

Minutes of the Meeting of East Dean Parish Council
20th January 2025 at 7.30pm
Held at East Dean Village Hall

Present: Neil Georges - Chair, Sarah Peirson -Vice Chair, John Holt, Peter West, Beanie Allison and Josh Collins

Apologies Sam Hook

In attendance: Henry Potter- Chichester District Council
Jeremy Hunt - West Sussex County Council (arrived late due to attending Singleton PC Meeting first)
Alexia Ward - Parish Clerk
4 Parishioners

Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 29th October 2024 were reviewed and approved.

1. Matters arising from Minutes

- Neil said that he would be able to purchase a new/second hand laptop at a reasonable price to replace Alexia's when the time came. Alexia said that there was an end date as her laptop will not be supported by micro soft at the end of October 2025. Henry Potter said he thought that we may be able to get a second hand one from the District Council.
- Neil said he had circulated by email a Budget Proposal for the PC members to respond to as the precept had to set by the 15th January and he would follow up at the financial statement in the meeting.
- Neil and Sarah had been shown a document 'An Expression of Wish' which would suggest that using the capital or interest from the Helen West Account would be acceptable. Neil said that if the bus shelter or bench became damaged and needed to be replaced the present balance of the account would be required to rebuild. Neil asked for a vote on whether to keep the money just for that purpose. The motion was carried by all the PC.
- Neil thanked all those who helped with the Bonfire Night Event, Max Davies and Adrian Murphy for providing the fireworks and Tim Calloway, Martin Gibbard, Glenn Ward, Adrian Murphy, Tim and Jono Bird for building the bonfire and firework lighting and those who helped marshal.
Neil was made aware of a few negative comments relating to the evening. This included the size of the bonfire and the speed with which it burnt wasn't agreeable to some and that the fireworks were not as visible in the new location which was chosen due to Health and Safety concerns at their previous site. He would address this before the event in 2025.
 - Alexia said she had paid the Village Hall for the defibrillator battery.

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.
<http://www.eastdeanhall.co.uk/minutes/>

Jeremy said that the Government has published its White Paper on Devolution and the implementation period is extremely challenging.

Jeremy said that he had been updated by Highways about the result from jet washing and CCTV in the pipes on Pond Green around the hole. The pipes are deemed beyond repair and as it's a capital project to replace the (39 metres) of pipe with 300mm plastic it will be included in next financial year.

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/http://www.eastdeanhall.co.uk/minutes/>

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

East Dean PC Meeting. 20/01/2025 - District Councillors Report

Little to report this month except the deep concern regarding the Government proposal to implement Unitary Authorities throughout England by amalgamating County, District and Borough Councils into single Devolved Authorities with the potential to have an elected Mayor. It is early days yet but there appears to be a sense of urgency attached to this proposal and rushed decisions are seldom good for democracy. Diane Shepherd, our Chief Executive, has issued a statement which I have recently circulated to you. Diane will be giving a further update to the Meeting of All Parishes which is being held online via the Zoom platform on 3rd of February.

The other thing I can mention which will affect Your Parish to a small, degree, last Monday 06/01 a meeting of the Development Plan and Infrastructure Panel considered requests from Authorities for allocations of District Council held CIL Funds, which are considerable. Sussex Police have requested for consideration £117,000 for a 'phased' introduction of ANPR Cameras at 13 locations throughout the District. Two of which I'm happy to say are, one on the A 285 in Halnaker and the other on Lavant Road, Chichester. The precise locations are not known at the present moment.

At the meeting on Monday, it was unclear if Sussex Police are aware that funding for this proposal is available, if Full Council approve the DPIP recommendation next week there is little reason for this scheme not to proceed forthwith without a 'phased' approach. All members of the DPI Panel agreed the sooner the better for our resident's benefit, not just to cut speeding but to track criminals as well. Our Officers will engage with Sussex Police to progress the schemes as soon as possible.

