the autumn of last year combines the economy of the new compact generation of buses with a layout which has proved popular with passengers. A further new Mercedes Sprinter with a similar layout is on order for the autumn of 2019, which will enable the disposal of Bus No 9, now fifteen years old.

**Drivers**

Finding sufficient committed regular drivers for all our services remains a problem, and one or two services have had to be cancelled at short notice recently for want of a driver. This impacts adversely on our reputation for reliability. Seven new drivers have been recruited and trained in recent months and are relieving some of the pressure on weekend and Hailsham driving, but more new drivers are always needed.

**Design and livery**

The livery, logo and design standards of the company have remained essentially unchanged since Cuckmere Community Bus was set up 43 years ago. A specialist design agency has now been retained and a new logo and a completely redesigned timetable booklet have been introduced. The new timetable has been very well-received. A new livery for the buses has been designed - retaining the current green and cream colours – and will first appear on the new bus ordered for the autumn.

**Legislation**

Concerns remain about the possible impact of enabling regulations made under the new Bus Services Act passed last year. A legal challenge by the Bus and Coach Association, representing commercial bus operators, is aimed at constraining what the Association sees as unfair competition by ‘not for profit’ operators. The eventual impact on the permits under which services such as Cuckmere Buses operate remains to be seen. There is also continuing uncertainty about the future of the D1 driving licence, which was automatically awarded as part of the standard driving licence until the 1990s, and which most of Cuckmere Buses drivers rely on. It is felt that the proposed changes are unlikely to be pursued until after Brexit takes place and things settle down.

Rod Young

6 May 2019