

WARTLING PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF

7th September 2022

This meeting was held at the Reid Hall in Boreham Street.

40 Present

Councillors K Stevens (Chairman), C Paterson, E Ashley and W Reid.

County Councillor B Bowdler, District Councillor Ray Cade, District Councillor P Doodles, A Stevens (Clerk) and six members of the public were also in attendance.

41 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

42 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 6th July 2022.

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 6th July 2022, were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Chairman.

43 Clerk's Report on Matters' Arising

All matters arising were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

44 Disclosures of Interests

There were no disclosures of interest on any items on this agenda.

The meeting was then suspended.

45 Reports from the County Councillor on matters from the County Council affecting this Parish.

County Councillor Bowdler read from his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

He also confirmed that the double white lines at the west end of Boreham Street are due to be restored on the evening of the 14th September.

46 Report from the District Councillors on matters from the District Council affecting this Parish.

District Councillors Doodles and Cade circulated a copy of their report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

District Councillor Cade said more properties are needed for people from Ukraine to rent.

District Councillor Doodles;

- i. Encouraged Parish Councils to use the same contractor as Wealden if they are considering installing electric car charging points.
- ii. Asked the Parish Council to include Wealden's communication links on its website.
- iii. confirmed Avian Flu is still a problem.

47 Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from the public.

The meeting was then re-opened.

48 Reports

a) Planning – The owner of The Lamb is appealing against the Enforcement Notice which was served to stop him using the pub for AirBnB.

b) Environment North

The long dry spell of weather means nothing has grown.

c) Footpaths

There was nothing new to report on this occasion.

d) Environment South

There was nothing new to report on this occasion because of the recent weather conditions.

e) Highways

The A271 has now been resurfaced. The white lines are to be reinstated on the 14th September.

f) Police

The new Area Commander is going to try and get PCSOs to attend more Parish Council Meetings.

g) Communication

Reports are regularly sent out via the village email distribution list. Anyone who is not on it and would like to be is asked to contact the Parish Clerk.

h) Speedwatch

The Project EDWARD week of action will take place from 19th to the 25th September. More details about the project can be found at <https://projectEdward.org/>

i) Trees

There was nothing new to report.

49 Reports from outside meetings and courses attended

Councillor Stevens is to attend the next Parish Cluster Meeting which is due to be held on the 9th September. He will report back to the Parish Council Meeting in November.

The Local Plan has been delayed by the changes at government level. Simon Clarke MP is the latest Levelling Up Minister.

50 Finance Report

Councillors resolved;

- To agree the payments list to the 7th September 2022. The payments were as follows;

		£
100993	Barkweb - Website hosting	300.00
100994	A Stevens - Salary - July	384.87
100995	A Stevens - Salary - August	384.87
100996	ESCC - Pension	225.16
100997	HMRC - PAYE	77.40

- To agree the accounts to 29th July 2022.

51 Feasibility Study

At the last meeting Councillors resolved to organise a Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) Meeting to address residents' concerns at the Tilley Lane end of Boreham Street, look into reducing the speed limits in the parish in general and consider speed cameras as a potential way to reduce speeding traffic. The Clerk subsequently contacted Highways to organise one.

ESCC Highways said they felt it would be more suitable to arrange a meeting with one of its Traffic and Safety Officers and one of the team dealing with the feasibility study. Councillors agreed and said they will follow up with an SLR Meeting if one is still needed after.

Councillor Stevens said Surrey County Council has taken the initiative to pilot a reduction to 20mph or 30mph within an 80sq mile area of the Surrey Hills AONB.

West Sussex County Council has also expressed interest in the scheme, up to now Highway authorities have generally reviewed speed limits in the context of accident statistics but Surrey County Council claim the changes will reduce the risk and severity of collisions, reduce air and noise pollution and make it safer and more pleasant to walk, cycle and ride horses.

The situation is being kept under review.

Councillor Stevens also agreed to find out why the Boreham Street sign has been moved.

52 Co-option update

At the last meeting Councillors resolved to co-opt Lyn Lewis to Wartling Parish Council. Unfortunately Ms Lewis has since moved out of the Parish.

The Parish Council hopes to be able to co-opt a new councillor at its next meeting,

53 Questions from Parish Councillors

Councillors resolved to move the next Meeting from the 2nd November to the 10th so that Councillor Stevens can be present.

54 Planning Applications

There were no planning applications for commenting on at this meeting.

There was no further business so the meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Members' Update - East Sussex County Council

August 2022

Cllr Bob Bowdler – Wealden East Division

Adult Social Care

Help shape future adult social care services

East Sussex County Council are working with residents and partners to develop a long-term strategy for adult social care.

People in East Sussex are being asked to take part in a survey which will help shape the future direction of adult social care across the county. People who need care and support, their unpaid carers, and their families are encouraged to have their say about what is important to them through the Living Well in East Sussex survey.

