ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

**CLERK TO THE COUNCIL**  33 Swaines Way

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

**held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 20th September 2021**

**Present:**

Cllr Watkins [Chair]

Cllr Beechey [Vice Chair]

Cllr Daw

**In attendance:**

Victoria Rutt - Parish Clerk

Approximately 22 members of the public

**54**. **Chairman’s Welcome**

Cllr Watkins welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that due to some apologies from Councillors and a Councillor resignation this morning we are low on Councillor numbers for the meeting but are quorate. There will be one agenda item that will need to be deferred until next month.

**55. Public Questions**

Cllr Watkins introduced Mrs Nicky Kinghorn and Mrs Vicky Radtke, both Parish Councillors from Arlington Parish Council, who have attended the meeting in the capacity of members of the Arlington Parish Housing Sub-Committee. Mrs Kinghorn explained that there is not yet a planning application, but Grosvenor estate are liaising with Wealden District Council [WDC] to build 2,500 homes on the land between Coldharbour Road and North of the A22 Boship roundabout. Arlington Parish Council have requested a meeting with both WDC and Grosvenor about this matter which will hopefully happen in due course. Arlington Parish Council have a number of concerns, the main ones being the flooding issues and tenuation.

Mrs Radtke explained that the Housing Sub-Committee have produced a two-sided leaflet which will be published widely in due course with all the information that is currently known. They would welcome all affected Parish Councils to join them to work together. There is a Facebook page called ‘Save Wealden from Overdevelopment Team’ (SWOT). Mrs Vanessa Rowlands from Cuckmere Valley Parish Council asked if it was an application linked to the Local Plan. Mrs Radtke said that WDC are working with landowners on this application and are lobbying for it to be included in the Plan. Mr Mark Lamb from Friends of Cuckmere Valley said it is something they would be interested in working together on and that they have similar concerns with the flooding and how it will affect the valley. The leaflet will be published in due course. Mrs Kinghorn is happy to be contacted for any further information, the email is arlingtonparishcouncilesussex@aol.com. Cllr Watkins thanked them for attending and it was agreed that APC would want to be kept informed of all developments.

*8 members of the pubic left the meeting.*

**56. Apologies for absence**

Apologies have been received and accepted from Cllr Bell, Cllr Rabagliati and Cllr Cooper.

Clerk explained that as of that morning of 20th September 2021, Cllr Savage has resigned. The Notice of Vacancy will be published the next day with the proposed timeline for new Councillor advert in October 2021, if no election is called, and a new Councillor co-opted at the November 2021 meeting.

**57. Report from Maria Caulfield MP**

Maria Caulfield MP was unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies. She sent in a report which can be found in Appendix B.

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

Cllr Shing reported that a number of meetings have returned to normal. There may be more money in due course but also more scrutiny. He spoke with Mr Karl Taylor recently about the traffic consultation, no update as yet but he will liaise with APC when a consultation date is known.

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

*Cllr Lunn arrived just in time for his agenda item so was not present for public questions when the proposed 2,500 houses at Upper Dicker were discussed.*

Cllr Lunn reported that he recently had a briefing about the Local Plan from the planning portfolio holder. The latest information is WDC are in the process of closing off the options for the numbers. He will inform the Parish Council when it comes out and the exact figures.

Cllr Lunn has concerns about the biodiversity, flooding and infrastructure. This is all information that is needed so everyone is informed. Even though Alfriston is in the National Park there would be an impact. The plan should come out for public consultation around the end of October. Mr Jon Boxall asked if Cllr Lunn knew about the proposed 2,500 houses planned for Upper Dicker. Cllr Lunn confirmed that he is aware of the proposal and explained that he would not support it. He is waiting to see the actual detail before engaging.
Mr John Hurwood asked if WDC have contacted the Government about the changing of procedures in the Local Plans? Cllr Lunn confirmed that they have been lobbying housing ministers about the housing number. He explained that WDC have approved 17,000 homes. Maria Caulfield MP is helping with this matter and the key is to continue with good communication. Cllr Lunn stressed that individuals and organisations should respond to the Plan consultation.

**60. Declaration of interests**

Cllr Watkins declared an interest as she is part of the Alfriston Emergency Group. Cllr Daw declared an interest as she is a Churchwarden for St Andrews and is also part of the Alfriston Emergency Group.

