

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 9th May 2019 in the Reid Hall, Boreham Street

1. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

2. Minutes from last year's meeting

The Minutes from last year's Parish Meeting were noted, having been approved at last year's Full Council Meeting in July.

3. Welcome and Annual Report by the Chairman

The Chairman, Keith Stevens, welcomed the ten members of the public in attendance and read from his report which said;

'Last year I mentioned my views about the need for Annual Parish Meetings and it is something that has been drawn to the attention of Ministers but surprising it has like many other issues been put on the back burner whilst other matters are being discussed !!

For the last year we had income of £7311 and expenditure of £7382....so a small deficit of £71. The internal audit of our accounts for the year has been completed and signed off by the auditor. So financially we remain in a good position.

We did of course have some grass cutting issues last year but now that we are paying ESCC for the additional cuts I do not foresee (hope) problems this year. Roads remain an issue of course and the continuing delay to the planned works on the Wartling Road is frustrating to say the least. The road is now deteriorating and becoming more dangerous as parts are subsiding. More and more traffic is using Boreham Lane thanks (not the right word) to SatNavs and when coming across Pevensey Marsh I see a lot of traffic veering off to Boreham Lane if there is a large lorry or worse still a coach in front of the traffic. The result is that Boreham Lane now needs a lot of repair work to be carried out.

Planning....for the most part we have been in agreement with Wealden District Council....any difference seem to be where legislation overrules common sense.

This time last year the hot topic was GDPR Fingers' crossed it hasn't been quite as bad as everyone thought I think this year's topic (ignoring Brexit) is probably going to be the recently introduced "accessibility rules" whereby websites have to be accessible to all no matter what the circumstances may be. We have until September next year to do this or explain why we cannot comply. In the meantime we will have to have an accessibility statement on our website later this year. The theory is fine but some website providers will not continue to support Councils and of course there is a cost element. NALC is seeking financial support for parish councils from the government but as I said earlier such matters are not high up the list.

SPEEDWATCH continues and I do believe that it is having an impact on reducing KSi in the District and within East Sussex. The traffic police regard it as an essential tool and are highly supportive. An interesting fact that I learnt last week is that out of every 3000 cars reported by SpeedWatch 90 have either no insurance, mot or tax....or all three. These now get reported to the appropriate authorities. The system here in Sussex is

now being mirrored by many other counties.

Finally I have a list of thanks.....our District and County Councillors for their continued support.....to my fellow Parish Councillors and to our Parish Clerk.

And of course to you the residents of Wartling for your continued support. I would also wish to put on record our special thanks to Richard...who has decided to step down as a Councillor this year.....but luckily he is going to continue with SpeedWatch... I hope he will join us at the Council meeting on the 3rd July or at least afterwards so that we can thank him officially'.

3. Report from County and District Councillors

County Councillor B Bentley sent a written report in which he said;

'As your County Councillor I provide regular reports to the Parish Council on ESCC activity and our work both within the Parish and my specific areas of responsibility as Lead Cabinet Member for Communities and Chair of Sussex Police and Crime Panel. Often these are projects that take a long time to complete, usually with diminishing resources and an expanding range of responsibilities.

What is often overlooked is that ESCC Spends £375 Million and last year delivered a broad range of public services within 1% of the budget set.

I thought that it may be helpful to reflect upon some of the achievements of the County Council during the past year. These snippets are a selection of information extracted from the East Sussex Council Plan 2018/19 which sets out both the Councils achievements and its plans for the next 12 months.

In the past residents received a quarterly "Your County" magazine. However, many residents expressed the view that council tax should be spent on services not publications. So "Your County" ceased dropping through your letterbox last year.

All information and articles have moved to new webpages under a new online title "YourEastSussex" please visit <https://your.eastsussex.gov.uk> to find out more.

This year has seen a large increase in the Policing precept. The Police and Crime Commissioner has described how this money will be spent in a leaflet enclosed with your Council Tax Bill.

50 extra police officers

By March 2023, we will have 250 more police officers than we had in 2017.

100 more PCSOs

To increase visibility, boost public confidence and provide support for police investigations.

