

ARLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

www.arlingtonparish.org.uk

31 Banner Way, Stone Cross, Pevensey BN24 5FE

Email: arlingtonpc@btconnect.com

Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on Thursday 19th April 2018 at 7pm in the Upper Dicker Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs Mike Garner (Chairman), Peter Stenning, Vicky Radtke, Jo Robinson-Sivyer and Nicky Kinghorn.

In attendance: District Councillors David White and Mark Pinkney, Alison Stevens (Clerk) and five members of the public.

- 1. WELCOME** - The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Mike Garner, welcomed everyone to the Meeting.
- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Apologies for absence were received from Cllr John Parsons and County Cllr Nick Bennett.
- 3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on 20th April 2017** – these were noted.
- 4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT** - The Chairman presented his Report for the year which said;

'I would firstly like to thank you all for attending this evening.

This evening you have before you a collection of detailed reports kindly provided by village organisations. My own report this evening will try to give you the bigger picture of what the Parish Council has been involved in;

This year we were very sorry to see Cllr Ray Collins leave, he will be sorely missed. Amongst many other things, Councillor Collins expertly maintained our website and produced our quarterly Parish Council newsletter. I would like to thank him for his sterling work with everything. I would also say thank you to those who distribute the newsletter.

This year, Councillors continued to make sure the Parish Council is represented at all levels of Local Government – SSALC and the WDALC for example.

Councillors also considered every planning application very carefully, they listened closely to villagers' comments and took them into account when making their response. We would like to encourage anyone making an application to attend the Parish Council meeting where it is due to be discussed and/or send their comments to the Clerk.

Individually Councillors also continued to work very hard. For example Councillors Robinson-Sivyer and Radtke successfully applied for funding from Tesco Bags of Life and the work to the Village Green is now almost complete. Thank you.

Councillor Parsons continued to work tirelessly with the County Council with the ultimate aim of reducing speeding in the Parish. Bede's has now appointed new consultants and they have submitted a new scheme, which is currently under examination by the consultants and Highways.

Please may I also like to take this opportunity to thank all of my Parish Councillors for their tireless work and commitment to both Arlington and Upper Dicker, they are all volunteers and are all unpaid. They all do a lot of extra work that you wouldn't be aware of such as trimming hedges at the allotments, cutting back dead branches, risk assessments etc.

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of all the volunteers in the village who help to make Arlington and Upper Dicker such lovely villages to live in.

And last but not least, I would also like to thank our County Councillor Nick Bennett and District Councillors Mark Pinkney and David White for keeping us up to date with activities at County and

District Level, and our Clerk for the sterling work she does for the Parish Council. Thank you

5. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR – County Councillor N Bennett
sent a written report in which he said;

Driving sustainable economic growth

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is one of seven local authorities that have formed a partnership called Transport for the South East (TfSE). The new partnership brings together the area's 16 transport authorities and a range of other organisations to work directly with the Department for Transport. TfSE is currently operating in shadow form but intends to secure full Government backing and statutory powers.

At the first meeting of TfSE in June 2017, partners elected Cllr Keith Glazier, Leader of East Sussex County Council as chairman.

Companies in East Sussex are now able to benefit from a new £2 million grants and business support service, aimed at boosting the county's economy. South East Business Boost offers grants of between £1,000 and £10,000 to existing small and medium sized businesses and start-ups for capital projects to help them grow and expand operations. So far £300,000 of grants have been awarded which will bring in over £850,000 in match funding. In addition, £227.4 million has been spent with local suppliers over the last 12 months; 55.8% of total Council spend.

East Sussex Highways, our partnership which looks after the roads, pavements, street lights, grass and winter maintenance won a number of prestigious awards during 2017/18. The customer service team won a silver award at the UK Customer Experience Awards and gold at the European Contact Centre and Customer Service Awards, following their introduction of a new more personalised way of working and a high-tech software system which has seen average call response times slashed from 90 seconds to just nine. In addition East Sussex Highways has been recognised for its work to boost skills in the area, with work in schools and a clear commitment to apprenticeships.