**61. Minutes**

61.1 To agree as a true record the Minutes of the APC meeting held on 26th July 2021

Cllr. Beechey proposed and Cllr. Daw seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the APC meeting held on 26th July 2021 were a true and accurate record. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cllr. Watkins duly signed the minutes.

**62. Finance**

62.1 To approve the Statement of Finances: Sept 2021

Cllr. Daw proposed and Cllr. Beechey seconded a motion to approve the Statement of Finances for Sept 2021. [Appendix A]. **MOTION CARRIED**

Cllr. Watkins signed the Invoices for Payment.

**63. To discuss access to and parking on Tye Road, to include consideration of request to make parking for residents only**

Clerk explained that with 3 Councillors in attendance we are quorate for the meeting however as Cllr Daw has to declare an interest in this item due to her role as Churchwarden, she will be unable to join in with the discussion and Councillors would not be quorate. This agenda item therefore will be deferred to the October 2021 agenda. Cllr Beechey explained that a detailed list of options will be drawn up for next month to provide more information for a focused debate. **Action 1.**

**64. To discuss and consider creating a policy for catering vehicles to access the Tye**

Cllr Watkins read out the emails from both the caretakers of the Hall and Mr Adrian Butcher regarding the issues that they have been facing. Key points are below:

* *When a catering van turns up (it’s usually refrigerated) with food for the guests during the day, the Hall fridges are usually full of Bar stock being chilled with little room for anything else, so the caterer has to work from their van, so it’s just not practical to ask them to remove their van after unloading to a parking space, they can’t keep food fresh and risk compromising food standards. There is a small space at the back of the hall that could accommodate this with minimal impact.*
* *The second scenario is for evening food, couples sometimes want a catering wagon outside the Hall for the evening food i.e. Fish and Chip’s, Pizza, street food, generally there only here for 1 – 2 hours.*
* *The structure of the AWMH charity is to make the Hall available to local residents/clubs etc at less than 'cost' price. The most efficient way we have found to do this is as a wedding reception venue as it requires a relatively small number of events throughout the year. It is this income that pays for all the decent upgrades and regular maintenance, which not only make it a special place to hold such events, but it gives the village an extremely well maintained village hall to use.*
* *We have done all we possibly can to make the kitchen as useable as possible, including the recent refurbishment and extension - better fridges, a new cooker, a more efficient dishwasher, more work top space - in the hope that this would be sufficient for wedding events but sometimes that's just not enough, and we would hate to lose a booking for the sake of a van parked near the Hall for a few hours of an evening, on the odd weekend throughout the year.*

Cllr Beechey said there is clearly a need for these vehicles to come to the hall. The existing policy that vehicles should where possible deliver and go should remain, but where necessary vehicles that have to remain should be hidden, and his preference would be for them to be tucked at the back of the hall/house by the patio rather than the front of the hall. It would need to be made clear that no ancillary structures such as tents, bars etc should spread onto the Glebeland and care needs to be taken when driving across the grass to ensure no damage is undertaken. Both Cllr Daw and Cllr Watkins agreed with Cllr Beechey’s comments.
Clerk will liaise with Cllr Beechey to update the existing policy and circulate to the AWMH for future events. **Action 2.**

**65. To discuss and agree which Community Plan to proceed with**

Clerk explained that she had circulated a short report that covered the different plans available to the Parish Council with an explanation of each to aide Councillors decision on which one to go ahead with. Cllr Beechey said the reason this discussion came about is following a point raised by Cllr Bell in regard to the 5/10 year plan for Alfriston and Housing. Cllr Beechey stated looking at the report the only one with any legal effect in terms of planning is the Neighbourhood Plan. However, it is the one that will take the most work. Therefore, APC should only agree to embark on a Neighbourhood Plan if a sufficient number Cllrs are prepared to undertake the work involved. Cllr’s Daw and Watkins agreed.

Clerk is going to now find out all the information about the Neighbourhood Plan process and submit a short report for the October meeting when it can be agreed which Councillors would be willing to sit on the working group for this Plan. **Action 3.**

**66. Report on Highways and Twittens – Cllr Rabagliati**

Cllr Rabagliati was unable to attend the meeting but sent in a short report. A recent meeting with East Sussex County Council about the traffic consultation was very positive and a public consultation should happen soon. Clerk confirmed minutes from this meeting were published and are available on the APC website. There is also a SLR [Strengthening Local Relationships] meeting being held on Friday morning where loose paviours and the road surface in Star Lane will be raised. The Clerk reported about Speedwatch. There are 6 trained members. Official sessions start this week with 3 new locations being agreed by Sussex Police. The locations are the corner of North Street/bottom of Sloe Lane on the grass triangle, halfway up Whiteway near the Rathfinny driveway and the corner of Tye Road next to Deans Place. Councillors agreed that Speedwatch could be an outside body so Clerk can report each month.