Improving 101 & public contact

The non-emergency 101 service is not good enough. Sussex Police has committed to improving contact with more call handlers and better technology.

50 more investigators & specialists

People said they were concerned that police are too busy to investigate some incidents. Sussex Police say extra investigators and digital specialists will help deal with the rise in complex and serious crimes.

As chair of the Sussex Police & Crime Panel I have campaigned hard to see these improvements and to see the return of more visible community policing, we will be watching and listening to residents as these improvements are delivered and most importantly gauging the pace of change that residents experience and see on their streets.

I would like to thank residents, businesses and the Parish Clerk and Councillors for their support, I am always pleased to hear from residents; if you have issues or concerns that I may be able to assist with, please get in touch.

His report included the following summary from ESCC;

This summary sets out some of the key achievements of East Sussex County Council in 2018/19 (up to February 2019) under the four strategic priorities of the Council. The Council Plan provides further detail of these priorities at: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/about/keydocuments/councilplan/default.htm The Council Plan for 2019/20 will be on our website from 1st April 2019.

Driving sustainable economic growth

Transport for the South East (TfSE), our partnership of the area's 16 transport authorities, launched its Economic Connectivity Review (the first stage of developing the TfSE Transport Strategy) in May 2018. At this event, it was announced that TfSE would receive a £1million grant from the Department for Transport to assist with the development of the Strategy. TfSE is currently undertaking a period of engagement with stakeholders to gain views on its proposals to Government to secure statutory status and a formal consultation will be launched in May 2019.

Over 160 **carriageway asset improvement schemes** were delivered in the first three-quarters of 2018-19, with significant improvement works delivered for the A267 and the A22. A major project to reconstruct Heathfield High Street was completed ahead of schedule, with the scheme also seeing parts of the pavement resurfaced and new street lights installed. Work also began on the construction of the Newhaven Port Access Road and on the second and most significant phase of the Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Scheme. Aimed at modernising the town centre, improving pedestrian conditions and attracting more visitors, it includes the installation of new bus lanes, bus shelters, a high-quality granite road surface and new paving, seating and landscaping.

Significant progress has been made in the implementation of the new Strategy for **Library and Information Services**, with a range of new library services introduced during the last 12 months. These include an enhanced, modern eLibrary with greater investment, a new children and young people's offer to support literacy and numeracy, increased outreach work in our most disadvantaged communities, and new Community Library Membership and Teachers Library Memberships. In addition Hastings Library reopened in March 2018, following a multi-million pound revamp. This included the installation of a new roof and lift, lighting and furniture. Crowborough Library was also refurbished with an expanded children's area, a newly created space for teens and young adults, new free access computer desks and new stock. Libraries at

Ringmer and Langney opened as community libraries, with support from ESCC, after they were closed following the review of the county library services, prompted by the need to make budget savings.

Businesses in East Sussex have been supported to create over 150 jobs in the area during the first three quarters of the year through our **business support** programmes. In addition, Locate East Sussex has supported 30 businesses to move into, or relocate within the county. The South East Business Boost service, offering grants of between £1,000 and £10,000 to small and medium sized businesses and start-ups for capital projects awarded over £900,000 of grants in East Sussex. In addition, Trading Standards launched a Business Advice & Support Partnership (BAASP) to help businesses and other professionals receive high quality regulatory support and promote their comprehensive range of training workshops including customer care, food allergens and selling on-line. To date, they have led 15 workshops, attracting 244 delegates.

ESCC was named as one of 20 **Careers Hubs** nationwide, with £200,000 external funding awarded. The East Sussex Careers Hub, which launched in November 2018, will link all secondary schools, special schools and colleges with employers, support organisations and higher and further education providers to improve the guidance and support offered to students. Projects which help young people make the right career choices will also be expanded, including the Industry Champions network (a network of more than 80 champions from local businesses), apprenticeship roadshows, Supported Internships and Apprenticeships for people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Open Doors, where businesses open their doors to allow students to visit and learn about the world of work. In November 2018, 44 businesses participated in Open Doors and received workplace visits from over 500 students.