Cllr. Henry Potter. CDC Member for the Goodwood Ward.

3. Financial Report

Alexia Ward said that the balance of the Lloyds Current account on 20th January was £4,456.77 and the Helen West Legacy account balance was £20,300.31 and the interest in November, December, and January 2025 was £51.09.

Neil sent out a budget proposal to the PC so that the precept could be discussed for the coming year 2025. As the PC financial results for the last two years show a trend of operational losses Neil suggested that to ensure financial sustainability and to address both ongoing overheads and future project needs he proposed an increase to the precept of £80.00. The precept for the coming year has been increased to £1,217.00 due to additional charges applied to second homes within the village and adding another £80.00 (approx. 80p per household) would increase the precept to £1,297.00 per annum. This was agreed by the PC and forwarded onto CDC by Alexia before the closing date of 15th January 2025.

4. Correspondence

Neil said that they had completed the form and paid for the blue plaque to be placed on the wall of their house, The Toft to acknowledge Christopher Fry's time in the village.

Neil said he would give Vicky Mudford, Chair of ED Village Hall Management Committee a signed copy of the letter he wrote to The Queen on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee for the Village Hall archive.

Neil said he had been contacted by Jim McDonald from the Star and Garter, for some support from the Parish Council re his compensation for loss during last winter's works by Southern Water on Pond Green. Sarah said she would write to Jim.

5. Update on flooding , Sewerage and Highways

The updates from Glenn McCubbin from Southern Water continue to show progress re the lining of the system beyond Charlton. Although the water table is rising the flow in the sewer system is as expected with no ingress. Southern Water have now completed approx. 3400 metres of work.

The drain rods have now been removed from the sewer in the land adjacent to Yew Cottage.

Neil has been contacted by Andrew Griffiths MP who was checking on the updates from Southern Water.

Neil will continue to report potholes on East Dean Hill and asks if other parishioners can also log them on the West Sussex Highways site.

6. Update from Parish Councillors

- Sarah Peirson said that she had notified Chichester District Council that East Dean PC had no objections to the planning application at The Thatch, Newhouse Lane. She also added that an application at 28 East Dean had been withdrawn.
- Josh Collins said that the estimate for the tree survey on Pond Green would be £765.00 +vat and they would contact Floyd Cooper from Southern Water for confirmation that this can go ahead.
- John Holt said that he would be starting to cut hedges and this would include taking the top from the hedge in Butchers Lane, as long as it remains dry.
- Pete West added that Goodwood have been planting trees at Midgy Camp Rue.
- Beanie suggested that the duck house on the Pond needed to be lifted out so that its structure could be assessed and any repairs completed.
- The speed limit in some areas of Singleton has been reduced to 20mph and it also includes some of the main A286. Charlton has a consultation period for 20mph through the village so it was suggested that maybe the PC looks into having a 40mph from Charlton to East Dean and 20mph within East Dean. Alexia will follow up with Sam Hook who was unable to attend the meeting.

7. Any Other Business

• VE DAY 80 8th May – A Shared Moment of Celebration

Sarah and Alexia will liaise and plan with the help from the government web site an appropriate event to commemorate the day/evening. John Holt added that he would try to organise transport to take people up to Court Hill for the event and lighting the beacon at 9.30pm.

- The Parish Council sub-group submitted their winter report. Neil agreed to them purchasing topsoil to repair areas of Pond Green that become eroded after the Bonfires on November 5th. A clear up day will be organised on Sunday 2nd March 2025 and it was hoped some of the other works could be completed. Alexia will arrange for posters etc.
- Alexia had been asked why East Dean Hill and the rest of the village do not get gritted. The reply from Jeremy Hunt was that the route has been established for a long time and we have grit bins available.
- The outfall from the road drain into the Pond on the south side requires some remedial work to support the overhang. Neil asked if Glenn Ward would be able to quote for materials to carry out this repair.

