

Minutes of the meeting of East Dean Parish Council
29th October 2024 at 7.30pm
Held at East Dean Village Hall

Present: Neil Georges - Chair, John Holt, Peter West, Sam Hook, Beanie Allison and Josh Collins

Apologies Sarah Peirson - Vice Chair
Jeremy Hunt - West Sussex County Council

In attendance: Henry Potter - Chichester District Council
Alexia Ward - Parish Clerk
5 Parishioners

Neil Georges opened the meeting with condolences from East Dean Parish Council to the families of Jill Mountford, Morris Pratt and John Fisher who died this month.

Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 15th July 2024 were reviewed and approved.

1. Matters arising from Minutes

- Neil Georges said that he would be able to get a reasonably priced second-hand laptop for the Parish Clerk if and when Alexia's present one ceased working.
- Neil said a meeting to discuss the budget for 2025-2026 would be required so that we can take into account any future expenditure before CDC request the precept in January 25.
- Neil said that he would do some more investigation into using the interest from the Helen West Account for the parish.
- The verges were cut by the due date in August and it was noted that Josh Collins will cut back the hedge in Butchers Lane.

2. Update from District and County Councillors

Jeremy's full report with links for further information can be seen at the end of these minutes.

On local issues Jeremy said he had been advised that the jet washing and camera team were due to survey the pipes leading to the hole on Pond Green on 28th October. It was confirmed by Glenn Ward that he had seen the works in progress. Jeremy said he would continue to keep in contact with WS Highways. He also said that he had requested an inspection of East Dean Hill re the potholes and road edge.

Finally, please don't forget to keep an eye on our website, especially our news and campaigns page where you can keep up to date with all our latest news. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/news-and-campaigns/>

Henry Potter sent his report by email which was circulated to the Parish Council before the meeting.

Minute paragraph 8 is of particular interest to residents in the Lavant Valley and would have been the basis of my report to your Meeting. There is little else going on at CDC except the 'old chestnut'. The Southern Gateway Scheme was debated at the most recent Full Council Meeting but it is apparent that little forward progress has been made. The Bus Garage / Workshop will eventually move into the Terminus Road Industrial Estate but any decision regarding the actual Bus terminal is still under consideration. Proposals to introduce Bus Stops on the Avenue de Chartres and around the Southgate area are mired in doubt. Of interest, the Police

playing field (adjacent to the Police Station), The High School for Boys and the Law Courts no longer feature in the scheme, the Freeholders have chosen to withdraw and 'do their own thing'.

The District Local Plan Examination began with an initial meeting at East Pallant House early in October, a follow up meeting is scheduled for later in November. After this will follow a long period of Examination and hopefully a positive determination next year.

Henry also included the report from the Goodwood Motor Circuit Consultative Committee Meeting held on 16th October 24. He suggested that as a Parish Council we should be represented. Alexia said she would contact the secretary.

3. Financial Report

Alexia Ward said that the balance of the Lloyds Current account on 29th October 2024 was £4,957.77 and the Helen West Legacy account balance was £20,249.22 and the interest for August, September and October was £53.77.

4. Correspondence

Alexia said she had been forwarding the emails to the councillors from Glenn McCubbin , Southern Water updating the works re lining throughout the village.

5. Update on flooding , Sewerage and Highways

Neil thanked Glenn McCubbin for his efforts in managing the lining of the sewage pipes in East Dean which has now been completed all but a couple of manholes which need sealing. Neil also said to keep reporting the potholes especially on East Dean Hill.

Update from Parish Councillors

- Josh Collins suggested that the new trees down Charlton Road would need the area around the bases clearing. He also said he would speak to Southern Water re the tree Survey and organise a quote for the works.
- Pete West suggested that maybe a better interest rate for the Helen West Legacy Account should be found. Alexia said she would do more research.
- John Holt said he had updated the contact details for the Winter Plan and it had been circulated to the rest of the PC.