Over 150 carriageway asset improvement schemes were delivered in the first three-quarters of 2017/18. The continued investment by the County Council into highway maintenance, and specifically the resurfacing of roads, has stemmed the rate of deterioration and maintained road conditions across the county at an acceptable and affordable level. The condition of A, B and C roads across the county have largely remained stable, and as anticipated when Cabinet approved the current investment strategy in 2013. The additional £10m invested in rural lanes, also approved by Cabinet in 2013, has resulted in a noticeable improvement of unclassified roads across the county.

A number of large scale infrastructure projects have also been progressed, including the Newhaven Port Access Road, improvements to Terminus Road in Eastbourne and funding secured to build a new two-lane bridge to replace the current one-lane Exceat Bridge over the Cuckmere river.

Our e-Sussex project to rollout faster broadband in previously isolated areas has continued to improve access to services, jobs and education. Over 70,000 premises have been connected during our first and second contracts. A final phase of works is being procured with the aim to connect as close to 100% of premises in the county as possible.

There was a further improvement in the percentage of secondary schools judged by Ofsted (as at August 2017) to be good or outstanding to 77.8% from 74.1% at the end of 2016/17. The Early Years Improvement Team has also worked with providers, such that 96% of all East Sussex early years settings are graded good or outstanding, up from 76% in 2013. Work continues through our new Excellence for All 2017-2019 strategy to raise standards across all our educational settings. In addition, ESCC was successful in securing funding from the Government's Strategic School Improvement Fund to set up a Secondary Inclusion Partnership which will see county schools working together to share expertise with a focus on disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs.

In July 2017, ESCC welcomed funding of nearly £12 million for the arts, announced by Arts Council England for seven projects across the county. This includes funding for Glyndebourne to support its education and outreach work, for the de La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill to promote visual arts, for the Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne and the Jerwood Gallery in Hastings.

Keeping vulnerable people safe

In June 2017, the Safer East Sussex Partnership launched a new pilot scheme called 'Ask Me'. The scheme widens opportunities for survivors of domestic abuse to access the help they need from their communities. It provides free domestic abuse training for people to become 'ask me ambassadors' who can respond to a disclosure of domestic abuse, and know where to signpost people for help. 16 Days of Action for the Elimination of Violence Against Women ran from 25 November 2017. Over the 16 days a range of organisations and individuals came together to work to end all forms of violence against women.

ESCC's Children's Services Department was runner up in the Social Worker of the Year Awards 2017 in the category of Best Social Work Employer. The Council's submission highlighted our achievements in supporting staff to create a high quality, sustainable system that secures the best outcomes for children and young people.

ESCC were successful in securing a £174,000 Warm and Healthy Homes grant from National Energy Action and £440,000 from the Warm Homes Fund to enable eligible vulnerable individuals to benefit from significant home improvements to help them keep warm in cold weather. This means over £1 million in external fuel poverty funding has been secured during the past two years.

By the end of December 2017, 61 organisations had joined the East Sussex Against Scams Partnership (ESASP) Charter which aims to make East Sussex a scam-free county. Over 687 residents have participated in Friends Against Scams awareness sessions which aim to reduce the likelihood of them, or people they know or care for, from becoming vulnerable victims of fraud and scams.

Helping people help themselves

Plans for closer health and care integration were given the green light by the Alliance partners (Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford CCG, Hastings and Rother CCG, ESCC, East Sussex Health Care NHS Trust and Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust) in the East Sussex Better Together (ESBT) programme in July 2017. Our ambition is to deliver a fully integrated health and social care system in East Sussex that will ensure every service user enjoys proactive, joined up care that supports them to live as healthily and independently as possible. We are now developing a single health and care entity to manage the £850 million spent each year on the health and care needs of people in East Sussex. In recognition of this work, the ESBT Alliance won the 'Improved Partnerships between Health and Local Government' award at the prestigious 2017 Health Service Journal Awards. Examples of more integrated services include Locality Link Workers who act as a conduit between the statutory services, the voluntary sector and the community. Integrated locality teams (ILTs), made up of nurses, therapists, social workers and proactive care practitioners from East Sussex Health Care Trust (ESHT) and ESCC, have also been rolled out across the Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford and Hastings and Rother CCG areas.

