



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD

on 18th January 2022 at 8.00pm
at Rodmell Village Hall

1. Present

Councillors John Gillies (JG: Chairman), Nikki Terry (NT), Sue Carroll (SC), Claire Dishington (CD), Roger Ford (RF) and David Smart (DS). District Councillor William Meyer and Alison Stevens (AS) were also present. There were no members of the public.

2. Apologies

Parish Councillor Lesley Prosser (LP) sent apologies for her absence. The reasons for her apologies were accepted by the Parish Council.

Apologies for absence were also received from County Councillor Sarah Osborne.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. Updates from the County Councillor and District Councillor

There was no report from the County Councillor on this occasion.

District Councillor Meyer explained;

- the frustrations of being a District Councillor in that as the Cabinet Member for Housing he has to spend most of his time dealing with housing issues and whilst he can be a conduit for problems such as the C7, the District Council has no control over roads because they are the responsibility of the County Council.
- As the Cabinet Member for Housing he has been promoting new council homes in Lewes, Newhaven and Plumpton. Lewes District Council has provided 250 new council homes in four years compared to 50 in the previous twenty.
- He no longer sits on the South Downs National Park Authority's Planning Committee and now sits on the Seven Sisters Country Park Committee instead. The South Downs National Park Authority bought the Seven Sisters Country Park from ESCC for £1 last year and is currently undertaking a lot of construction work there. The work includes building a new camping site and new tourist accommodation, both of which are to be provided in a more sustainable way.
- Plans to boost nature recovery and safeguard England's national parks for future generations have been set out by the Government. The proposals are set out in the Government's response to Julian Glover's independent Landscapes Review which looked at whether the protections for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are still fit for purpose. The consultation closes on Saturday 9 April 2022 and can be found at;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-implementing-the-review>

District Councillor Meyer also suggested the Parish Council might like meet his colleague, James MacCleary, who is expected to take over as Leader of Lewes District Council in July.

In answer to Councillor's questions, District Councillor Meyer confirmed;

- He has no plans to move to the County Council. Councillor Carroll said she was glad to hear that because as our District Councillor, he provides a very useful link with the District Council and other Parish Councils.
- The Government's plans to bring jobs and more economic activity to Newhaven will impact the C7.

Councillor Ford said he would like to know;

- If the Parish Council has a corporate view of development as there is no Neighbourhood Plan. Settlement edges are of particular concern.
- How the Parish Council responds to planning applications.

District Councillor Meyer replied and said;

- Neighbourhood Plans are extremely time consuming, very expensive, not always very effective and benefit some parishes more than others.
- No development has been pencilled in for Rodmell because there is nowhere to put houses here. The village is protected by its character and nature, and is in a good position because it is in the South Downs National Park. He suggested Councillor Ford might find it helpful to talk to Neville Harrison who helped develop the Local Plan.

It was also noted that pre- application advice has been sought from the District Council for four to nine homes at 1 Little Dicklands and that whilst the Parish Council has not been consulted at this stage, if a planning application follows, it will be consulted then. Changes of use relating to agricultural applications can also be a cause for concern.

- Councils are under pressure to meet housing targets and sites that weren't previously considered for development are now being considered. That said, the Housing Minister, Michael Gove, is understood to be reviewing the targets and is expected to reduce them.

Councillor Dishington entered the meeting.

4. Public Questions

There were no questions from members of the public.

5. Disclosures of Interests

There were no disclosures of interest on any items on this agenda nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests.

6. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th November 2021

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 16th November 2021, were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Chairman.

7. Official signing in and welcome of the New Parish Councillor

The Chairman welcomed Clare Dishington to the Parish Council. Ms Dishington signed the Acceptance of Office, the Register of Interests and the Consent to Receive Electronic Agendas Forms before the meeting.

8. Planning

8.1: No planning applications were commented on at this meeting.

8.2: Planning issue responses – This was covered in the updates from the District Councillor.

- 8.3: Rodmell Conservation Area Action and Management Plan (RCAAMP) – At the previous meeting Councillors agreed there is a need to update the existing plan because it was drawn up in 2007 and they asked the Clerk to write to the SDNPA and press for Rodmell's to be prioritised. The SDNPA subsequently replied to say;

'As you may be aware, the South Downs National Park has 166 Conservation Areas within or straddling its boundary. Some of these Conservation Areas do not have an appraisal or have appraisals dating to the 1980s and 1990s. Therefore, it is these Conservation Areas, along with those under development pressure that we will be prioritising.

Please be assured that when we review the Rodmell Conservation Area Appraisal, we will be involving the Parish Council and any relevant community groups'.

9. Maintenance Reviews

9.1: Defibrillator Report – Councillor Prosser;

- continues to monitor the defibrillator and sent a photograph of it to the Clerk so there is an official record of the battery life.
- also registered the Parish Council's defibrillator on 'The Circuit'. The Circuit provides a national overview of where defibrillators are.

10. Clerk's and Councillor's Reports

10.1: Legal Matters - General update on the school and playground progress – The Parish Council understands the sale of the school is still progressing.