6. Any Other Business

- Neil said that the Bonfire Night Health and Safety risk assessment had been updated .The main change was that a new site for the launching of the fireworks had been found as a 25-meter clear launching zone was required. The new site would now be from the field behind Fallowfield. The bonfire would be built on Pond Green on the usual site. The catch pit and the hole on the green would have netting put around them to cordon off the area. Neil thanked Max Davies for donating the fireworks.
- The next Village Clear Up day will be 30th November. Alexia said she would do posters and a notice on Village WhatsApp.
- Alexia asked the PC if they would agree to fund the replacement battery for the defibrillator which is located at the Village Hall. The PC agreed. Neil asked if the defibrillator needed child specific pads. Vicky Mudford, Chair of Village Hall Management Committee said she would check.

Date of Next Meeting

20th January 2025 at 7.30pm

28th April 2025 AGM at 7.00pm Meeting at 7.30pm

At East Dean Village Hall

Report from Jeremy Hunt

Finance. I am currently working through our budget proposals for 2025/26 and our Medium-Term Financial Strategy through to 2029/30. An update on our plans will be presented to Public Cabinet on Tuesday 29th October. Budgets continue to be under extreme pressure, mainly through the continuing pressures, both from demand and complexity, in social services, in both Children's and Adults. I just want to reference an additional challenge to budget planning this year, and that is the new government we have in Westminster. To date we have had no indication from them as to their plans for LA funding. I wrote to the Chancellor at the end of July, setting out our funding challenges. I also suggested that we needed to have some idea of Government funding proposals as a matter of urgency. I pointed out that, as we are currently preparing our 25/26 budget, we needed to make decisions now on how we are going to fill our budget gap. This is difficult to do if we have no idea of what level of funding we are likely to receive. With the budget not being presented until 30th October - and the Local Government Finance Settlement not due until December - it puts us in a very difficult position. My worry is that, as Local Government funding isn't ring fenced, this funding could remain unchanged - or worse still - cut back. In the face of ever spiralling costs, it is essential that the government either fundamentally change how many of these services are provided or ensure that we are properly funded in order to continue to provide them for our residents. We are not alone in this position, as a majority of LA's are facing similar - or worse - financial pressures. I appreciate that it will be challenging for the new government to tackle these pressures in time for 2025/26, so my worry is that they could well look to simply increase the CT referendum limit. We wait to see if that's true, but I did point out to the Chancellor that continued CT increases were not the way forward. I haven't yet had any response to my letter, so we will have to wait and see how they propose to address the estimated shortfall in local government funding of around £6bn over the next two years.

Positive Ageing Month: free events at our libraries. Selected libraries across West Sussex will host free events and health checks to raise awareness for Positive Ageing throughout October. You can listen in to talks on ageing, book a wellbeing assessment, attend a drop-in, speak with local organisations, and of course pick up plenty of books on ageing well. For details of Positive Ageing and other events in all libraries, click on the link below or go our [Library What's On pages](#) and click on the 'ageing well' tag.

Positive Ageing Month

Our plan to reduce emissions and increase climate resilience. We've set out the first phase of a six-year plan to become carbon neutral and climate resilient by 2030. A Climate Action and Adaptation Plan for 2024 to 2027 has been published which identifies 20 priority actions to be taken across the council and in partnership with key stakeholders in the county. The actions are broken down into six pathways focusing on issues such as buildings and energy, transport, and nature and environment.

[Read the plan](#)

Best start in life for our children. Our new 'Right from the Start: Early Years and Childcare Strategy' sets out our vision and priorities for supporting children in West Sussex. The four-year strategy aims to improve the wellbeing of young children, reduce inequalities and support positive choices for families. This strategy will be embedded across all our services supporting young children, to help every child in West Sussex achieve their full potential. Ensuring we work together with families and other services to implement the strategy and shape what happens next is a high priority for us. Please look out for opportunities to get involved through our upcoming communications.