There have been improvements against Adult Social Care key measures. Delayed transfers of Care (delayed days) from hospital per 100,000 population (aged 18+) has improved from 24.4 in April 2017 to 12.7 in November 2017. The proportion of older people (aged 65+) who are still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services for April to September 2017 is 91.7% - up from 90.5% in 2016/17.

An initiative helping young people with disabilities travel independently to school, college or training won national recognition. The Learning Independence for Travel (LIFT) training programme was one of just seven schemes shortlisted for a 'best service' award at the GO Excellence in Public Service Awards 2017/18.

One You East Sussex launched in October 2017 offers those who are struggling to make healthy lifestyle changes a bespoke support programme for help with weight loss, stopping smoking, getting active, drinking less and eating a healthy diet. Our Beat the Street East Sussex mass participation physical activity initiative saw more than 42,000 people take part and new Health and Wellbeing Community Hubs are due to be established in Hastings and Bexhill, helping people improve and manage their health by giving them access to information and support in one convenient place.

Schools across the county have been able to access additional funding to improve children's physical

and mental health. Last year, 183 schools and colleges across the county received grants of £10,000 to develop and implement school health improvement plans and this year all schools were entitled to an additional £7,000 to further develop activities to boost health. In addition the ESCC primary school menu was accredited with the Soil Associations Food for Life Served Here Gold Standard, which recognises pupils are being served meals with the freshest, ethically sourced ingredients, free from additives and excessive salt and sugar.

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 6th February 2018. The budget includes spending of £371 million on services for East Sussex. It also includes savings of £17 million, a 3 per cent Adult Social Care levy and a 2.99 per cent council tax increase.

The Council's Stand Up for East Sussex campaign, which made the case for East Sussex's particular needs to be recognised, gathered almost 6,000 signatures and was delivered to the Prime Minister in December 2017.

The Orbis partnership between East Sussex County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council and Surrey County Council aims to improve the quality and resilience of business services and provide savings to both authorities. After surpassing its initial financial targets by achieving £4.5 million savings in 2016/17 against a target of £1.1 million, Orbis is currently on target to deliver £3.9 million efficiencies in 2017/18. Teams from across the three Councils have been working together to improve the way Orbis delivers services to its customers, including an online pensions portal and a new e-recruitment system.

6. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS – District Councillor Mark Pinkney said the main concerns at Wealden are currently the lack of policing and the Local Plan which is due to be considered by Wealden Full Council in July.

District Councillor David White sent a written report in which he said;

‘Over the past twelve months there have been two related matters that have dominated the work of Wealden Council – first the damage being caused to the Ashdown Forest as a result of the level of development that has taken place, and is proposed, for the District, and second the difficulties posed by the lack of a local plan.

For some time it has been apparent that the level of development within the District was damaging the Ashdown Forest. Recent studies produced to support the level of growth proposed in the new draft local plan published in September 2015 confirmed that not only was the then proposed level of development for the next 15 years going to cause irreparable damage for the future but that the damage was already occurring as a result of the development that had taken place to date. Natural England requested further studies to establish the extent of the damage that was occurring across the whole of the Forest and not as had previously been thought to be the case only along the verges of the roads that crossed the Forest.

The effect of the need for further studies has been to delay the publication of the new plan and if the suspicion of irreparable damage is found to be correct may well determine the extent of the development that the District can accommodate in the future severely restricting the numbers originally intended. In the meantime pending the outcome of the further studies the new plan was put on hold and all new developments deferred. It is now proposed to publish the findings of the further studies and the new Wealden draft Local Plan at the end of July.