Date of Next Meeting

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

21st July 2025 at 7.30pm

At East Dean Village Hall

Report from Jeremy Hunt - East Dean PC WSCC Update 20/01/25

Council Budget and Priorities. The council has now finalised its budget for 2025/26 and once again, despite the ever-increasing pressures, mainly around social care, we are presenting a balanced budget. Not only is it balanced, but we are putting in just under £60m of additional funding, meaning more money in frontline services, with no cuts to services. The County Council is expected to spend just over £2.2bn on day-today services (including schools) and just over £118m through capital investment into areas such as roads, highways infrastructure, schools, Fire and Rescue service, and digital infrastructure. After taking account of grants, fees and charges and other contributions, our net revenue budget 2025/26 is proposed to be £827m. The proposed budget will be presented to the Performance & Finance Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 22nd January, Public Cabinet on Wednesday 29th January and finally presented to full council on Friday 14th February. All these meetings will be webcast and obviously the papers will be available on our website.

The Government's Devolution Proposals. The government has published its white paper on devolution and the implementation period is extremely challenging. Basically, the proposal is that areas will become Mayoral Strategic Authorities (with a minimum population of 1.5 million). There were two choices, either you put forward a plan to become a mayoral area or the government would introduce legislation to achieve this aim. Those County Councils, or Unitary authorities, wishing to be on the priority programme were asked to register their expressions of interest to be a Priority Scheme Mayoral area by Friday 10th January. Following approval at their respective cabinet meetings, West Sussex, together with East Sussex and Brighton and Hove, subsequently submitted their combined expression of interest on Friday 10th January. It was made clear in the white paper that if authorities did not choose to do this then the government would enact legislation to force them to go down the devolution route by May 2028. The proposal is that for the areas on the priority list (confirmation is expected end January/early February) will have elections for a mayor in May 2026. A Mayoral Area will cover a minimum of 1.5m people, and the mayor will eventually (not all at first) have powers such as:

- Economic development and regeneration;
- Environment and climate change;
- Health, wellbeing and public service reform;
- Strategic Planning (roads and infrastructure);
- Transport & Local Infrastructure;
- Economic development; skills & Employment Support;
- Fire and Rescue and Police.

Running parallel with - but separate from - devolution there will be Local Government Reform (LGR). The proposal is that current two-tier areas (CC plus D's & B's) of E & W Sussex will become individual Unitary authorities with one tier of government. B&H is already a unitary authority, so our Strategic Mayoral area will be made of three separate Unitary Authorities - E. Sussex, W. Sussex and B&H. The government will be publishing a paper on LG reform shortly and the CC, together with the D's & B's will be required to put forward our plans by this Autumn. If our bid to be included in the Priority Scheme is successful, then the Minister has suggested that in order to meet the demanding timetable of both Mayoral elections and LGR - and to avoid any disruptions to the process - he is minded to lay secondary legislation to postpone local elections from May 2025 to May 2026. Both E. & W. Sussex, together with B&H have requested the deferral of elections, as have our immediate neighbours, Hampshire, Kent and Surrey.

The proposal is that in May 2027 there will be elections for a shadow Unitary Authority which will run in tandem with the CC and the D's and B's until May 2028. At that point, the CC and the D's and B's will cease to exist and the shadow unitary will take over full control. In the Devolution White Paper it is made very clear that localism is very much to the fore of these plans and engagement with parish and town councils is planned to increase, devolving more powers to local areas. The Devolution White Paper can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-andpartnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

Local Issues:

Hole on The Green - Following the jetting and inspection by CCTV it was confirmed that the pipe is beyond repair. The pipe (39 metres) will be replaced with a 300mm plastic pipe. The works order has been raised, but as project of this size is treated as a capital project it will be included in the next financial years programme. I will ensure that I chase the progress of this work as the year progresses.

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/howthe-council-works/watch-county-council-and-committee-meetings-online/>

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