

# ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

## CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

Mrs Victoria Rutt

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Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022

## Minutes of a meeting of Alfriston Parish Council (APC) held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022

### Present:

Cllr Watkins [Chair]

Cllr Beechey [Vice Chair]

Cllr Bell

Cllr Monteath-Wilson

Cllr Cooper

Cllr Daw

### In attendance:

Mrs Victoria Rutt - Parish Clerk

8 members of the public were present.

### 122. Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Watkins welcomed everyone to the meeting. On behalf of all Councillors, she expressed her appreciation to AEG for all their recent hard work with the flooding. They worked tirelessly at pumping water and pulling vehicles out of the flood. Clerk to write to AEG to express APC's gratitude. **Action 1.**

### 123. Public Questions

1. Mrs Janet Bonus asked if a letter could be sent to Wealden District Council [WDC] about the local fireworks in Saffron Gardens on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The Clerk confirmed 5 complaints had been received to date about these fireworks. Cllr Beechey explained that whilst APC can write to WDC, the reality is that there would be more impact if they received letters from all those affected by the fireworks. Cllr Watkins confirmed that APC have no power to stop the fireworks and that the Clerk did liaise the resident last year to make him aware of the concerns. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to WDC. **Action 2.**

Mrs Bonus explained that she did call the Police but they did not come out. Clerk will find out the details of the noise abatement department at WDC and circulate this. **Action 3.**

2. Mr Dawson asked whether there was any plan for charging points for electric vehicles to be installed in the village. Clerk confirmed that WDC are in the process of finalising a plan to install 6 charge points in the Willows coach park. Clerk will obtain a timeline update on this.

**Action 4.** *\*\*Update – they are looking at installing early 2023 as the flooding has raised some questions they need answering before proceeding.*

3. Mrs Dawson asked for an update on the postbox. The Clerk reported that she received an update at the beginning of November but sadly it is not good news. The Post Office confirmed that a new postbox will be installed however it is not a priority as there is one in the village, albeit out of the way. The postbox in the Square has been condemned and will be sealed and painted black. The Post Office did have some proposed locations but there were issues with them i.e. planning permission required, too close to a junction etc. The lady wanted to manage expectations that it will be replaced but it is not a quick process. Cllr Beechey

suggested that a meeting is held with the Post Office furniture team as he is sure APC could assist with some proposed locations for the new box. Clerk to liaise with the Post Office.

**Action 5.**

Cllr Beechey also explained that although there is another postbox in the village, it is not in a suitable location for those who struggle to walk to get to and it also does not accommodate large letters.

**124. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Rabagliati.

**125. Report from Maria Caulfield MP**

Maria Caulfield was unable to attend but sent her apologies. Her report can be found under [Appendix B](#). The Clerk raised a request in Maria Caulfield's report, whether APC would be interested in working with her to try to raise funds for a new water pump for AEG. Cllrs agreed in principle but more information to be found out. **Action 6.**

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

Cllr Shing apologised for missing the last meeting. He reported that ESCC have given the ESCC highway maintenance contract to Balfour Beatty, who will take over the contract from April 2023 until 2030. Balfour Beatty will then have the option to extend the contract until 2037. Cllr Shing asked whether APC had received the ESCC local transport consultation, the Clerk had not seen this so Cllr Shing is going to forward this information on. Cllr Shing confirmed that the County Council are currently working on next year's budget.

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

Cllr Lunn was unable to attend the meeting, but he did send in a written report which the Clerk received after the meeting. It is copied below:

Wealden Local Plan - The local plan is very close to being published. We are hopeful it will be this side of Christmas. Any further delays will have implications similar to the Mornings Mill application which has been widely reported on. Despite Councillors objection the planning inspectorate found in favour of the development and quoted the Council as being unreasonable to turn down the applications. The costs of defending this against national policy despite local elected councillors democratically exercising their local knowledge is also significant, estimates suggest that it could be close to £1million pounds. That is tax payers money and as a result nearly all applications which cannot be clearly defended are being put forward for approval. Some residents have suggested that they would prefer to have higher Council tax to try and defend such applications but national policy is trumping local policy. It is therefore critical that the local plan moves forward.