The absence of an up to date local plan and the Government's pressure to provide new homes has opened up the opportunity for speculative developments on any green spaces. Whereas with a local plan land is allocated for development where planners consider it to be sustainable and can be planned around local services and facilities. Where there is no current plan and where a local planning authority is unable to demonstrate that it is meeting the delivery of the Government's Objectively Assessed Housing Needs Target then the Government directs that development should be approved unless there are clear policy reasons for a refusal. All too often therefore with Wealden unable to develop as a result of the constraints of the Forest and unable to produce a new local plan, the District has been in the

clutches of the developers intent more on building for profit than preserving the countryside or of meeting local needs.

Hopefully we will have a more ordered approach to development following the publication of the new draft local plan in July. Although until the new plan is finally adopted, which is unlikely to be much before the end of 2019, I fear that there will still be something of a free for all in planning applications with many unsuitable locations being offered out of greed and in preference to the truly sustainable that we would all benefit from.

In addition to matters of planning, this last year has been taken up with a continued drive to reduce the Council's costs. Government has decided that Local Authorities should be largely self-funded by 2020 after which grants from central government will cease. The localisation of business rates with the local authorities keeping all of the business rates raised in a district is intended to offset the withdrawal of the central government grant. However for a District such as Wealden which has a relatively small business rate the loss of the central funding will not be compensated by the business rate income alone and unless either services are to be cut or Council tax raised, other funding streams have to be identified. Wealden has already started to look to the future first in identifying business opportunities such as the development of the new crematorium at Horam which will both provide a much needed service for local residents and generate a profit, and in the investment of some of its reserves in the purchase of the Vicarage Fields shopping centre in Hailsham. The investment in Hailsham will both show a better return than deposited funds with the banks, and will create the opportunity for the Council to regenerate the centre of its largest town.

The elections in May 2019 will see the further savings to the Council when the number of District Councillors is reduced from the 55 to 44.

In the meantime however this year following a succession of years when the Council has been able to hold Council tax to no more than a 2% increase Wealden along with other precepting authorities i.e. the County Council, the police and fire authorities and the Parishes have all found it necessary to increase their respective precepts even to stand still in meeting the increased cost of local services. Not ideal but a great deal better than some other authorities'.

7. REPORTS FROM CLUBS AND ASSOCIATIONS – The Chairman of Upper Dicker Village Hall sent a written report which said;

'2017 has been another busy and successful year for the Hall. The major event occupying the committee has been the successful refurbishment of the kitchen and its facilities, and the final stages of hall renovations will continue through 2018 with work to bring the electrical system up to modern requirements. Thanks are due to those committee members who are in the forefront with responsibility to plan and oversee this work, and to our contractors for delivering it.

The Solar Scheme's second full year's results reveal that:

- (1) The Hall has benefited by a 28.32% reduction in total electricity units consumed during the second full year following installation, compared to the average annual consumption over the five years prior to installation.
- (2) Hall hirers have likewise benefited by a reduction in their metered heating costs of 24.58%.
- (3) Improved insulation has resulted in the hall being warmer overall, thus requiring a lower heat input to achieve and maintain a working temperature for a longer period.
- (4) 3913.33 units of electricity were generated and exported to the grid during the year 01/01/17 – 31/12/17 (only just short of the 3971 total units consumed).
- (5) The Feed-in-Tariff received by the Hall via our electricity supplier in respect of these exported units for 2017 totals £603.62
- (6) Taken together, the 2016 and 2017 results indicate that the scheme is on target to recover the Hall's financial investment in solar power by mid-2019.

Otherwise, both regular and casual Hall bookings continue at a steady and satisfactory level. Fundraising has held up well in support of our projects, for which thanks are due both to our committee colleagues for their sterling work organising and participating in many events, and to our numerous Friends of the Hall in the community for their invaluable assistance. Another safe and successful 'Dicker Day' event took place in June based at the Hall and its sports field, for which thanks are due to both the

'Dicker Day' committee and participating members of the Hall committee for a great deal of planning, and hard work on the day.