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

Cllr Cooper was unable to attend the meeting, however the Clerk updated that Cllr Cooper recently went to look at the allotments and a few plots are still untidy. Clerk and Cllr Cooper will be inspecting the plots together in the coming weeks to make a note of those plot numbers so plot holders can be written to individually. If any plots do become available there is now a lengthy waiting list.

**68. Report on Public Transport – Clerk**

Clerk confirmed that nothing new to report.

**69. Report on Rights of Way and Countryside – Clerk**

Clerk reported that following discussions at the meeting last month when it was suggested that volunteers could paint the White Bridge, whilst it is closed for maintenance works on the other side, the criteria for the volunteers to do this was sent over from South Downs National Park. There were a number of criteria, but the first is that volunteers had to be covered on the APC’s insurance. Due to historic volunteer requests requiring insurance, APC knew that this was not going to be possible as our policy does not allow, so the decision was made not to proceed. This has been reported back to SDNPA and they were asked yet again to reconsider painting the bridge. At present they have no plans to paint the bridge.

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

Cllr Daw reported that the events at the August Bank Holiday were successful and made money for both AEG and the Cricket Club. Permission was granted for the Tye and Recreation ground to be used for August bank holiday 2022.

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

Cllr Beechey reported that the grass cutting on both the Tye and Recreation Ground is getting worse, despite a recent meeting with the Contractor, Clerk and Cllr Beechey. We will need to look at our options re improvement. Cllr Beechey thanked Cllr Daw for continuing to cover the litter bins on the Tye as this is making a huge difference.

Recently one of the concrete bollards at the bottom of the Tye has been destroyed. Also the wooden sleepers by the Wingrove keep getting knocked. If anyone sees this happening please report it to the Clerk. We are still waiting for an update from AEG about the goal posts and there has been no recent update from Friends of Playground. Cllr Beechey asked what progress there has been re. Arranging a meeting about a multi-sport area on the Rec for young people. This is being worked on.

**72. Report from Planning Committee – Cllr Bell**

72.1 Applications considered by APC Planning Committee since last meeting

**SDNP/21/03869/HOUS** White Walls, North Road, Alfriston, BN26 5XD APC objected

**SDNP/21/03803/HOUS** Little Winton, Alfriston Road, Alfriston, BN26 5UH APC supported

**SDNP/21/03796/HOUS** Pailin House, 6 Kings Ride, Alfriston, BN26 5XP APC supported

**SDNP/21/04438/HOUS** Timbers, Sloe Lane, Alfriston, BN26 5UU APC supported

**SDNP/21/04630/HOUS** 6 The Broadway, Alfriston, BN26 5XL APC supported

72.2 Applications notified or awaiting decision from SDNPA

**SDNP/21/00499/FUL** Land South of North Road, Alfriston, East Sussex SDNPA granted

 **SDNP/21/01727/FUL** Mistila, Whiteway, Alfriston, BN26 5TP Decision pending

72.3 Enforcement updates

Clerk explained that the 3 signs that have gone up on the listed Italian shop have been reported to SDNPA Enforcement Officer for investigation.

**73. Reports from Outside Bodies**

*73.1 Volunteer Task Force*: no update.

*73.2 Heartstart*: no update.

*73.3 Alfriston Emergency Group*: Mr Steve Woodgate was unable to attend the meeting but he sent in the following report. ‘*AEG were busy earlier in the month with the flooding that occurred following the heavy rainfall. Crews attended and pumped for several hours, during which we saw a drop in water levels. As the river levels fell, the sluices began to drain.*

*We have not had low enough river levels to be able to ascertain if any of the sluices are stuck open which will explain some of the flooding issues.’*

*73.4 Flood Forum* – Mr Hurwood confirmed nothing new to report.

*73.5 Neighbourhood Watch* – no report.

*73.6 Twinning Committee* – nothing new to report.