Cuckmere Estuary - After recent heavy rainfall in the catchment I think everyone is aware of the impact of flooding. The Environment Agency have been monitoring the situation and the river mouth has been maintained by flood water. However, through the Cuckmere Flood Forum, the EA has agreed to de-shingling the estuary on the 28<sup>th</sup> November. The budget remains for emergency clearing of shingle if the need arises.

Wealden Council Tax - With the cost of inflation, and a possible further cuts in Government grants for local Councils, it is a real concern for local councils. There is real pressure on Council budgets to maintain public services. At this stage Wealden is probably in a better position than our colleagues at County level but I do expect an increase being considered but I am hopeful this will be below inflation.

### **128. Declaration of interests**

Cllr Watkins declared that she is a member of the Alfriston Emergency Group [AEG]. Cllr Daw declared that she is a Church Warden for St Andrews.

### **129. Minutes**

Cllr. Cooper proposed and Cllr. Beechey seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the APC meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were a true and accurate record.

**MOTION CARRIED.** Cllr. Watkins duly signed the minutes.

### **130. Finance**

#### 130.1 To approve the Statement of Finances: Nov 2022

Cllr. Beechey proposed and Cllr. Daw seconded a motion to approve the Statement of Finances for November 2022. [[Appendix A](#)]. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cllr. Cooper signed the Invoices for Payment.

Clerk updated that a text had been received from Santander claiming insufficient funds in account to process a bill. With the help of Cllr Beechey, it was ascertained that Castle Water [who supply water to the allotments and pavilion] were trying to take a direct debit out for just over £15k. The Clerk liaised with Castle Water and confirmed that both accounts are at £0 balance. Working with Santander it looks like it is an old Direct Debit with an old SE Water account number linked to it that was trying to be used. Clerk decided to stop all Castle Water Direct debits for the time being and pay any bills manually until Castle Water can investigate further at their end and reassure the Clerk that this won't happen again.

### **131. To discuss, agree and award Grass Cutting contract for 2023 – 2025**

Clerk explained that she went out to tender in September to 6 companies. Only two companies returned a tender and one of the companies met with the Clerk in the village prior to submitting return. Cllrs had received a full report with the schedule broken down by area, the annual cost and the report showed which equipment the companies would use and a reference for each company. It was discussed and agreed that the quotes were a huge increase. APC currently pay annual £4,500. Company 1 quoted £15,191.27 for 2023 and company 2 quoted £13,420. It was agreed that as this would have a huge impact on the precept, there is a need to go out to tender again in January to more companies and see if the schedule could be split somehow. Clerk confirmed she is happy to work with Councillors to go back out to tender but needed Cllrs to be aware that we went out to tender early so we have the budget set for January as the precept must be agreed in January. As the grass budget will now not be known it is putting APC at risk of not having the funds available to pay a grass contractor. All Cllrs were aware of this and accepted the risk to pursue going back out to tender. Cllr Cooper proposed going back out to tender in January 2023 to more companies and breaking down the schedule. This was seconded by Cllr Watkins. **Action 7.**

### **132. Report on Highways and Twittens – Cllr Rabagliati**

Cllr Beechey reported that the latest High Street plan was received today from East Sussex Highways [ESH]. ESH went out to 28 stakeholders, 7 of which submitted a response. There were no objections, just comments. Cllr Beechey stated it was good to see that SDNPA responded and theirs were helpful comments. However, it was alarming that both in terms of the gateway style and change in road surface, APC have not been listened to. ESH will be written to about this to ensure it is correct when it goes to public consultation. It is clear that co-working is not happening which is very disappointing and frustrating as it has already been a very lengthy process. ESH to be written to with comments and meeting request. **Action 8.**

Cllr Beechey asked if a name of someone at ESH has been obtained to discuss the different village name plate styles, Clerk confirmed name was received but he was not able to help. Cllr Beechey suggested that she could liaise with Mr Ian Johnson. Clerk will contact him. **Action 9.**

### **133. Report on Allotments – Cllr Cooper**

Cllr Cooper reported that an allotment meeting was held on 12<sup>th</sup> November, it was a very positive meeting. The key points from meeting were:

- The plot boundaries need to be re-defined so it is obvious where plot ends/plot starts. Paths needs to be maintained at a higher standard.
- All plot holders will take the responsibility to number their own plot in whichever way they wish as long as it is visible and clear.
- Gate is going to be re-hung in the next week. Padlocks are not possible but better/clearer signage will be looked into. *Gate has since been re-hung.*
- Clerk will do regular inspections to prevent this happening again. One plot holder talked about 'weed notices' been given at other sites, Clerk is looking into this as good idea.
- There is a community plot [plot 24] for get togethers, putting unwanted produce on there to share etc. However, this is a large plot and is not currently being utilised so this will be reduced in size and one half been given to someone on waiting list.
- Allotment holders are going to set up a WhatsApp group for them to liaise with one another. This would be plot holder led and nothing to do with APC. Issues raised that Clerk needs to be aware of, one spokesperson will report in.

Points that require decision tonight from APC:

Could the allotment water be turned on 4 weeks earlier, so beginning of March?

This was agreed by all Cllrs.

Could a skip be ordered and kept for around a week?

Cllrs discussed this and some felt strongly that a skip should not be ordered and plot holders should tidy up after themselves as stated in the contract. Cllr Cooper pointed out that a skip had been ordered previously to help plot holders out. Both Cllr Beechey and Bell stated that a skip should not be ordered due to cost. *Since the meeting, Clerk has looked into this further and this request will be brought back for discussion at the January 2023 meeting.*

Could 2 further water stations be installed on the allotments?

Cllrs would need to see a quote for this, but it was discussed that it would be unlikely as costs would be too high. Clerk will obtain quotes. **Action 10.**

Could a decision be made whether the allotments is 'no dogs' or 'dogs on lead'?

Cllrs discussed and felt that plot holders should be allowed to have their dog on site but they must be kept on a lead and controlled. They should not be accessing other plots.

Clerk reported that following the allotment meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> November there have been some positive changes and the waiting list has reduced to two people which is great. Allotment fees are on the agenda for discussion at the finance budget meeting early next year. Renewals will be going out as usual in January 2023.

### **134. Report on Public Transport – Cllr Monteath-Wilson**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson reported that she would be interested in seeing the transport consultation once Clerk has received the information from Cllr Shing. Clerk confirmed she would forward it on. Cllr Monteath-Wilson is attending the next Cuckmere Buses meeting being held on the 29<sup>th</sup> November so will have an update at the next meeting.

### **135. Report on Rights of Way and Countryside – Cllr Monteath-Wilson**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson reported that she had received a report of two trees down on two bridlepaths at Haven Road and old Newhaven road. Both have been reported by the Clerk to the Rights of Way team.

### **136. Report on Strategic Planning – Cllr Daw**

Clerk reported that further to earlier conversations with Cllrs, Cllr Daw had volunteered to Cllr Cooper said she had found a cheaper tree elsewhere (approx. £125) and would need to pay a small delivery charge but they would not erect it. Cllr Monteath-Wilson proposed to go ahead with the purchase from Mr Harper so the tree is in place for this coming week, but a different plan would need to be looked at for next year. Cllr Bell proposed to not have a tree and do something with the existing tree, this was seconded by Cllr Beechey. Clerk explained again about the two proposals. Cllr Cooper seconded the proposal by Cllr Monteath-Wilson. Cllr Watkins has the casting vote so opted for Cllr Monteath-Wilson's proposal. Clerk asked Cllr Daw if she is happy to continue with organising the Christmas tree? Cllr Daw explained she is happy to continue, however it would have been helpful if Councillors said their opinion on the matter of the tree before this work commenced two months ago. Cllr Cooper pointed out that details such as cost had only just been provided.

### **137. Report on Tye and Recreation Ground – Cllr Beechey**

#### 137.1 Goal post update

Cllr Beechey reported that the goal post was ordered 11 weeks yet no delivery as they are short on drivers. Clerk has been chasing them regularly. Cllr Beechey asked Clerk to forward contact details and he will call them to see what can be done. **Action 11**

#### 137.2 Tye Road resurfacing

Cllr Beechey reported that this is a standing agenda item, he will start to look at this in due course. Thank you to Ms Shirley Everleigh who volunteered her services along with Cllrs Monteath-Wilson and Rabagliati. Clerk expressed her thanks to Cllr Beechey for filling in the large pothole along Tye Road.