Hall finances, while depleted by the works taking place over the past two years, remain satisfactory with our reserve intact, and thanks are due to Arlington Parish Council for their welcome grant in these difficult times towards our 2017/18 projects, notably some new seats in 2018. The final stage of our three-year renovation plan will follow through 2018, with a 5-yearly safety inspection of the Hall's electrical system, heating system modifications, and exterior redecoration as necessary in the wake of the various works undertaken over the past three years.

Sincere thanks are due as always to my committee colleagues for the many tasks they undertake and the effort everyone puts in to ensure that the Hall continues as an enterprising and successful community facility. Special thanks are due to Bede's School for their important and much appreciated support, particularly with maintenance of the Hall's sports field and its facilities. Finally, a big thank you to all our friends and colleagues in the Parish and local community, both contractors and individuals, who advise and assist when needed to keep our Hall viable and available for us all to enjoy'.

Ms Gillam from Arlington Village Hall sent a written report in which she said;

'Arlington Village Hall committee is working tirelessly to improve the appearance of the village hall to enhance its appeal to all members of the village and the wider local community.

Thanks to a small group of dedicated helpers, we have achieved much over the past year including:

- Installation of much-needed new heating and lighting
- Re-surfacing the floor
- Erection of a new field fence, allowing a little more space for recreation and parking outside the hall.
- Installation of a fire alarm system (thanks to a Precepts grant).

Fundraising

The centre of the village, including the village hall area, was appointed a conservation area in March 2017. Although this may be a positive step in preserving this lovely area, it does bring its own problems with regard to obtaining planning permission for some projects. Nevertheless, we have been given the all-clear for replacement windows as the double-glazing and wooden frames have had their day. It is hoped that this will help reduce heating costs. We applied for lottery funding for this important project and have just heard that this has been granted.

Our other vital regular fundraising activities include the Arlington Bluebell Walk weekend in May, when a team of helpers bake, prepare and serve refreshments to hundreds of visitors over the bank holiday. Thanks to the generosity and hard work of award-winning landowner John McCutchan, dozens of charities like ours benefit from this annual and ever-popular event, which attracts visitors from all over the world. Recently his daughter Philippa and her husband Michael have opened the Bluebell Farmhouse Kitchen, where they run innovative cookery courses.

The new and successful Christmas Fayre has raised vital funds for the hall and St Pancras church over the past two years, whilst other social events, such as quiz evenings, jumble sales, the Produce Show, and the monthly market, provide a small but steady trickle of money into our funds, which helps pay for maintenance and other bills.

Other events, such as the annual Harvest Supper, are held simply to bring villagers together to have fun and enjoy themselves. Popular yoga classes are held weekly. The hall is also hired out for parties, working groups and band practices. It is the meeting point for the bi-annual Litter Pick, helping keep our verges rubbish-free.

The church of St Pancras uses the hall for occasional events such as wedding receptions, wakes and Messy Church. The FoSPA project, which Trustee Jackie Appleton helped create, was set up last year to help preserve and improve the fabric of the ancient church and grounds.

Arlington Scene and the Arlington Village website continue to provide useful information on local events.

We are slowly improving the grounds of the village hall to make them easier to manage, with the help of seasonal working parties. One of our next projects is to improve the outside seating area at the back of the hall so that people can enjoy the larger space that has been created. Inside, the plan is to refresh the décor and fit new curtains.

Road signs

As part of an ongoing campaign to improve road safety through Arlington, Village signs stating 'Welcome to Arlington – please slow down' have been installed at The Street, Caneheath and more recently Bayleys Lane, to alert drivers that they are entering a village, not a rat-run! Our thanks to the Parish Council for funding these.

In summary, our village hall continues to thrive as a focal point for the village activities for which Arlington has become renown'.

8. OPEN FORUM – There were no questions from the public on this occasion.

There being no further questions, this meeting closed at 7.15pm.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....