81.5% of secondary **schools** are judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding, 1.5 percentage points above the national average of 80% as at end May 2018. 92.9% of primary schools in East Sussex are judged to be good or outstanding against the national average of 89.9%. 100% of special schools are judged to be good or outstanding against the national average of 93.4%. Across East Sussex, results for GCSE English and Maths improved with 41.9% of pupils earning grade five – a strong pass or above, an increase from last year's figure of 38.4%.

Keeping vulnerable people safe

ESCC became one of the few local authorities to achieve the highest possible rating for its work with vulnerable families. Following an Ofsted inspection, ESCC **Children's Social Services** is now rated 'Outstanding'. Inspectors were particularly impressed with the 'connected practice' model which places emphasis on social workers creating enduring and trusting relationships with families and children.

Members of ESCC demonstrated their commitment to protect residents by becoming SCAMBassadors for Friends Against Scams. In July 2018, Councillors took part in their first formal training finding out how scammers operate and what they can do to help stop residents from falling victim. The **East Sussex Against Scams** Partnership, run by the Safer East Sussex Team, helps to protect residents from scams by raising awareness through over 100 partner organisations, such as local businesses, charities, church groups, community enterprises and councils. Nearly 3,000 residents have participated in Friends Against Scams awareness sessions. Trading Standards have also continued their fight against rogue trading in the county, providing support to the most vulnerable and pursuing those who target them. To date, the team have carried out

180 positive interventions to prevent fraud and other scams, and installed 27 call blocking devices to prevent telephone scams.

ESCC was awarded a silver award under the **Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Support Scheme**, which honours employers that show a commitment to supporting current and former military personnel. Award judges were impressed with the support given to armed forces cadet volunteers and Army Reserve members.

Hastings Community Support Service, based in Bexhill, which helps people with learning disabilities live independent lives was rated 'Outstanding' – the highest possible grading in its report from the Care Quality Commission. The service provides specialist support to adults in their own homes, including support with social activities, daily living skills and personal care.

ESCC again took part in the White Ribbon Campaign's 16 Days of Action to help eliminate **domestic violence** and abuse against women and girls. During the campaign, ESCC promoted a series of events designed to highlight support available to victim, as well as encouraging people to speak out against violence and abuse.

Helping people help themselves

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex visited the ESCC managed Joff Youth Centre in Peacehaven, where they met 50 young people gathered from youth groups around the county, including the elected Youth Cabinet. Their visit focused on the issue of **youth mental health** which has been a top priority of the Youth Cabinet this year. In November 2018 over 50 young people took part in our Annual Takeover Day to discuss mental health.

ESCC has worked with the 5 district and borough authorities to set up a new scheme which offers up to 100% **Council Tax discounts to Care Leavers** aged 18-24, using a single protocol and process. We are one of only nine shire counties in England to adopt such a scheme and one of only four to have a countywide scheme.

There have been further improvements against **Adult Social Care** key measures. Delayed Transfers of Care (delayed days) from hospital per 100,000 population (aged 18+) has improved from 12.7 in November 2017 to 10.3 in November 2018. The November 2017 figure had already reduced from 24.4 in April 2017. The proportion of older people (aged 65+) who are still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement or rehabilitation services for April to September 2018 is 92.7%, up from 91.7% over the same period in 2018.

The end of 2017-18 saw the end of the current five year cycle for NHS **Health Checks**. In this period, the Council achieved the highest proportion of people being offered and receiving their check in the South East.

ESCC has partnered with Crowdfunder UK to provide a new **Crowdfund East Sussex** online platform, training and support to groups and organisations across the county. Crowdfund East Sussex was launched by awarding £5,000 to five projects that will make a big difference to local communities - www.crowdfunder.co.uk/east-sussex

Making the best use of our resources

The Council's **budget** and Council Plan for 2018/19 were approved at the meeting of Full Council on the 5th February 2018. The budget includes spending of £375 million on services for East Sussex. It also includes savings of £5.1 million. The savings required in

the budget were significantly less than first anticipated due to the success of sustained lobbying of central Government. As a result, additional one off funds were secured for social care and special educational needs and disability funding. East Sussex was also selected to be a business rate pilot during 2019-20 which will bring in £4.3m funding to the county area, including an estimated £1.6m for ESCC.

