

# LONG MAN PARISH COUNCIL

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## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PARISH

Held at Wilmington Village Hall on Monday 15 May 2023 at 7.00pm

**Present:** Councillors: Pam Merritt (Chairman), Tyler Butterworth (Vice-Chairman), Claire Church, Lizzie Chisholm, Helen Baulcombe, Michael Bridges  
Jeanne Peterson (clerk)  
County Councillor Stephen Shing  
Five members of the public

**Unable to attend:** Alison Cotton (tree warden), Ruth Zacharewicz (Wilmington Village Club)

### 1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

It was noted that she would be retiring from the council, and position as Chairman, at the Annual Meeting of the Council later that evening once a new Chairman is appointed.

### 2. To agree and sign as a true record the Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish dated 9 May 2022

The minutes from last year's meeting had already been circulated and were unanimously agreed and signed as a true record.

### 3. Matters Arising

None

### 4. To receive the Annual Report of the Chairman - Councillor Pam Merritt

The usual work of the Parish Council has continued throughout the last year with meetings every 2 months. A bus shelter was erected at the bus stop on the north side of the A27 to replace the one destroyed in a road traffic accident a few years ago. Two trees were cut down in Milton Street and the usual grass cutting in Wilmington was organised along with the annual clearance in June of the overgrown footpath from Wilmington car park to the base of the Long Man path.

The work by National Highways on the A27 junctions and cycleway finally came to an end in April. The input from a group of Wilmington residents regarding ongoing safety concerns at the junction achieved some improvements to the original design, such as the 40mph flashing sign for traffic approaching from the east, speed signs painted on the tarmac etc.

The Parish Council has read and commented on 17 planning applications during the year, almost evenly divided between SDNP and WDC. The majority were approved by the relevant planning authority.

The Parish Council has experienced a change of personnel during the year with the previous Clerk, Claire Reynolds, leaving in January after 6 years service. In her place, we welcomed Jeanne Peterson who started in February.

This will be my last report as I am retiring from the Parish Council after about 10 years. I would like to thank all the Councillors and the Tree Warden for their hard work on behalf of the Parish, as well as the Parish Clerks both past and present.

I would like to finish by saying that if anyone wishes to fill the vacancy of Councillor for the Wilmington ward, please talk to the Clerk or to one of the Councillors.

#### **5. To receive the Annual Report of the District Councillor**

No report available.

#### **6. To receive the Annual Report of the County Councillor – Cllr Stephen Shing New Contract for Highways**

East Sussex County Council agreed to award a new contract for highways and infrastructure services to Balfour Beatty Living Places Ltd. The Contract of the new Highways and Infrastructure Services Contract is for an initial term of seven years (2023-30) with an optional extension of a further seven years (2030-37). Award of the extension is not mandatory; it is discretionary and a further report will be presented to Cabinet at the appropriate time prior to the decision on whether or not to utilise the extension option. This decision will need to be taken at the end of Service Year 5 (March 2028) in order to allow sufficient time for a re-procurement to take place if the extension option is not taken up.

The Contract includes the following services: Service Management, Control of Vegetation, Stakeholder Management, Road Markings, Network Management, Winter Service, Third Party Claims, Structures Routine & General Maintenance, Highway Asset Inspections, Street Lighting, Drainage Maintenance, Traffic Signals and Reactive and Emergency Response, priced as lump sums (fixed annual price with annual inflation uplift applied per service year), (2) improvement works commissioned as actual costs with target cost (only actual cost is paid) and (3) un-planned works as cost reimbursable actual cost works.

The Contract is based on current ESCC highways policies (e.g. intervention levels) and the contract terms and conditions are based on the industry standard NEC4 Engineering and Construction Contract, modified as appropriate, with output focused specifications designed to enable delivery of the five service outcomes agreed by Cabinet in July 2021.