### **138. Report from Planning Committee – Cllr Bell**

#### 138.1 Applications considered by APC Planning Committee since last meeting

**SDNP/22/04972/LIS** Laburnum Cottage, Sloe Lane, Alfriston, BN26 5UP **Approved**

**SDNP/22/02365/HOUS** Somerset House, High Street, Alfriston, BN26 5TD **Approved**

#### 138.2 Applications notified or awaiting decision from SDNPA

**SDNP/22/03808/HOUS** 11 North Street, Alfriston, East Sussex, BN26 5UG **Granted**

**SDNP/22/04149/HOUS** Flint Cottage, 12 North Street, Alfriston, BN26 5UG **Ongoing**

#### 138.3 Enforcement updates

Cllr Bell reported that some work has been undertaken at Burnt House. In front of the property is land known as Dukes Green, this is a village green and the law states that you are not allowed to enclose the area or put up hard standing. The resident has done so however reports to SDNPA have not been successful as they have no issues with it. Cllr Bell disagrees with this and feels that further action should be taken. Cllr Bell suggested that there are other avenues open to APC if they wish to proceed. Cllr Daw asked what action could be taken? Cllr Bell suggested that further research and evidence could be obtained, the information put into legal form and taken to a magistrate. Cllr Daw asked would there be a cost associated? Clerk explained that at the

moment no complaints have been received from residents so if going to spend public money it should be an agenda item for formal discussion. Cllr Beechey explained that there is an important principle at stake in relation to open spaces/village greens. Cllr Monteath-Wilson felt that APC are not necessarily at the stage to do something further as no complaint had been received other than from some Councillors. Cllr Beechey asked are APC not beholden to protect the status of the village green and suggested it is APC's duty? Cllr Monteath-Wilson did not feel that it was APC's duty as we act on behalf of residents, of whom none have complained. Clerk confirmed that this needed further discussion so would be an agenda item for January 2023 meeting. **Action 12.**

### **139. Reports from Outside Bodies**

139.1 Volunteer Task Force: no report.

139.2 Heartstart: no report.

139.3 Alfriston Emergency Group: Mr Steve Woodgate sent in the following report. *'The start of the month saw the beginning of the wet season with some fairly major flooding primarily on the eastern side of the river, some flooding was evident in River Lane which AEG pumped, in addition Tye Road/ Deans Place was affected, again AEG attended and pumped for an evening which stopped the water levels from rising further. This last week saw the return of flooding, with the West Bank breach causing the major flooding on the lower road, Willows car park, River Lane and Deans Place. AEG were advising drivers not to enter the fast flowing water at both Winton Street and Willows car park. Shortly after Highways attended and closed the road. When it was apparent that the water levels were rising at a fast rate, East Sussex Fire and Rescue were called to get an idea of the severity of the situation. Later that evening they called out an appliance to undertake pumping operations in River Lane as properties were being compromised. Saturday night saw AEG pumping the lower road to a safe depth to allow Highways to finally open the road. We will continue to monitor water levels in the coming days. There are concerns about the number of drivers, some local residents, who chose to ignore the closure, two minibuses and a refuse collection vehicle were stopped by the water and required recovery. This places lives and property at risk as well as tying up people to do the recovery.'*

139.4 Flood Forum – no report.

139.5 Neighbourhood Watch – no report.

139.6 Twinning Committee – Mr Michael Anderson sent in the following update. *'We have the wonderful Lo Polidoro for our Christmas concert again at the AWMH on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Don't miss it! Details on the poster in the village shop.'*

139.7 St Andrew's Church – Cllr Daw reported that the bells are back and ringing! There is a new wrought iron object shaped like an octopus that holds the bell ropes that is impressive and worth a look. Mrs Penny Ellis has also done a beautiful shield. There is a large box in the Church for presents for children for Christmas and a food bank box. The Christingle service will be held on the Tye again on Christmas Eve in the afternoon.

139.8 Clergy House – Ms Holly Jones sent in the following update. *The Clergy House closed to the public for the year at the end of October and will re-open again on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. We welcomed 5558 visitors this year, which was 1600 up on budget, we are hoping to open a day more next year with three days a week if staffing resources allow. A thank you to the Clergy House team of staff and volunteers who all play a part in looking after the 15<sup>th</sup> house & garden and sharing our story with visitors. We have managed to complete some important conservation work this year from the ridge thatch renewal back in the spring to paint investigation work in the house this autumn, along with some vital repairs to the garden amphora. Our visitors help us fund this essential work. We will do some maintenance work in the garden over the winter (flood water allowing) and spend the next few months putting the house to bed. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer next year either welcoming visitors*



or telling them about the house (training given) please email the property on [alfriston@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:alfriston@nationaltrust.org.uk). Many thanks for the support from the village this year.