*73.7 Alfriston and Cuckmere Connect* – ACC is temporarily suspended at the moment.

*73.8 St Andrew’s Church* – no report.

*73.9 Clergy House* – no report.

*73.10 Cuckmere Buses* – no report.

*73.11 AWMH* – Mr Adrian Butcher thanked APC for supporting the need for catering vehicles.

**74. Correspondence to the Clerk**

1. Clerk reported that the Assistant Manager from The Star has been in touch as the Polizzi’s would like to arrange for a large Christmas tree in the square. They are aware they need to apply for the licence and road closure and would ask Norvetts to put the lights up. Cllr Beechey said he had no issues with this but reminded Cllrs that the criteria for the tree to come under APC insurance is for the lights to be installed by a professional and for the tree to be put up by a competent person. All Councillors were happy with this.

Clerk will liaise with The Star. **Action 4**

1. Letters of thanks have been received from St Wilfrid’s and Cuckmere Buses thanking APC for the grants rewarded at the July 2021 meeting.
2. Email received from The Chapel Cottage residents stating the following. ‘*With reference to the last Parish Council Meeting [Montessori school at OCC*]*, we, the residents of Chapel Cottages, want to make the following statement. It was stated* [by OCC management] *that we were invited to meetings, but the first was during the day when some of the residents were at work, the second meeting was in the late afternoon and was limited to one person from each household and as we only had a couple of days notice and we had made arrangements and so not all of us could attend.*

*One of the letters sent to us stated that the Chapel Centre is soundproof, which is incorrect and also the side door is left open. Regarding the drop off points for parents / carers we have noticed that they are using the Tye road and even parking in The High Street. We also feel that as we are now in talks with The O.C.C Committee it may be best to liaise with them directly and try to resolve any problems’*

1. Clerk reported that an additional email has been received from Mr and Mrs Guyatt along The Broadway who are still unhappy that they are not being consulted with about the goal posts. The Clerk explained the process to them and informed them of the APC meeting so they could attend if they wish. They have not attended.
2. An email has been received from Wealden District Council that the Neighbourhood Recycling point at Deans Place Hotel will be closed and removed from the 27th September 2021.
3. Clerk explained that following recent discussions about live streaming meetings, and a very generous offer from Mr Steve Woodgate to supply the equipment. This was looked into further by the Clerk speaking to fellow Clerks about what process they follow. In doing so a number of concerns were highlighted to the Clerk about why this was not a good idea. The key issues are the data processing impact and who owns/stores the data, getting permission from everyone who could be on film and again where one stores this, who owns the recordings and would it meet GDPR etc. Due to the number of issues it was reported to Councillors and they all agreed that meetings would not be streamed.

The minutes of the meeting are the true record and are published widely, and parishioners are invited to attend the meetings.

1. A recent email was sent to all residents from the Old School Surgery, the information relating to the Alfriston branch is below:
* We have opened up a limited number of slots for GPs to see patients at our Alfriston branch. Throughout September and by 4thOctober the number of face to face appointments will increase
* From 13thSeptember patients will be able to request a choice of face to face appointment or a Telephone call for routine GP appointments
* From 4thOctober we aim to introduce phlebotomy services at the Alfriston Branch and will aim to increase the amount of time committed over the next 2-3 months.
* We continue to review other nursing services and, where we can, we will reintroduce these at the Alfriston branch
* There are no plans to close the Alfriston branch
* Thank you to all our patients for bearing with us during these difficult times. We appreciate the difficulties patients have when the Alfriston surgery or dispensary have to redirect services to Old School Surgery. We are actively working on ways to reduce and stop the number of times services have to be redirected.

**75. Public Questions**

1. Mrs Heather Hurst wanted it noted in the minutes her thanks to a small volunteer group led by Mrs Caroline Adcock who have done an amazing job on the area outside the electricity substation at the bottom of Kings Ride/Deans Road.

2. Mr Bill Rendall said he has noted a few issues on footpaths recently. He will send the list to the Clerk so she can report. **Action 5**

3. Mr John Hurwood asked about the Star Lane agenda item for the SLR meeting. Clerk confirmed that the potholes and trench in Star Lane have already been reported and that East Sussex Highways [ESH] have confirmed they will be repaired within 28 days. APC have asked for a total resurface but ESH have said no at the moment. It will be raised again with them direct at the SLR meeting.