The Contract includes the transfer of approximately 190 of the existing contractor's staff to the new provider. The Contractor is started on 2nd May 2023, I will meeting the team to discuss our local highways needs.

#### **Local Transport Plan**

The fourth Local Transport Plan for East Sussex is currently underway. A Public consultation has been launched asking residents and businesses in East Sussex to help shape the future of local transport. The deadline to respond is Friday 9 December 2022.

The Local Transport Plan (2023-2050) will be one of ESCC's most important documents as it will set out how the authority will connect people to places around and through the county over the next three decades - by walking, cycling, public transport, car or by using new forms of travel. It will look to improve transport, deliver better access to jobs and services including education, and create safer, healthier, more sustainable and inclusive communities. At this stage, ESCC wants to hear what people's priorities are for travel and transport, the key issues they encounter, and which opportunities for improving travel across the county are important to them.

ESCC's next Local Transport Plan will set out a vision for what transport in East Sussex will look like in the next thirty years, and how that vision will be achieved. It is encouraged that residents, businesses and community groups to take part in the consultation to ensure they have their say on how transport in our county will be delivered over the next thirty years. The final LTP4 workshop will be take place on 24 May 2023.

#### **Ukrainian Hosting Update**

East Sussex residents who are hosting Ukrainian guests through the Homes for Ukraine scheme are set to receive winter top up payments from ESCC. ESCC has taken the decision to increase the monthly payments payable to hosts to thank them for their continued kindness and generosity and to reflect the increased costs faced during the current economic crisis.

The monthly payments for all hosts will increase by £150 per host per month, for six months from October 2022 to March 2023. The increase will apply county wide and be payable to both existing and new hosts. For hosts with fewer than five guests, the thank you payment will rise from £350 to £500 per month between October and March and those who are hosting families of 5 or more (currently 25 hosts), this means their monthly thank you payments will be £650 per month from October to March, which recognises their particular situation.

### **Essential gas Main Replacement -C40 Jevington Road**

Since Southern Gas Network ('SGN') announced the essential gas main replacement work in May 2022 and a proposed closure on C40 Jevington Road. Hundred of local residents, shoppers and drivers have sent objections to County Highways and SGN that the C40 Jevington Road is the local lifeline and to be closed for 6 months is not acceptable in this day and age.

The problem is that currently Jevington is a two-minute journey to Wannock (or four minutes to Polegate station) with diversion becomes a good 30 3 minutes each way — more at peak times. That would cause difficulties for many people and businesses, is catastrophic and unworkable. I have discussed with County Highways and SGN about any alternatives to replace the gas pipe that could reduce the road closure. With many meetings and discussions with Residents, businesses, County Highways and SGN, the gas main replacement work was completed in 2 phases and less impacted to our residents and businesses.

### **Proposed Changes to School Boundaries**

East Sussex County Council are proposing to move the community area boundary between the Polegate/Willingdon area and the Eastbourne primaries area, and to make a similar change in respect of the community area for Willingdon Community School at secondary level.

The proposal is due to the new estate being built on the former sites of Brodricklands and Hamlands Farm, which fall outside the Eastbourne borough boundary but is only accessible from within Eastbourne borough. Accordingly it is proposed that the boundary between the community areas for Willingdon and Polegate Primary Schools, and the Eastbourne borough primary schools, be moved so that children living on this estate fall within the Eastbourne primary schools area.

The proposal is to move the boundary for Willingdon Community School to the same location. It is also proposed that siblings of any children who are already living on the estate and have secured places at Polegate or either of the Willingdon schools prior to the introduction of this arrangement in September 2024 will be treated as in-area siblings for the school their sibling attends. Full details can be found in the report dated 17 October 2022 which was put to the Lead Member for Education, Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability.