139.9 Cuckmere Buses – no report.

139.10 AWMH – Mr Adrian Butcher reported nothing new to report.

139.11 Speedwatch – Clerk confirmed nothing new to report.

#### **140. Correspondence to the Clerk**

1. Clerk explained that a gentleman would like to hold a Couch to 5k session on the recreation ground, weekly on a Wednesday between 09:00 – 10:30. Councillors discussed this as they would like to know whether he charges for this and if the case, whether APC should have a policy about the 'hiring of the Rec'. Clerk will go back for further information. *\*It has since been agreed via email that this will be an agenda item for January 2023 as requires a full public discussion\**. **Action 13.**
2. Clerk received a request for someone to use the Glebeland for a marquee for their wedding in August 2023. Cllr Beechey explained that APC always say no as the Glebeland should be available to all. It was suggested that something could be added to the Tye policy so these requests do not need to keep coming to the meeting, they can just be referred to the Tye policy. **Action 14.**
3. Clerk explained that many complaints were received about the handling of the Beachy Head marathon. Despite not having a road closure in place, they closed the High Street for nearly 2 hours, they were verbally abusive to drivers and one marshall threatened violence so the Police had to be called and attended. Marshalls explained to drivers that they had the support of APC. Clerk can confirm that APC were not consulted in anyway about this event. Cllrs agreed that a letter should be drafted to inform the organisers of this issue. **Action 15.**
4. The Clerk explained that 5 letters of complaint had been received regarding the fireworks. All Cllrs had received copies of the letters in full. There was no requirement to read them out as Cllrs agreed that a letter should be sent to WDC as identified in action point two.

#### **141. Public Questions**

1. Cllr Daw suggested that APC start to think about the King's Coronation in May 2023. Clerk confirmed she will put it on the agenda for January 2023. **Action 13.**
2. Mr Jon Boxall saw that SDNPA were up at the tarmac area at top of Kings Ride and asked if anything was being done about the tarmac. Clerk explained that SDNPA did come back with a response that the material was the same as previously used. Cllr Monteath-Wilson explained that the correct material was used despite it not looking right. However there does continue to be a drainage issue so Clerk will liaise with SDNPA about this. **Action 14.**
3. Mrs Janet Bonus asked about vehicles driving up Winton Street when the road is closed. Clerk confirmed that she is aware of these issues and will be liaising with ESH to see what can be put into place. It is understood that ESH explained to some residents that APC have the power to close the road, or put in traffic lights. The Clerk explained that APC do not have the power to do this and is questioning who said this. It has also been expressed that Winton Street is a private road, this is not the case, it is a public highway and will remain open to traffic but measures may need to be put in place to ensure everyone is safe. Clerk will be liaising with ESH. **Action 15.**

#### **142. Date of next meeting**

*Please note there is no meeting held in December.* The date of the next APC meeting is Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall at 19:15.



Signed:

Mrs Victoria Rutt [Clerk and RFO]

**APPENDIX A****Alfriston Parish Council Finance Report 21st November 2022***Authority is sought to make the following payments:-*

133	BACS	Victoria Rutt November salary [increased due to backdated amount, will reduce]	£2,325.42
134	BACS	AWMH - hall hire	£41.40
135	BACS	Biffa [increase due to annual waste note compliance charge incl]	£309.34
136	BACS	Victoria Rutt reimbursement: Mileage Sept - Nov 2022	£70.20
137	BACS	John O'Connor	£372.35

**Total** **£3,118.71***Authority is sought to make the following payments made since last meeting:-*

123	CARD	Screwfix - Tye Rd pothole repair	£152.45
124	DD	O2	£21.54
125	DD	Santander	£20.00
126	BACS	iINTERBIZ - payroll services	£22.80
127	BACS	Inland Revenue - Tax and NI Oct 2022	£338.57
128	CARD	RBL Poppy Appeal	£20.00
129	DD	NEST pension [increased due to backdated amount, will reduce ]	£217.58
130	CARD	Screwfix - Tye Rd pothole repair	£110.96
131	DD	HP Instant Ink	£9.99
132	CARD	EDF Energy - clock bill	£197.73