4. Mrs Annabelle Wood reported very dangerous steps at the top of King Ride leading to Deans Barn. The steps have eroded leaving metal posts. Clerk will report this immediately. **Action 6**

5. Mrs Rosalind Danesi asked what was happening with the wall in the Dene car park? It used to be a nice flint wall and now it is breeze blocks. Cllr Beechey explained there has been a lengthy dispute over who was responsible for replacement, which has now been settled. The owners are in the process of applying for planning permission.

6. Mrs Wendy Garnett said it was a shame about the recycling point at Deans Place going. Cllr Beechey explained that WDC said it is being removed because you can leave so much recycling in your bin on a weekly basis now. Cllr Lunn said that if you are a large household you can request two recycling bins.

**76. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next APC meeting is Monday 18th October 2021 in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall at 19:15.

Signed:  Mrs Victoria Rutt – Clerk and RFO

**APPENDIX A**

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**APPENDIX B**

**Update from Maria Caulfield MP**

**1. Macmillan Coffee Morning in Parliament**

I was pleased to join Macmillan last week to show my support at the World’s Biggest Coffee morning in Parliament where I was able to meet Macmillan frontline workers who did so much to support people living with cancer during the pandemic.

As a cancer nurse who took up the NHS’s call for help during the pandemic, I was able to see first-hand how much work Macmillan staff put in during the height of the pandemic to continue to support those living with cancer. I wanted to make sure that I was able to join them at their World’s Biggest Coffee Morning in Parliament to thank them for everything that they have done and continue to do.

Anyone who is living with cancer and needs support can get in touch with Macmillan on www.macmillan.org.uk or call 0808 808 00 00.

**2. Roadworks at Drusillas**

I know the roadworks outside Drusillas have been causing significant troubles to residents. I am pleased to advise that following this week’s night closures, Berwick roundabout is now open. This week they have also been working on the surface to the footways. Please do let me know if you experience anymore difficulties.

**3. Road Improvements**

As we build back better it’s vital to level up transport across East Sussex, to support jobs, the economy, and the environment. This is why I am very pleased that East Sussex is benefiting from a new investment of £250,000 which will massively level up transport across the area cutting congestion, boosting safety, and reducing journey times and emissions – a commitment set out in the government’s recently announced Transport Decarbonisation Plan.

The funds can be used by local authorities to repair existing equipment and modernise traffic signals. Improved signal operations will reduce traffic queues and provide better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

**4. Improvements to 10 railway stations in Lewes constituency**

The improvements are part of the Passenger Benefit Fund and include stations in Berwick, Bishopstone, Cooksbridge, Glynde, Lewes, Newhaven Town, Newhaven Harbour, Plumpton, Polegate.

This is great news for rail passengers across the Lewes constituency who will have improved facilities at these railway stations thanks to Southern Rail and the Passenger Benefit Fund. As a commuter I spend a lot of time at railway stations and know that people need high standards of facilities such as toilets, seating, and space to escape the elements. As more and more people return to work and using the railways for leisure these improvements will make everyone’s journeys much better.

**5. Broadband Upgrades**

Residents across the Lewes constituency are set to benefit from a lightning-fast broadband boost, as 50,300 rural homes and businesses in East Sussex are set to get access to the fastest broadband speeds on the market thanks to the Conservative Government’s £5 billion plan to level up internet access across the UK.

For too long, homes and businesses in the Lewes constituency have suffered from poor internet connectivity, leaving families battling for bandwidth and businesses unable to take advantage of emerging online markets across the world.

That is why the Conservative Government is investing £5 billion as part of Project Gigabit, which will bring speeds of up to 1,000 megabits per second to 50,300 homes and businesses in East Sussex- with the total number of premises covered to 2.2 million across the country. 60 per cent of all household will have access to gigabit speeds by the end of the year, the fastest rollout in Europe

The Project Gigabit fund is upgrading digital infrastructure for millions of people in hard-to-reach areas to accelerate the country’s recovery from covid, fire up high-growth sectors such as tech and the creative industries, put an end to families battling for bandwidth and bring the speed and reliability people need to start and run businesses.

**6. GP services.**

I met with Old School Surgery who run the Alfriston surgery last week. They acknowledge the problems getting through and this should improve over coming days. They have also restarted face to face appointments now and I would appreciate any feedback as to how this is going.