### **New Exceat Bridge Planning Application**

It is please that at last the New Exceat Bridge planning application was approved by South Downs National Park Authority on 8th December. I am continuing working with county council on highways maintenance about our roads, the proposal Alfriston traffic management scheme, Polegate high street, Polegate cross Road, A2270 bus lane/cycling lane and Golden Jubilee Way / Dittons Road Replace roundabout with traffic light controlled crossroads with improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. A27 / A22 Golden Jubilee Way roundabout: Increase size of roundabout.

## **7. To receive the Annual Report of Planning 2022 / 23**

A Summary was included in the Chairman's report

## **8. To receive the Annual Reports of the Parish Associations**

### **a. Wilmington, Milton Street and Folkington Village Club – Claire Church (Secretary)**

#### **Introduction**

The Village Club at the Village Hall in Wilmington was created for social and recreational purposes for all residents of Wilmington, Folkington and Milton Street. The operational upkeep of the Hall and its grounds are entirely dependent on income from social events, from private rental of the Hall and from the occasional charitable grant. It has no endowed income stream. Even though 2022 was a more 'normal' year after the Covid disruption, events at the beginning of the year were still impacted by Covid. The year will be remembered for: 'pub in the club' evenings; the turn-out of over a hundred for lunch celebrating the Queen's Jubilee; curry night; an open-air jazz evening; the Christmas Fayre; and for successful grant applications which have helped considerably in maintaining our facilities.

#### **Social events and Fundraising**

A 'pub in the club' evening was held once a month during the year whilst the Wilmington village pub was being renovated. Huge thanks to Abey and Melissa for organising and replenishing the stock throughout the year and finding volunteers for the bar: Debbie, Kelly, Rachel, Tom, Jill, Sean and Ruth. Also for the inspiration to show the World Cup on the big screen with the 'pub' open during England's run and for their continued innovation in electronic payments and ticketing systems. They also organised Curry Night in October. A mammoth logistics task to feed sixty villagers, with help from Billie and many others. Special thanks to Belinda for the remarkable decorations on an Indian theme. Over a hundred residents from all three villages came together for a free open-air lunch celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June. Helped by a small grant from the National Lottery and the contributions in food and time of so many residents, we were able to put on an excellent spread. Thank you to everyone who contributed and to everyone who came.

An outdoor Jazz Evening in August was led by Tony and his Little Big Band. Although it was the first cold evening for about two months the band played on outside and it was wonderful to listen to while tucking into the accompanying hot dogs – thank you OJ.

Other events included a talk by Ian Gledhill on a seaside theme, organised by Alan, and a last film night organised by Annie, who sadly passed away. We hold treasured memories of her. Thanks also to the 'marquee' team which comes together behind the scenes to set up and take down the marquees for these events: Michael; Richard; Steve and multiple others. The Christmas Fayre was again a highlight of the winter season, wonderfully organised by Christine and with many contributing stallholders including Vicky on children's games, Melissa and Abey on tombola, Pari and Belinda on bric a brac, Belinda and Averil on cakes, Sarah on plants, Tony on mulled wine and Hilary, Claire and their many helpers on tea and coffee and washing up. A special thanks to Colin for his crafted wooden pieces. We were also able to do some collaborative events with Reverend Shirley including a quiz night for Tearfund, a pancake afternoon and a flower arranging class. Private hire of the hall occurred for a yoga class, for birthday parties and other family events. The hall is also hired by the Parish Council on a regular basis and is a polling station. Many thanks to Christine for helping with bookings. Chair's Report for 2022 for Wilmington, Folkington and Milton Street Village Club