ESCC also published its '**Core Offer**' – a description of a basic but decent level of service which we believe is the very least residents should be able to expect, even with the intense financial pressures we face. As well as meeting our legal duties across all services delivered, the Core Offer includes measures to grow the economy of East Sussex and make sure we invest resources in some preventative and early intervention work where greater costs may otherwise build up. Views were sought on the Core Offer between November and December 2018 and over 1200 responses to the questionnaire were received. Feedback from the questionnaire set out that most people – 78% considered that the Government should allocate more funds to meet the financial gap ESCC faces.

Through our capital programme we have delivered **improvements to schools buildings** and expansion of facilities across the county providing approximately 1,100 additional school places across primary, secondary and special educational needs provision'.

In answer to residents' questions, County Councillor Bennett said;

- There is not a different funding stream to build passing places, resurfacing and potholes are the priorities.
- Pothole repairs are only temporary repairs.
- He is angry that the repairs to the Wartling Road have been postponed again and he is not convinced that putting in kerbing will be the solution.

District Councillor Doodes read from her report which said;

'In May I completed my 20th year on Wealden District Council. Where have all the year's gone? Much has changed and improved during that time.

Looking at the past year:

It has been very quiet in Wartling Parish. There have been fly tips which have been cleared swiftly, planning applications have been determined, bins collected and bins missed. However generally there have been no serious problems.

Wealden Local Plan:

The Wealden Local Plan has been submitted to the Inspector who is starting the Inspection in Public procedure this month.

Refuse Collections – Commonly known as 'The bins':

We are coming to the end of Kier's contract and I regret to say the service has not been perfect during the last few months. Keir seem not to be recruiting sufficient staff or replacing worn out, wrongly sized vehicles. In addition they seem to have 'end of term' syndrome. Thankfully the service for Wartling Parish has not been too badly affected, apart from the continuing problem of missed green waste bins in the centre of Wartling. Biffa come on board in July.

Litter on the A259 and other main roads:

I was extremely disappointed that the verges on the A259 were cut before the promised litter pick took place. Normally Wealden is informed of the date of the cut so the pick can happen first, this time there was a breakdown in communication. Litter was cut along with the grass and the strong winds did the rest.

Local councils find it difficult keeping up with removing the ever increasing amount of litter dropped by thoughtless people who never give a moment thought as to who will remove it.

Horsewalk

Fly tipping on the Horsewalk is a problem we are trying to resolve. I have been in constant communication with the Police as have our Street Scene Team.

Crematorium

The Crematorium will soon be in operation. A Public Open Day for viewing the new facility will be advertised shortly.

Wealden Local Housing Company

Wealden is one of the very few local authorities building its own council houses. This enterprise is proving successful.

Purchase of Hailsham Centre

The public are being consulted on the future in Hailsham recently purchased by the Council.

These three projects enable the Council to get a much better return on its reserves at a time when interest rates are low.

Wealden continues to be a strong, financially stable council with good leadership. Officers and Members work well together as one team to deliver the best we can. Our new Chief Executive, Trevor Scott has quickly gained respect, as has the new Head of Planning, Chris Bending.

Pam – Responsibilities at Wealden

I have now completed my three years as Vice Chairman of the Council. This was an enjoyable time spent supporting Wealdens businesses, club and societies and visiting areas of the District I haven't been to before. In addition last year I was a member of the Scrutiny Committee and various other talk and finish groups.

District Council Election

Ray and I are very grateful for your support and for returning us both to Wealden. We are an energetic couple of folk who will do our best to represent the huge geographical area which is now our ward.

Personally I am humbled that 823 people took the trouble to give me their vote.

Thank you.'

4. Reports from Clubs and Associations

Mrs Richardson from the 1st Wartling Brownies sent a written report which said;

'We have had a busy and enjoyable year. We are growing in numbers and so now more local girls are having fun with us.