The survey is the starting point for the development of a new strategy which will determine the direction of adult social care for everyone who has, or will have, care and support needs within the county, the projects and services that support them, and their carers and families.

The survey runs until Sunday 18 September and can be found on the [East Sussex Consultation Hub website](#).

Children's Services

East Sussex students celebrate exam result success

Council leaders have praised the efforts of young people across the county as this year's A Level and GCSE results were announced.

This year marked the return of formal examinations for the first time since 2019. East Sussex students particularly excelled in GCSE Maths and English, where the proportion of students getting higher grades 9-5 in both subjects was 46% and 9-4 66%.

Advice for young people and their parent carers on the next steps available, including further education, work experience and volunteering, traineeships, apprenticeships, T Levels, being your own boss, the new Kickstart programme, and support for young people with additional needs is available on the council's [Careers East Sussex website](#).

Holiday Activity & Fun

Again we were able to provide extensive HAF due to funding of £980k from central government. This meant that during the Summer Holidays we were able to provide extensive hot meals, games and entertainment for children who qualify for free school meals. 79 local providers across 142 sites were able to support 27,000 individual sessions. 15% of the budget was used to support wider eligible of groups, which included many children of our Ukrainian guests.

Communities, Economy and Transport

Success for summer apprenticeship roadshows

The Sussex Council of Training Providers (SCTP), in partnership with East Sussex County Council, welcomed hundreds of people looking to get into the world of work at two successful summer Apprenticeship Roadshows.

More than 60 training providers and employers from a range of industries across the county were on hand to give advice and information about the opportunities available. The events in Hastings and Eastbourne gave more than 600 people attending the chance to find out about current and future apprenticeship vacancies and training opportunities.

The Apprenticeship Roadshows are part of the Transform programme, funded by the European Social Fund and led by East Sussex County Council. The programme, worth £600,000 over 3 years, includes match funding of £300,000 from the council's Apprenticeship Levy to help small and medium sized enterprises access apprenticeship advice and funding.

Businesses looking for information about apprenticeships and future events can find out more and learn how to access the free and impartial Transform skills support service [on the SCTP website](#).

Funding to tackle fuel poverty among private renters

A new initiative to tackle fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency in privately rented households within areas of Hastings has been launched.

East Sussex County Council was one of 13 local authorities to secure funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities' Partnerships for People and Place programme.

The funding will help the council, local partners, and central government colleagues to develop new solutions which aim to reduce fuel poverty and increase the take up of energy efficiency improvements in privately rented homes, boosting residents' health and providing benefits to the environment. The project is focussed on three Hastings wards: Castle, Central St Leonards, and Gensing.

Citizens Advice 1066 are currently running a series of engagement events with landlords and tenants to better understand the barriers to making energy efficiency improvements. The responses from landlords and tenants will help the council and central government colleagues to develop new solutions to identified barriers which will then be piloted in the target areas.

The project runs for 12 months, although there are hopes that local and central partners will develop a more sustained programme of activity which can be delivered across the county and beyond.

Landlords or tenants who own or live in rental property in Castle, Central St Leonards, or Gensing, and would like to participate in the project, can find out more and sign up on the [Citizens Advice 1066 website](#).

District Councillors' report to Wartling Parish Council September 2022

Housing

Ukrainian refugees continue to arrive under the "Homes for Ukraine" (HfU) scheme as the war in Ukraine drags on. Many families come with few possessions, but many anxieties and experiences of terror and grief for lost relatives and friends and those they have left behind.

The generosity, resolve and commitment of Wealden residents and people across the UK, to welcome the refugees into their homes and support them during their traumatic experiences, never ceases to surprise us.

Local community groups are now beginning to refine their support as they turn from immediate priorities to more everyday living needs, comfort and acclimatisation of their guests.

Regular community events and gatherings are being set-up and initiatives such as counselling, English lessons, transport facilities, provision of clothing, and search for employment are becoming commonplace.

The statistics as of 26/8/22:

1193 guests have arrived in East Sussex with 527 hosts.

525 guests, Wealden with 209 hosts

711 guests are expected in Wealden to 272 hosts.

Obviously, these numbers will continue to increase.

Next month will be the six month mark of the HfU scheme and it is hoped hosts will continue to accommodate their Ukrainian guests. The original intention of the scheme was for volunteers to host for a minimum of six months, and maximum of twelve. We believe the Government will extend its support for longer than a year, but there are indications, understandably, that a significant percentage of the hosts will not continue that long. So, our attention is now turning to "moving on" initiatives, where Ukrainian families become self-sufficient with employment and accommodation.

Needless to say, this is creating challenges, especially regarding the latter aspect.