#### **Maintenance of the Hall and Grounds**

Probably because of Covid we have been dealing with some overdue maintenance issues at the Hall. In the spring of 2022 we had the Hall electrics thoroughly overhauled, rewired where necessary and a new fuse board put in. We had electrical appliances PAT tested and the fire extinguishers checked. This expensive work was greatly helped (given our lack of income over the previous two years) by a successful application to Wealden District Council for a Covid business interruption grant. Our other major project this year has been to find grants to replace the external disabled access lift which has rotted through. We have received grants from the National Lottery Community Fund and the Sussex Community Foundation. The installation of the new lift is scheduled for late March 2023. We will keep costs down by removing the old lift ourselves: thank you, Michael. As well as being a main driving force in locating and applying for grants, Alan has made a major effort to get on top of the maintenance, dealing with outside contractors, undertaking a risk assessment for the Hall and helping to make sure everything is working. Many thanks to him for all his efforts around the Hall and grounds and for getting us up to modern compliance standards. We also had to deal with a burst pipe this January after a freezing spell – quick thinking by Claire and action by Alan have ensured the damage was much less extensive than it could have been. Thank you also to Kelly for keeping our Hall clean and to Tony for the renovation of the boules pitch.

### **Finances**

Many thanks go to Sean our treasurer who will deliver the detailed financial report. 2022 was a relatively healthy year for our finances but initially required a lot of determination in dealing with Barclays Bank as he took over the role. Sean has also made big efforts to ensure we are compliant with our insurance and other issues including obtaining a new electricity deal as our old one expired.

### **Secretarial**

Support Claire is our secretary and many, many thanks go to her for minutes and agendas and organising us: we recognise the hours she spends helping us stay on track.

### **Closing Remarks**

In closing I'd like to thank all members of the Committee for their time, energy and contributions and for the many residents who helped us out. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding contribution over many years of Belinda who is standing down at this AGM.

Ruth Zacharewicz, Chair, 22 February 2023

*On behalf of the committee for 2022 Melissa Abey Katrina Best (Folkington), Claire Church – Secretary, Belinda Ferretter, John Marshall – President, Alan Norris Sean O’Nunain – Treasurer, Kelly Quinn, Vicky Ward (Milton Street), Christine West, John West – Vice President, Sibilla Whitehead, Tony Wilson.*

## **b. Long Man Tree Warden – Alison Cotton**

### **Trees for the Downs (SDNPA)**

This year we have taken a rest from the ‘Trees for the Downs’ disease resistant elm planting project, as the recording and reporting to SDNPA of for our third round of planting (190 trees) in Spring 2022 was somewhat onerous. I do however intend to apply for more trees, for planting this Winter.

### **Call for Nature (SDNPA)**

The aim of this initiative by SDNPA is nature recover. For our parish, this presented an opportunity to improve the biodiversity and appearance of our crossroads area, with its common land owned by Wealden District council. Our application early in 2022 to SDNPA was successful, and they allocated an officer, Fay Pattinson, to take our project forward.

Along with Jo Heading from Wealden and a group of dedicated villagers, we have met on site several times to plan and action the project.

Our initial aims were to enhance the meadows with wildflower planting, reinstate 'Tom's Treacle' pond, and plant shrubs and trees to provide habitat for wildlife including pollenators, offset carbon, improve air quality and reduce noise from the road.

As the new cycle path and Pegasus crossing were completed, with associated services, fencing and lights, it has become apparent that aesthetic considerations are of paramount importance to residents, who have demonstrated their commitment to this cause by contributing financially to the first round of planting that was completed this Spring. There has been approval from Wealden DC to add more native shrubs, including evergreens that can grow on this very wet site, to improve the visual screening of the crossing. This further planting is planned for the coming Autumn.

**Other parish tree matters**

Dangerous poplars and willows with disputed ownership had become a concern for residents of Ade's Field, whose homes these trees overhang. After many negotiations, Clarion Housing who owns some of the houses decided to pay for reduction to the trees, to protect their tenants. This work was completed in February.

Alison Cotton 14.05.2023

**9. Public discussion**

**None**

The Chairman wished everyone all the very best for the future. Now at the time of her retirement Pam Merritt wished to note thanks to all those residents that had taken the time to make contact during her term of office, and her appreciation of the good working relationship with council members.

**There being no other business the meeting was declared closed at 7.20pm.**

**These Minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting.**

**Signed:** .....

**Position:** .....

**Date:** .....