**Total** **£1,111.62****Summary of Bank Balances 21st November 2022**

Business Current Account	£6,720.37
Business Savings Account	£98,303.66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£105,024.03</b>

**RESERVE INFORMATION**

Project	Opening balance	Budget 22/23	Expenditure	Closing Balance
General Reserves	£15,520.00	add £1,620		£17,140.00
Tye Rd surface	£11,500.00	add £3,500		£15,000.00
Playground	£6,000.00	add £2,000	-£5,720.00	£2,280.00
NDP	£0.00	add £500		£500.00
High St Traffic Plan	£0.00	add £5,000		£5,000.00
CIL money	£1,749.07		-£987.00	£762.07
Play Project	£200.00	donations £9889.25 plus grant £37,180		£47,269.25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£34,969.07</b>	<b>add £11,000</b>		<b>£87,951.32</b>



Signed by:

Victoria Rutt - Clerk &amp; RFO



## APPENDIX B

### **Report from Maria Caulfield MP**

#### **Possible Funding Campaign for New Water Pump**

I would be interested to hear from the Parish Council on whether they would be interested in working with me to try and raise funds for a new water pump for the emergency group in the village?

#### **Remembrance Sunday**

I was honoured to attend a number of remembrance events across the constituency to remember all of those who have given so much in the service of the United Kingdom and defence of freedom. I also laid a remembrance cross in the Royal British Legion Constituency Garden of Remembrance at the Houses of Parliament.

#### **Autumn Statement**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of November the Chancellor set out the Government's plan to tackle inflation and mortgage rates and support the most vulnerable. The key announcements in this statement include:

- Protecting and maintaining public spending for the next two years at the levels set out in 2021 and then increasing spending by one per cent in real terms a year until 2027–28.
- Increasing taxpayer funding for our NHS and schools by an extra £11 billion over the next two years.
- Supporting every household with higher energy bills by extending the Energy Price Guarantee until April 2024, while providing over £12 billion in additional support to help the most vulnerable households.
- Uprating benefits in line with inflation and protecting the pensions Triple Lock, delivering on our manifesto commitment and supporting the most vulnerable.
- Boosting growth with over £600 billion in capital investment over the next 5 years, protecting the Levelling Up Fund, protecting R&D spending, using our Brexit freedoms to reform the financial services sector, and providing a £14 billion business rates cuts package.

#### **Road Safety Measures**

I have recently spoken in Parliament to raise the issue of road safety in rural areas. I raised with the Transport Minister that many rural parishes in the Lewes Constituency have tried to implement road safety measures such as reducing the local speed limits and the number of HGV's cutting through the villages but have been told by the local transport authority that there haven't been enough people killed or seriously injured to justify a change. I encouraged the Minister to look at whether this policy can be changed to ensure the safety of rural communities.

The Minister responded by confirming that local transport authorities do have the power to put measures in place, such as reducing speed limits and that the Department for Transport issues guidance to support this so I will be asking the County Council to rethink their criteria to allow safety measures to be put in place.

### **Raising Farmer's Concerns in Parliament**

I recently raised the concerns of farmers from across the Lewes constituency in Parliament during the Farming and Agriculture in Sussex debate. I meet regularly with farmers in my constituency but the key issues for them are the cost and availability of fertilizer, certainty over the payment schemes that are being introduced, and the effects of Avian flu which is the worst we have ever seen this year.

Avian flu is a huge problem in Sussex due to the scale of the outbreak. I am pleased to hear that since this debate, the Government has announced changes to the compensation scheme for farmers when they lose birds to the disease.

### **Rampion 2 Consultation**

I have been a big supporter of Rampion in my time as the MP for Lewes, the wind farm delivers enough power for 350,000 homes and they also do a lot of work in the community through various projects and funds. I would encourage people to take part in the Rampion 2 consultation to have their say on the proposals before they are submitted next year. They are launching a six-week statutory public consultation from Tuesday 18th October - Tuesday 29th November. The consultation can be found at <http://www.rampion2.com>

Unadopted