The Wealden Housing team continues to deal with initiatives resulting from the Grenfell Tower tragedy public enquiry and the closer working relationship between the Housing Ombudsman and Regulator. Our latest requirement was to complete a consultation in relation to the responsibilities of social landlords regarding electricity supply, safety and monitoring. We believe this will lead to more regulation and punitive consequences for social housing providers. Fortunately, Wealden Housing, in most respects, has already been operating these processes and safety procedures for some years.

The Streatfield House, Uckfield planning application was submitted at the end of June 2022. It has been validated and out for consultation. The application is for demolition and redevelopment to provide 20 new affordable carbon zero ready homes. The scheme will be considered by Planning Committee North in late September.

This will be a flagship development by the WDC Housing team, which includes innovative design, SAP "A" rating; properties built to be easily adapted to account for disabled or long term health condition occupants; two houses specifically for disabled persons requiring a lift; and an open ecological space for residents to relax and enjoy. We believe this will act as a template for future developments of its kind.

Waste Management

These last few weeks have seen the return to normality as far as collections are concerned.

The re-establishment of regular bin emptying took longer than expected, for a number of reasons and we are still experiencing the odd problem. However, "missed bins" have dramatically decreased and we foresee a return to the usual efficient service by Biffa, very soon.

I am sure you will have seen the decision to freeze the cost of garden waste collections until July 2024 in recognition of the disruption and inconvenience suffered by our customers due to the industrial

action. We considered other types of recompense too costly, mostly due to their administration and the impact on staff time and resources.

Full year 2021/22 recycling data is now available showing an improvement from last year with 49.1% of waste collected, recycled in 2021/22 compared to 48.4% for the previous year. The average amount of non-recyclable waste per household has also improved with a reduction from 458.17Kg in 2020/21 to 450.50kg for 2021/22. Overall waste tonnages continue to be up to 7% higher than pre-pandemic levels.

Regarding "Street Scene Performance", the latest independent survey for street cleanliness took place in July. Results for all measures such as litter, dog fouling, graffiti and fly posting were all within target. The result for detritus was 0.6% above target. Street Scene Officers are working with Biffa to identify the locations contributing to this result, to bring them back within standard.

Climate Change

EV Charging - The first six car parks have completed their feasibility work and our provider, Connected Kerb is presently negotiating with their civils contractor. On a further five car parks we are still waiting on connection costs and once we have these then these will progress. We are about to start a full engagement with Parish Councils via the Parish Bulletin for all Parishes and then direct contact with those Parish / Towns where charging is to be installed. Connected Kerb will be running a webinar for Parish Councils on the project. This will be very general, i.e. what the chargers look like, how they are used etc. details about booking for this will be in the Parish Bulletin.

A number of Parish Councils have approached us to be put in touch with Connected Kerb to look at their own assets: if you are interested please contact us, we will make sure your expression of interest reaches the correct person at Connected Kerb. We are keen to encourage Parish Councils to use Connected Kerb to build on their network in the district, helping to reduce potential maintenance costs and ensure that the same back-office system is used ensuring ease of use for residents.

Solar Together - Wealden will not be running the usual auction this autumn as we need to focus on completing the previous schemes that are still in the implementation phase due to delays linked to the Pandemic. We have flagged with iChooser that we are likely to be interested in a further scheme in 2023.

Coastal Protection

The "Cape Michelle", a 60 foot, single manned, yacht ran aground on the Council's beach halfway between Birling Gap and Cuckmere Haven after dragging its anchors in the early morning of 25 July 2022. The rudder was knocked off the boat in the incident. The owner was rescued by helicopter. The boat was almost new and uninsured. A vessel stranded on the foreshore remains the responsibility of the owner until such time as it may be formally abandoned, at which point responsibility passes to the local authority for both the damaged vessel and the fuel within it.

In this case, it was clearly in both the boat owner's and the Council's interests to secure the removal of the boat. Officers of the Council worked with our colleagues at Lewes and Eastbourne and the ESCC Emergency Planning team to liaise with the owner via the Maritime Coastguard Agency. After two failed attempts, the boat was finally towed off the beach on 12 August 2022. However, due to leaks in the yacht, both the rescue vessel and the yacht then ran aground again near Cuckmere Haven. Repairs were carried out to the yacht at the next low tide and both vessels were re-floated and finally left the Council's beaches on 13 August 2022. All debris and oil was removed with it.

We are pleased to be able to report that there was no lasting damage to the environment and through our proactive communications activities no injuries or other incidents (despite the obvious risks beyond the Council's control) as a result of the vessel unsecured on the beach for a protracted period. Publicity was kept to a minimum during this operation to avoid the possibility of attracting members of the public to what could be a dangerous location.