[Read the strategy](#)

On-street parking charges. West Sussex County Council has decided to freeze on-street parking charges across the County at current levels, in order to help residents and visitors to the county. Councillor Joy Dennis, West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, [announced the decision today](#) following the annual review of charges, which could otherwise have meant increases from 1 October 2024. Councillor Dennis said: “I hope this decision will be welcome news. It aims to help both West Sussex residents, businesses and visitors to the county in what continues to be a financially challenging time. We hope that this will help people who would otherwise struggle to meet increased on-street parking fees and, in turn, support town centre businesses, in line with our Council Plan priority of supporting a sustainable and prosperous economy across the county.”

The West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service delivers a record number of Safe and Well visits. West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service delivered its highest number of Safe and Well Visits in a single quarter. The service’s Prevention Team and operational fire crews delivered a record-breaking 1,152 Safe and Well Visits to vulnerable residents between 1 April and 30 June 2024. This data was presented to West Sussex County Council’s Fire and Rescue Scrutiny Committee who reviewed the fire and rescue service’s quarter one performance at their meeting last week (26 September). Data also revealed that 28 of the service’s 30 core measures were on target – an improvement from the previous quarter which saw 26 core measures on target. A [performance report](#) showed sustained good performance in many areas. One particular success was the improvements made around safeguarding referrals; 100% of referrals were within 24 hours of discovery – a target which was red in the previous quarter. Since the committee last met, a project to review the Retained (on-call) Duty System was launched as part of the commitments set out in the service’s [Community Risk Management Plan](#). The project intends to improve the current processes in place for the running of the retained function, aiming to create a system that works for a modern fire and rescue service. It is hoped that this will address the issue of retained firefighter availability, an issue that affects services across the nation. Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Matt Cook, added: “This report is a culmination of the hard work my colleagues deliver every day, and it is great to see their work reflected by the improvements in our targets.”

Recycling centres switch to Winter opening hours from 1st October. Just a reminder that our Recycling Centres across West Sussex switched to autumn and winter opening hours from 1 October through to Monday 31 March 2025. The recycling centres will be open from 9am to 4pm, and some centres will close for an additional day during the winter period. Please find below details of some local centres. These will be open on the following days:

- Bognor Regis - Monday to Wednesday, Saturday to Sunday
- **Chichester - Monday, Wednesday to Sunday (Closed Tuesdays)**
- Littlehampton - Monday, Thursday to Sunday
- Midhurst - Monday, Thursday to Sunday

All centres will be **closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day**. Finally, just as a reminder, before visiting any West Sussex re-cycling Centre, residents must book a timed slot online using the [Book to Recycle system](#) or by phone on 01243 642106. Bookings can be made up to 14 days in advance or even on the same day if there is availability.

Local Issues:

Hole on The Green - it was confirmed to me last week that a jetting and camera team would be inspecting the drain on Monday 28th October. We wait to see! I have stressed (extensively and on numerous occasions) to our highways team that I’m not sure why we need a jetting team as the problem is very obvious (!), but I am told we have to go

through certain procedures. Hopefully they come up with a report that says more than just 'there is a collapsed drain on the green' that needs repairing!! I will obviously have a lot to say on your behalf if they do!!

East Dean Hill - following a query raised at the last PC meeting I have requested an inspection of the road. To this date I am awaiting an update.

Finally, please don't forget to keep an eye on our website, especially our news and campaigns page where you can keep up to date with all our latest news. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/news-and-campaigns/>

Also, a reminder that all our public meetings are webcast live and are also archived, so you can always view them later. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/watch-county-council-and-committee-meetings-online/>

Jeremy Hunt – West Sussex County Council Member for Chichester North
c/o Cabinet Office, County Hall, West Street, Chichester, PO19 1RQ
E-mail: jeremy.hunt@westsussex.gov.uk Tel: 0330222419536