We have been keeping very busy and we

- Had a food bank collection and were able to make a large donation to the Hailsham Foodbank.
- Have been bowling at Freedom Leisure.
- Had a Parliamentary Evening to commemorate 100 years of the Suffragette movement.
- Had an evening of remembrance to commemorate 100 years of World War 1. We made our own hand print wreath which was laid at Herstmonceux Village Hall.
- Had a 'Bumble Bee' night – planting seeds to help bring bumble bees into the girl's gardens.
- Celebrated Mothers' Day, Easter, Shrove Tuesday and Chinese New Year.
- Had a Scavenger Hunt in the hall car park.
- Did playground chalking.
- Celebrated Harry and Meghan's wedding and send off congratulation cards which we received thank you notes from Buckingham Palace to all the girls.

On behalf of myself and all the Brownies I would like to thank everyone in the local community for supporting us.'

Councillor Reid read from the Chairman of the Reid Hall's Report which said;

'2018 has been another successful year, for the team of trustees and the hall itself.

The trustees and some helpers have worked hard to keep the village hall, clean, tidy, maintained, operable and compliant they give their time completely free of charge sometimes absorbing personal cost to ensure that the halls runs as efficiently as possible.

Spend:

We spent some considerable time considering an extractor system for the kitchen, gaining quotes from three known commercial kitchen fitting companies. Frankly the estimates were ridiculous so one of the Trustees spent great efforts researching and came up with a supplier who could give us exactly what we wanted at a fraction of the cost, this upgrade has been gratefully received by our hirers who use the kitchen.

The floor has been stripped and recoated with appropriate material as per the "care" instructions; this was £3250 to complete, not including the lost revenue whilst the works were carried out. However completely necessary to restore the floor and maintain its fantastic condition.

The sewerage system pump failed which was replaced as soon as humanly possible, to enable the hall to remain open the tank had to emptied on a couple of occasions.

The entire T's and C's were re written, together with booking forms. Whilst it was a mammoth task we believe that this will help protect the hall in the future.

The cupboards were decorated.

Financial report:

Balance 1st January 2018 - £30505.60 Compared to 2017 - £28021.02

Balance 31st December 2018 – £34427.77 Compared to 2017 £30505.60

Our treasurer Will Reid will give you a separate report

Trustees:

This year the trustee team will be losing one of our trustees so he can spend his efforts on some charitable work, Graham Richards, who has served for 10 years, will be leaving us, I am sure you will join me to thank him for his efforts. Thanks Graham.

So we have a vacancy for a trustee, do you think you can help. In exchange you can be involved more with the community contribution to the running of the hall, equally have input into the way the hall is run. If you think you have some spare time that you would like to afford to our community then please do make yourself known to either myself or Rowena.

Community events:

The trustees have organised some community events in the past and are considering the future. These events have been organised so that the Hall can be show cased, as a benefit of the Parish which is one of the original constitutions aims. I must stress that this is not the responsibility of the Trustees.

So..... Would you like to run the next / future events, we would be happy to help. I believe that this is fantastic way of keeping the community in touch with each other.

If you would like to be involved, please make yourself known to any of the trustee team.

Booking clerk:

We are about the start a recruitment drive to employ a new booking clerk, I would appreciate it if you would spread the word as we would like to secure someone suitable from within the parish.

The role is currently being completed by Rowena, who I think secretly enjoys it, but this must not continue as Rowena has other commitments – but at this point, and from all of the Trustee's – THANK YOU

Plans for the future:

We are considering the rear patio refurbishment to include a suitable seating area, some lighting and to modify the steps into suitable slopes for easier access/exit.

Repairs/relay of the front slope as it has been damaged over the years.

Continue to monitor the tarmac condition as it has starting to break up in places.

Continue to monitor roof condition.

Try and free up some storage to include a private and locked cupboard for the hall necessities.

Some tree works to the Eastside strip of land.

Special thanks to:

The trustee team for their continued time both running and then maintain the hall. The meetings. The maintaining, the hirer visits the bins!

To Norman Hunnisset for his help and experience – I know we say this every year, but it is truly appreciated.

To the Hagues family for their help with the hedges.

To Trish for her previous support as booking clerk.

To Jackie and Keith for their continued work with the hall condition.

To Paul Fuggel, the hall accountant/auditor who has sadly passed away.

To other paid contractors who work around our hall's needs – Thank You'.

5. Open Forum

There were no further questions from the public.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.10pm.