Emergency Planning

Avian Flu - Following cases in Hastings and then wider East Sussex (inc. Wealden), Avian Flu has been confirmed in Cornwall and Norfolk, however, it has been reclassified as low risk as of August as the

peak is considered to have passed. Our assessment is that we managed the threat very well, despite having been in a surveillance zone, at no time was it necessary for a protection zone to be introduced in Wealden.

Heat Waves - The recent Heat Waves and Flood Warnings were managed well in partnership with East Sussex and the Sussex Resilience Forum. Communication cascades worked well, with ample notice for warning and informing the public, consolidation and resharing of partner messaging across social media and preparing our Retirement Living Residences accordingly.

At the height of the July heat wave, we also increased our messaging to managers in consideration of the wellbeing of those staff who may be working outdoors, or indoors with limited ventilation, or undertaking demanding physical work so that appropriate adjustments would temporarily be made to working patterns and requirements to alleviate the worst impacts of the heatwave.

Although not needed, we were prepared with Southern Water being able and ready to distribute bottled water should systems not cope.

Environmental Health

Taxis

A ten percent increase in the maximum hackney carriage fares has been approved, which will be implemented on 3 October. The companies who change the meters have been informed and arrangements have been made for meters to be updated and new fare cards printed and distributed. Training for all taxi drivers on child sexual exploitation (the signs to look for and how to report) will take place in November. This is funded by the Wealden Community Safety Partnership

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

The number of very good businesses continues to be a high percentage at 77 percent and only five businesses were failing in the last quarter compared with six the quarter before. We are working intensively with these businesses to get them to at least a satisfactory standard.

Air Quality

In August, DEFRA approved our annual air quality review.

This Annual Status Report confirms that concentrations within Wealden continue to be well within the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objectives at relevant locations. No significant changes in emissions sources within the Council's area have been identified in the last year. The priorities for the coming year will be to continue monitoring in the area and continue to implement measures to increase sustainable travel options and improve transport infrastructure. The Council will ensure assessment and mitigation measures for new developments, particularly those allocated around the main urban centres. The Council will also consider additional monitoring points in these areas of new development. The Council will continue discussions around planning policy to ensure that air quality mitigation requirements become policy in the new Local Plan and continue work with Sussex Air and other Local Authorities.

In partnership with Sussex Air we send out alerts to medically vulnerable people by text or email, if poor air quality is predicted the following day, so they can increase their medications or stay at home.

Communications

The way Wealden communicates with residents has changed dramatically in recent years. As nearly everyone has a mobile phone with access to news channels and a whole host of social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, Next Door and LinkedIn, this is the direction our communication is taking whilst still using the News section on our website and regular Media Releases – so far this year the Communications Team has released 100 media releases, a 35 per cent increase compared to last year.

The most recent figures regarding our following on social media are as follows:

- Facebook – Wealden District Council - 7.5k followers
- Twitter – @wealdenc - 8.4k followers
- Instagram – 1.5k followers

- Nextdoor (a targeted communications method to inform residents of news that is local to them) – 24.5k residents signed up across Wealden and 17 neighbourhoods
- LinkedIn – 1,241K followers

YouTube is another platform which is being developed. We are growing the amount of videos we upload to the platform and of particular success recently has been the Become a Councillor video – to encourage members of the public to consider standing as councillors - and the Corporate Plan consultation video, asking residents to give their view on what they want the council to consider as priorities between 2023-27.

In addition, the Communications Team has been boosted by the addition of a Social Media Advisor, who is able to help both members and staff with social media posts.

Our next major project is to help boost recruitment within Wealden District Council using specialised videos and campaigns.

Emergency Planning

It is expected that Towns and Parishes draft template Emergency Plan will be considered by East Sussex Resilience and Emergency Planning board in early September. Once agreed the next stage will be to begin to roll it out .

In anticipation of Protect duties, Officers will be meeting with Counter terrorism Security Advisors from Sussex Police to make plans for the review of any significant buildings, including Vicarage Lane and consider other measures such as staff training.

A desk top exercise to explore recovery of IT systems in the event of a cyber attack will take place in early October.

Refresher training for all staff involved in EP call out rotas will be taking place over autumn and winter.

Press Releases on the Council's Website

The following may be of interest:

Annual Canvass www.wealden.gov.uk/news/wealden-annual-canvass/

Queen's award for Voluntary Service www.wealden.gov.uk/news/queens-award-for-voluntary-service-nominations-are-open-for-2023/

Tree Competition www.wealden.gov.uk/news/trees-wealden-competition/

Street Learning Courses www.wealden.gov.uk/news/new-street-learning-courses-available/

Governance Review www.wealden.gov.uk/news/a-community-governance-review-relating-to-four-parishes-within-wealden-is-underway/

**Councillors Ray Cade and Pam Doodes
September 2022**

