

Minutes of the meeting of East Dean Parish Council
15th July 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

In attendance: Jeremy Hunt-West Sussex County Council
Henry Potter-Chichester District Council
Alexia Ward - Parish Clerk
5 Parishioners

Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 15th April 2024 were reviewed and approved.

1. Matters arising from Minutes

- Jeremy Hunt said he would update the meeting re the hole on Pond Green when he spoke about his report.
- Neil Georges thanked all those who helped with the organising and preparations to commemorate the 80th D Day Landings on 6th June 2024 with a beacon on Court Hill, Glenn Ward, Ian Andrews, Josh Collins and John Holt in particular for beacon building.

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.

Hole on Pond Green – Jeremy reported that he had been chasing for an update but unfortunately his main contact was away on holiday but he would follow up as soon as possible. He also added that the drain from the hole had to be jet washed before anything else could be done.

The Culvert from the catch pit to Chapel Row is on the list of works to be jet washed before the winter by Balfour Beatty.

Jeremy also asked if we sent a representative to the post Goodwood events in the autumn. Jeremy and Neil both said they would contact Lloyd McNeill at Goodwood to see if the PC could be invited to the meeting so we can have an input re traffic and other effects of their events on the village. It was acknowledged that the events do benefit the local economy providing guests for accommodation and employment.

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.

"East Dean Parish Council Meeting. 15/07/2024. District Councillors report.

At the Cabinet Meeting on June 11th, Members agreed to recommend to full Council the release of £420,000 from reserves to cover the cost of specialist Professional Services to support the Planning Authority in defending Planning appeals. In addition, a further £74,000 was agreed, again from reserves, to provide funding for legal and expert advice during the years 2024/25. The reason being, the Council has received a number of speculative Applications for housing some of which have become subject to Appeals. These appeals are sometimes very costly and time consuming hence the need for substantial funding.

Whether this will be worthwhile remains to be seen since the new Government plans to increase housing supply by unsustainable numbers.

Also during the same Meeting, Cabinet agreed the release of £206,206 towards the cost of replacing the public toilets in Tower Street, Chichester.

Interestingly, the very following day, 12th June, the Planning Committee voted to defer a decision on the demolition of the toilets until the decision was agreed by Full Council. There has been much aversion by the public to lose these toilets, but there is evidence of subsidence to the foundation of the building so something must be done. I fully supported the recommendation to demolish the block, knowing that the money had been set aside for the replacement. There appeared in the Chichester Observer last week a rather derogatory letter questioning my support for what is obviously the best option, demolish and renew which is supported by most of the responders to the future of these very necessary toilets.

The Council have begun a 'Let's Talk' consultation period for members of the public to engage in debate regarding the Climate Emergency Action Plan beginning with an on line session which took place on July 1st. Face to face meetings are planned, in Petworth at the Leconfield Hall, the Grange Centre in Midhurst and at the Assembly Rooms in North Street Chichester, on Thursday 25th July from 3.00 pm until 5.00 pm.

A great opportunity to voice your views on Climate Change. I understand refreshments will be provided.

Even more detail will be found in the next copy of the Councils 'Initiatives' magazine.

And that concludes my report.

Cllr Henry Potter. CDC Member for Goodwood Ward"

3. Financial Report

Alexia Ward said that the balance of the Lloyds Current account on 15th July 2024 was £4,386.27 and the Helen West Legacy account balance was £20,195.45 and the interest for May, June and July was £65.32. The first precept payment of £571.50 had been received on 19th of April 2024.

4. Correspondence

Alexia said that she had received emails from Paul Slater and Tara Watson Ives to introduce themselves as our new PCSO officers who will be working on opposite shifts which cover our area and had arranged for Tara to attend this meeting. Unfortunately, Tara had to give her apologies to the meeting as she was suddenly called out on a missing person detail just before the meeting started. Alexia said she would contact Tara and arrange a walk around the village before our next meeting in October.

Glenn McCubbin from SW linings team has been sending email updates each week to inform the PC of their progress in the village. Alexia said will continue to forward these to the PC.

Alexia said she has received information regarding VE DAY 80 – 'A shared moment of Celebration' 8th May 2025. The PC decided that they would acknowledge this event and it would be discussed nearer the time. Alexia had received a letter from Andrew Griffith MP for Arundel and South Downs as our new MP. Neil said he will contact him and invite him to our next PC meeting.

5. Update on flooding , Sewerage and Highways

Neil said that he had been in constant communication with Floyd Cooper from Southern Water by phone and email over the last few months to get the works that they had agreed to completed after their use of Pond Green over the winter and spring. SW have committed to carry out the following - soil testing on the green, tree survey for the willows, silt removal from the pond, mending of the road by the road sign on Pond Green and tidying up of the verge outside Hill Acre. Neil will ensure that these works are carried out by SW as promised.