10.2: Other updates

- Website and Email Problems: The company that hosts the Parish Council website is having to migrate the site to a new server. The migration is expected to take place after this Parish Council Meeting.
- Tree Warden – Councillor Smart has been to look at two tree work applications relating to properties in Rodmell. Neither of the applications relate to trees which are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order, but have had to be made as the properties are in the Rodmell Conservation Area.
The first was SDNP/21/06146/TCA. This relates to a Horse Chestnut tree on the verge outside Black Timber House, Martens Field. He said it does not belong to the owners of the house but overhangs their drive. Some dead wood needs removing and the rest needs reshaping. He does not think there is any need to make any comment.
The second was SDNP/21/06088/TCA. This relates to a Field Maple and Laburnum in the garden of Willow Down Cottage, The Street. Both of these trees are healthy, but are oversize for the garden they are in, causing too much shade to the house. He said that whilst it is difficult to see this aspect of the problem at this time of year, he can imagine it to be the case. It is only proposed to reduce the height of both so he does not think there is any need to comment.
- Countryside, agriculture and allotments – Councillor Smart asked the Clerk to send out the latest allotment agreements to the allotment holders. He will then arrange for their cheques to go to the landowner. There is to be no change in the rent charged.
He also reported the following;
1: A footpath with a sign which needs to be replaced and/or repaired. The sign is currently propped up outside 1 South Farm Bungalows.
2: There is a gap between the wall and the concrete steps which are at the back of the playground by the church. One of the uprights supporting the handrail on the steps is also loose.
3: There are brambles overgrowing the pavement opposite the side of the village hall which need cutting back.
4: Overhanging vegetation in The Street opposite the property known as Merlins where larger vehicles have their wing mirrors either broken or damaged if they catch it.
The Clerk said she will report all four issues to the appropriate Local Authority.

- Repairs to the Street – Councillor Terry said the works to The Street have still not been carried out despite Highways saying they would take place on the 13th December. The Clerk will chase Highways up again.
- Sports Field, Mowing and Trimming – There was nothing new to report.
- Communication with Northease residents – Northease residents have been experiencing problems with their water supply and television signals. Another co-ordinated clean up weekend is being planned on the 5th and 6th March.
- Safer C7 Report – Councillor Carroll described the Safer C7 Project to the new councillors. (Details of the project can be found in previous Minutes). Chairs of the Parish Council along the C7 are now being invited to a meeting on the 17th February to form a Steering Group and take it forward. The County and District Councillors are also being invited to attend this meeting as co-opted members. It was suggested the school might like to send a representative too.
- Walkable verge between Northease and Rodmell – ESCC has agreed to make a walkable verge along the C7 to link the footpaths between Rodmell with Northease. This will be achieved by flattening the verge and pushing back the vegetation and hedges. The path will then be monitored for a year to see whether some sort of surface such as a permeable membrane will be needed. Councillor Carroll said she will talk to Dale Poore, ESCC Head of Highways, about including signage to warn drivers of pedestrians crossing the road.

SC

Councillor Dishington offered her help with both the pathway and the Safer C7 Project.

11. Brief Report from the Clerk and/or Councillors – Councillor Carroll said;
- Update from the latest POLO Meeting – There have been no POLO Meetings since the last Full Council Meeting.
 - Consideration of projects for CARES – The Parish Council was notified too late in the day this time and has asked to be notified earlier on in the consultation process next time.
 - Update on the latest meeting of the Lewes District Association of Local Councils (LDALC) – The LDALC meeting which was to take place on the 17th January has been postponed until 14th February.

Councillors also discussed the Parish Assembly which is to be held on the 29th April. A speaker from OVESCO (a utility community interest company from Lewes) has been booked. The, by then, newly appointed High Sherriff and the current post holder have also confirmed they will attend. Suggestions are now invited for a speaker of local interest.

Audio equipment will be tested at the Full Council in March which if successful will be used at the Parish Assembly.

12. Finance Report

Councillors resolved;

12.1: To approve the accounts to the 5th January 2022.

12.2: To approve the following payments;

		<u>£:</u>
Lewes DC	Dog Bin Emptying	93.60
National Trust	Wayleave	1.00
A Stevens	November Salary	345.05
A Stevens	December Salary	345.05
HMRC	PAYE	249.60

- 12.3: Councillors resolved to appoint Councillor Prosser as a new bank signatory and authorised the Clerk to delete all signatories who are no longer Parish Councillors.
- 12.4: It was noted that a number of artists live in and around the village. Councillors resolved that Councillor Ford will draft a design brief for an illustrative village map combining walking routes and heritage sites in the village which he will send out to all the Parish

Council for comments. When the design brief has been agreed, local artists would be invited to produce the map. When the map has been agreed Sussex Signs will be asked for a price to make it into an information sign.

13. Queen's Platinum Jubilee

A beacon will be lit at South Farm on the 2nd June to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The village will be invited to attend.

Councillors discussed other ways to commemorate the Jubilee and decided to ask residents for their ideas and invite them to organise an event.

14. The next Full Council Meeting is planned for Tuesday 15th March 2022, items for the agenda need to be with the Clerk by Friday 4th March 2022.

There was no further business and the meeting finished at 9.35pm.