

LONG MAN PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Long Man Parish Council Meeting

held on Monday 8 January 2024 Wilmington Village Hall 7.30pm

1. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Attendance & apologies for absence

Present: Councillors; Tyler Butterworth (Chair), Claire Church (Vice-Chair) (CC), Helen Baulcombe (HB), Ann Osborne (AO), Jeremy Christey (JC) and Jeanne Peterson (Clerk).

Apologies: Councillors Michael Bridges and Lizzie Chisholm

It was resolved to accept the apologies as given.

Other attendees: County Councillor Stephen Shing, District Councillor David Greaves, Vanessa Rowlands SDNPA Chair and Alison Cotton Tree Warden

3. Declarations of Interest – None

4. Public Discussion (15 minutes maximum).

There were no members of the public present

5. Reports from other bodies

5.1 County Councillor Stephen Shing: Reported the following:

- The consultation period for the Local Plan 24/25 will close on 2 February 2024
- ESCC are working on the precept calculations for the coming financial year's council tax and they will not go for the maximum that could be applied.
- More pot holes were repaired in October.
- Cllr Shing attended the Eastbourne Fire Station open day as a Member of the Fire Authority
- Wealden has the worst record in the South East for driving & traffic incidents but authorities are reluctant to agree 20mph zones.

5.2 District Councillor David Greaves: A written report had been circulated. The following additional points were noted:

- A permit has been allowed for drainage of the river at Alfriston in Springtime, but there has been no mention of repair to the five sluice gates.
- 2.5L sacks of domestic DIY rubbish can now be taken to Wealden District local amenity "household tips" at no cost.

5.3 Guest Speaker Vanessa Rowlands addressed the meeting as SDNPA Chair and also in the capacity as a member of Cuckmere Valley Parish Council (CVPC). The following points were noted and discussed:

- From the SDNP perspective, it is trying to influence ESCC Highways to think about traffic in villages, but it is not a highways authority so its powers are limited.
- The whole area has a thriving visitor economy so there is a strong economic argument for reducing speed limits.
- Vehicle speeding issues are a village wide problem. Alfriston has approval for traffic calming but are still working out how to do it. Kingston (near Lewes) are putting together a package on C7 road improvements and employing a consultant to advise.

- Another aspect of speed reduction and traffic issues is in regard to thinking about the valley's eco systems.
- ESCC don't see verge parking as a problem. At Seven Sisters car parks there are staff patrolling the car parks, but there is no control in place for the rural verges.
- A big problem is that there is little or no enforcement.
- A part of the Exceat Bridge approved works is to include a memorandum of understanding to agree a speed limit reduction across the bridge and a proper crossing. Discussions are ongoing to get this resolved and included.
- In investigating suitable traffic speed restrictions, it was suggested that a possible start could be to look at "gate entrances". This is one end of the spectrum, then work from there until the best option is found for the location. ESCC are reluctant to agree 20mph zones.
- The councillors were reminded that the SDNP Workshops will be held in February/March time.
- CVPC is trying to set up a Climate Action Group.
- A major joint concern [with LMPC] is the river and flooding.
- It was agreed that going forward CVPC and LMPC could communicate on how the two councils could work together on interconnected issues

5.4 MP Maria Caulfield: A written report had been circulated.

5.5 Tree Warden Alison Cotton:

- There was an update from Jo Heading, WDC Countryside Officer, to confirm that WDC has approved funding for the planting at Wilmington Junction. Looking at mid-February for planting and volunteers will be needed to help. There will be high density mixed native shrubs to create a zone to screen the lights.
Action: The clerk was asked to put information about the plan onto the council website for people to contact Claire Church or Alison. Volunteers should bring wellies and a spade.
- The tree on Parish Council land that was recognised as dying last year had blown over at Milton Street. Arrangements have been made to cut the tree down as it had collapsed on a nearby fence.
- A resident is interested in organising a community orchard across the A27 junction at Wilmington, but it is so wet that apple trees won't grow. A local apple tree expert is going to consult on this, but ideas for alternative sites are welcome. It was suggested that The Warren opposite Warren Farm might do as it doesn't flood. Alison will take the idea forward with Jo Heading.

5.6 PCSO: Isaac Wood was not able to attend the meeting. It was suggested the council could invite a member of the Rural Crime Team to also attend a future council meetings.

6. Minutes of the Long Man Parish Council Meeting held on 13 November 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record

7. Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2023 not covered elsewhere on the agenda: It was noted that when any member has a declared interest (pecuniary or prejudicial), or a personal interest, in an item on the agenda, including planning items, that they should leave the room during discussion on that item.

8. Reports from Parish Councillors

8.1 Folkington: None available

8.2 Milton Street:

- Flood water depth-gauge measures are being considered for the village as every year someone gets stuck in deep water. The gauges would be placed to show water depth at the

deepest point of a flood to deter drivers from entering the area. **Action:** TB to contact ESCC for cost and application process to be considered at a future LMPC meeting.