6. Update from Parish Councillors

- Josh Collins said that he would organise a quote for the survey for the willows on Pond Green and for the removing the silt from the pond for SW.
- Beanie asked if it was possible to leave the area around the back of the bus shelter as it had been cut by highways while still looking attractive with wild flowers. Jeremy Hunt said it was hard for the contractors to deviate from their cutting plan.
- Neil asked John to check the winter plan.

7. Any Other Business

- Neil said he would look into purchasing a new laptop for the clerk to use as Alexia's personal one was going to need replacing soon.
- Neil added that he would complete a more detailed budget at the end of the year to ensure that the precept was set correctly.
- A parishioner suggested that a more favourable rate of interest on the Helen West account could be achieved for example was through CCLA and any interest may then be available for the PC to use.
- A parishioner said that he understood that West Sussex Highways had some time ago agreed to resurface East Dean Hill rather than just patching.
- Jeremy Hunt was asked about the timing of the cutting of the verges as they were becoming very overgrown and after any rain the grasses were leaning in reducing the width of the road making it very dangerous. He said that West Sussex Highways contractors were working through the schedule and the due date for completion in East Dean was 8th August 2024.

Date of Next Meeting

21st October 2024 at 7.30pm

20th January 2025 at 7.30pm

At East Dean Village Hall

Report from Jeremy Hunt

Good Evening. Obviously everyone has been distracted by the recent elections, but I would like to reassure you that the work of your County Council, supporting you and your residents, has gone on uninterrupted. Heading into the summer break here are a few updates, including some which I hope will help support your parishioners, including your youngest residents and their parents, so please spread the information as widely as possible.

Finance: Although we are only just into the fourth month of the current financial year, we are well into formulating our budget plans for 2025/26 and our four year Medium Term Financial Strategy through to 2022028/29. An update on these plans - and the financial challenges we are facing - will be presented at Public Cabinet on July 23rd at 10.30 at County Hall. Papers will be published ten days in advance of the meeting on our website: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/committees-and-decision-making/cabinet/>

Highways Update. A further package of multi-million-pound road repairs and improvements has started in West Sussex, proactively tackling our current pothole issues and also investing in larger-scale resurfacing across the county's 4,000km road network. Following additional funds being added to last year's budget for highways maintenance, West Sussex County Council is committed to tackling the impact of persistent, severe weather on the highway with both reactive and proactive measures. This financial year, in addition to our base budget for highways maintenance and operations of £43.8million, we have invested:

- an extra £4million to support highway maintenance, including pothole repairs.
- an additional £7million to increase our carriageway resurfacing and treatments programme to more than £20million, enabling highways teams to deliver one of their largest programmes of works to date.
- a further £2million to tackle the significant carriageway patching backlog across the county following the very wet conditions over the last six months. This work will start in early summer to maximise the best working conditions.

The county council has so far received £4.3million (£2.161m in 2023/24 and £2.161m for 2024/25) from additional government funding announced in 2023. We are using this funding to deliver additional carriageway resurfacing works, with delivery having already started and the programme due to run to September 2024. A further £10million from council funds has been committed for next year (2025/26) to continue the work needed to make our highway network more resilient for the future.

These latest figures for highway repairs and improvements show that we're not just talking about the challenge - we're taking action. Our highways teams are continuing to work hard to fix the issues, completing multi-million-pound improvement programmes and demonstrating our commitment to our Better Roads campaign. We have teams of highway officers out on the network identifying and assessing safety-related defects including potholes, both through routine inspections and by responding to customer reports. Our safety repair gangs are then tasked with fixing the safety defects. During this busy period, we are currently fixing around 1,000 safety defects a week. Last year, our safety repair teams completed more than 46,000 safety defect repairs, of which approximately 30,000 were potholes. This is an increase of more than 5,000 from the previous financial year. In more rural areas, we used three Velocity spray injection patchers to repair more than 23,000 further defects while also delivering proactive patching covering 26,000m², which is equivalent to covering more than 130 tennis courts.

Our Planned Delivery team worked across 189km of roads in the last financial year, which were either completely resurfaced or had surface dressing, micro-asphalt treatments, or large-scale areas of patching and completed:

- 75 full resurfacing schemes were completed, totalling approximately 43km. The new road surfaces are more durable, making them more resilient to potholes, and smoother, which lessens road noise.
- Surface dressing was used at 31 sites, with 66km of roads treated. Surface dressing involves coating the road in bitumen and chippings and relies on the action of the traffic using the road to embed the chippings. It is used as a cost-effective method to prolong the lifespan of suitable roads.
- 277 sites received micro-asphalt treatment, covering a total of 69km. This treatment delays the need to do more significant work and minimises disruption to residents and road users.
- 11km of large-scale areas of patching were completed at 48 sites.