- Traffic signage already ordered still hasn't been received **Action:** TB to make Councillor Enquiry to ESCC to track progress.

8.3 Wilmington:

- Sewage had been overflowing up at the Pegasus crossing which is a new occurrence since the road works **Action:** Contact Southern Water when this happens.

9. Emergency & Resilience Planning

The template documents had been circulated and were taken as read.

9.1 It was resolved that the clerk would initially complete the templates with information currently available and bring the documents back to the council to consider and agree the next steps.

10. Finance

10.1 The financial reports as circulated by the clerk were noted:

- i. The Bank Reconciliation & Reserves updates to the end of November 2023 (December's bank statement had not yet been received)
- ii. The Budget v Actual Quarterly Report to the end of December 2023.

10.2 To approve and authorise the accounts payable as detailed on the payment list:

Payments list for 8 January 2024

	£
Clerk wages: December 2023	414.90
January 2024	414.90
HMRC PAYE	311.20
Clerk expenses as detailed on expense sheet + receipts	45.21
Wealden District Council Election 2023 costs	1076.47
<i>(This is a replacement chq as WDC destroyed the previous 100806)</i>	
Delia Thornton – Emergency & Resilience plan templates	150.00
AFH Payroll Solutions Ltd payroll services Dec 23 & Jan 24	37.80
	<u>Total 2,450.88</u>

It was resolved to approve the payments list:

The Council noted that the Chair and Clerk under delegated authority had given the go-ahead for the urgent tree work at Milton Street to be carried out. The damaged trellis fencing will also be replaced at Council cost. These payment items will be reported at the next meeting once invoices received.

10.3 It was noted that the Local Government Pay Award was agreed in November 2023.

It was resolved to approve that the clerk's pay increase will be back paid from April 2023 to January 2024, the payment to be made in February, with the hourly rate increase also applicable from that month.

10.4 Draft Budget 2024-2025

The clerk presented the final draft budget.

- It was agreed to reduce the grass cutting contract. There will simply be the two ESCC urban cuts for no cost. This was to keep in line with the ESCC decision to manage rural area verges by sowing wild grass seed to improve biodiversity.
- It was confirmed that the defibrillator at the Sussex Ox is the only one supported by LMPC. This has been checked by TB & HB and found to need replacement

children's pads. **Action:** TB/HB to inform the clerk of the pad specification for ordering

- It was agreed to continue offering grant funding support to those groups which the council considers help the local parish community.

It was resolved to approve the draft budget, taking into account the reduction by £350 to the grass cutting line, and that both General costs and Grant costs would be applied for via the precept request. It was agreed that the precept request would be £13,977. The clerk was asked to contact the grass contractor to let them know of the council's decision.

10.5 CIL Funds

It was noted that investigation into the best option for external lighting at the village hall was still being looked into.

11. A27 Ongoing Junction Issues

The draft minutes taken at the meeting between LMPC, MP and Highways had been circulated. Main points arising from the meeting to take forward or note are:

- The continuing drainage problems at the A27 Milton Street junction.
- Unless a traffic/motoring incident is reported to the police by calling 999 and they attend, Highways receive no information at all about lower level incidents.
- It is hoped to get the Sussex Safer Partnership team on board regarding the speed limit issues, and it would be helpful to have access to mobile data if possible. The Partnership may also be able to look at the ongoing issues of "undertaking" and "cutting up" when vehicles are trying to turn.
- Sussex Police are looking at the whole length of the A27 re speed issues.

12. Clerk's general update

12.1 Correspondence – there was no correspondence to report

12.2 Maintenance – The updated Asset Check Report had been circulated and was noted.

Updates include:

- Seat - Wilmington Old Pond Site – this had now been located and reported in good order.
- Seat – Wilmington Ades Field – this is in a bad state of repair and currently hazardous. It was agreed to remove the seat **Action:** The clerk to make necessary arrangements
- Seat – Milton Street Silver Jubilee – incorrectly reported as hazardous. In fair condition but needs monitoring.

13. Communications

13.1 The council reconsidered attaching a "Lead" responsibility to councillors for specific areas of its work. It was agreed that the most important thing is make it as easy as possible for people to approach the council and its members.

It was resolved to continue with councillors being available for individual approach on any matter and not to adopt a Lead approach.

13.2 Members agreed that the new website was easy to use and presented well. There is capacity for more listings to be added to the One Stop shop area to continue to develop that as a comprehensive source of information for parish residents to use.

14. Planning

14.1 The planning report had been circulated and was noted. The Working Group against Over development had circulated an email inviting two councillors from each parish to attend their next meeting. **Action:** Clerk to circulate the details to members

14.2 The council considered the outstanding applications and **It was resolved** to submit the agreed responses as shown on the updated planning report attached to these minutes as Appendix 1

15. Feedback from external meetings – none (A27 meeting reported Item 11)

17. Date of next meeting - Monday 11 March 2024 at Wilmington Village Hall, 7.30pm

The meeting was declared closed at 9.45pm.

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

Signed:.....

Position:.....

Date:.....