We are responsible for maintaining around 4,000km of road: A and B roads are ordinarily inspected monthly, C-class and main distributor roads on a three or six-monthly basis and declassified roads are typically inspected annually. However, our highways officers cannot be everywhere, so the public's help in spotting and reporting concerns are really appreciated. Details, including [an online reporting form](#), are on our website. If a pothole is an immediate risk to public safety, you should call 01243 642105. We also have information on our website explaining the process of [identifying and repairing potholes](#). For more information go to: www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/roadworks-and-projects/road-projects/better-roads-road-funding-information/

WSCC Here to help - Advice and practical support with the cost of living. West Sussex County Council and its partners are here to help, offering practical support and advice to anyone who needs it. Drop into any of our 36 libraries for free;

- information, books and enquiry service
- Information and advice
- Internet access and help to get you online
- Events and activities
- Access to support from a range of partners, for example health and wellbeing, or financial advice

To find out more go to [library support online](#).

Contact our Community Hub/Household Support Fund - Our Community Hub is open seven days a week and offers information and advice across a broad range of support available. You can call us or fill in a contact form online. You may be eligible to access help from the Household Support Fund, which is available through our [Community Hub](#) and can help support eligible residents who are struggling with costs towards fuel or food bills. For full details, including how to apply, see the Community Hub pages @: [Community Hub](#) You don't have to be receiving benefits to access help from your local council. If you do receive benefits, they won't be affected in making an application via this scheme.

West Sussex Records Office. Explore the history of West Sussex via our Record Office's new website, giving residents even better access to the history and heritage of the County. Visitors to the website can be transported to years gone by from the comfort of their own home through access to digital records. The online catalogue uses a specialist digital preservation system enabling users to search through the records and access up to 36,000 images available to view, download and purchase. West Sussex has a rich history and our new website has made it easier to access by modernising the way residents can access services through the use of digital channels and technology to make it as easy as possible.

To help users to get the most out of the new website, advice on searching the catalogue is available along with new research guides and further information about the collections. There are also new pages on all the Record Office's projects and latest news.

The online shop also has a host of books DVDs and CDs available to purchase, some of which can't be found anywhere else.

Residents can also visit their local library to use a public computer, and staff will be able to help get you started on the new website. For those in need of a little extra help, the library offers digital support with the chance for a one-to-one session with a digital volunteer. Contact your local library for further information.

For those residents who still want to make a visit to the Record Office in person, the website is still a handy tool. The new Reader Order Management system can let the team know what documents you'd like to view in the Searchroom by requesting up to three items in advance, helping customers make best use of their research or study time when they visit. You can also use the website to find out what events and talks are taking place and book your place online. Start exploring today at <https://www.wsro.org.uk/> .

And for our younger residents - Marvellous Makers is coming to a library near you. Children of all ages can visit your local West Sussex Library and join Amelia, Riley, Bob the dog and friends as they get creative to complete the 2024 Summer Reading Challenge, Marvellous Makers.



With free materials from the library and online via the website, the challenge encourages youngsters to keep reading over the holidays by offering rewards, including a medal and certificate if they complete the challenge and read six library books of their choice. Children can take part any time from Saturday 13 July – Saturday 14 September. All that participants need is a library card, which are available from all West Sussex libraries. After registering online for the challenge at arena.westsussex.gov.uk/src, children receive a special code word. They then reveal this to staff at their local library to get their Marvellous Makers fold-out poster and first set of scratch-and-sniff stickers. The main challenge is for children aged 4-11 years, but younger children can take part in the Mini Challenge, collecting stickers as they share library books over the summer and receiving a special gold sticker and a certificate when they finish. Last year was a huge success, with 11,500 children and young people in West Sussex taking part in the challenge. I hope families will be inspired by this year's creative theme.

We are also looking to recruit volunteers aged 14 and over to support staff in promoting the Summer Reading Challenge, developing their skills and gaining valuable experience working with children and families. Applications can be submitted at www.westsussex.gov.uk/src.

Local Updates

Hole on Pond Green - I have been chasing for an update on this. Unfortunately my main contact has been on holiday, but I hope to have an update to bring you on Monday.

Culvert - Butchers Lane to village green - following discussions on these at a previous meeting I reported that the culvert needed jetting through to our highways team. Apparently though, they come under our 'Structures' team who did not appear to have this culvert on their records. However, it has now been added to our structures team stock and as such, should be inspected on a two yearly cycle. In the meantime an order was placed for our contractors, Balfour Beatty, to jet the culvert as soon as possible before the winter.

WSSC Residents News Letter. Lastly, just a reminder from my last parish update, that every month we issue a Residents News Letter, which is sent to all residents who subscribe to our free email service. Signing up for our email alerts means you don't need to check our website to find out the latest information. Instead, it will be delivered free, straight to your inbox. To subscribe just go to:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKWSSC/subscriber/new>

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/>

And lastly, if you have any issues relating to the County Council that I might be able to help you with, please don't hesitate to contact me.

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