

Minutes of the meeting of East Dean Parish Council
21st July 2025
Held at East Dean Village Hall

Present: Chris Tyas- Vice Chair, Sam Hook, Jim McDonald, Josh Collins & Pete West

Apologies Beanie Allison

In attendance: Jeremy Hunt – West Sussex County Council
Henry Potter – Chichester District Council
Alexia Ward - Parish Clerk
8 Parishioners
Kate Whitton- Chalk Streams Resilience Officer Aldingbourne and Lavant
Louise Barnettson- Water Champion at West Sussex

Chris Tyas welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new financial year after the AGM in April. He said that he had a hand over from Neil Georges who had moved away since the last meeting. Chris thanked Neil for his hard work especially with Southern Water through the winter of 23/24. Chris also noted that there had only been three chairs in the last 20+ years providing continuity for the village.

Chris said he wanted to acknowledge the deaths of three parishioners John Gale, Jeremy Adams and Pearl O’Leary and send condolences to their families. He also noted that the village also had new residents, many of whom had participated in the Village Hog Roast . This reflected the ongoing change that was taking place and he had noted that in his initial research there were a range of external and compliance factors that are affecting the Parish Council and the way in which it must be run.

Chris added that there will be further challenges when the far-reaching changes to Local Government come into effect over the next 3 years and he thanked our District and County Councillors for keeping us up to date.

1. Matters arising from Minutes

Following on from their attendance at the last meeting Kate Whitton and Louise Barnettson attended and gave a brief resume of the work that they do. Louise works as Water Champion throughout the area with Parish Councils and Community Groups advocating responsible water use. Kate is focused on the River Lavant and Aldingbourne mainly to reduce pollution and management to reduce flooding for example with buffer areas. Chris said that the VE80 celebrations were an emotional and uplifting event and thanked everyone who was involved in making it happen.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chris asked if the Parish Council would approve the minutes of the meeting on 28th April 2025. Sam Hook and Josh Collins proposed and seconded the approval of the minutes.

3. Election of Chair

Due to the resignation of Neil Georges the position of Chair of the Council was vacant, Chris Tyas offered to stand. He was proposed by Sam Hook and seconded by Pete West.

4. Parish Clerk

Chris said he had received a letter of resignation from Alexia wishing to resign as Parish Clerk at the beginning of August which he had reluctantly accepted. He thanked Alexia for her wonderful service to the Parish Council and the entire village of East Dean over the last 8 years .

He advised that Maria Davis who had excellent experiences for the role had agreed to take up the position and she will meet with Alexia to ensure a smooth handover before the next meeting.

5. Update from District and County Councillors

Henry Potter had sent his report by email and it had been circulated to the councillors before the meeting. His report is attached.

There was a discussion on the new plans for a Unitary Local Authorities , the forms this might take in Sussex and the impact on Services.

Jeremy Hunt said that the County Devolution proposals had to be submitted to Government by 26th September with the results due in spring 2026. He said there was an engagement survey which could be completed at www.shapingwestsussex.org by 14/08/25

Jeremy Hunt and Henry Potter both spoke about the harmonisation that would take place with devolution. This refers to the process of aligning different policies, practices and sometimes even structures across various local authorities or regions that are undergoing devolution.

The Mayoral Election would take place in May 2026.

Shadow Authorities are planned to be in place from April 2027

The new Unitary Authorities are planned to take full effect from April 2028

There was then a discussion on Local Services

Jeremy said that Alexia had advised him that there didn't seem to have been any further investigation into the Hole on Pond Green by Portsmouth Water on the 23rd June. He said he had chased PW and due to a change in management and holidays nothing had been done. He said he will follow up in due course.

Jeremy asked if there had been any response to the TPRO for reduced speed limits in the village. Sam Hook said that there had been no confirmation so they would follow up or re submit.

NB Jeremy subsequently advised that the 20 MPH limit in the village is progressing but not anything currently regarding the 40 mph between Charlton and East Dean

Jeremy had been approached by Richard Stevens about problems with sewer behind Oak Cottage as it was still undulating and due to lack of flow was getting blocked. They were in communication with Glenn McCubbin and SW to try and resolve the problem.

Jeremy reported that the potholes up East Dean Hill had been jet patched .It was suggested that the road signs needed collecting.

Alexia and Pete West both agreed that the 1m summer verge cutting along Charlton Road and up East Dean Hill had been done in a very rudimentary way with bits missed and in places far less than a 1 metre width cut and asked Jeremy if he could report back to the contractors for their response.

Chris raised the issue of excessive traffic in the village through the Festival of Speed this year .Jeremy suggested a speed watch campaign during the events. He also asked if we were represented on the Goodwood post event meeting. Although in the past we had been invited to that meeting but not recently Jeremy said he would make sure we were included in the next meeting.

6. Financial Statement

Alexia confirmed that she had submitted the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 24/25 which had been accepted by the auditors. She had also posted the Public Notice on the board for the required period which ends on 1st August 2025.

The balance of the current account on 21st July 2025 was £2,586.30 .Since the last meeting debits of £12.75 had been taken for charges and £28.77 paid to Glenn Ward for fuel for the lawn mower. A credit of £494.77 had been received from HMRC as a VAT reclaim from January 2024 to April 2025. (£416.50 was from the cost of the lawn mower).The precept payment from CDC of £648.00 will be due in September.

The Helen West Legacy Account balance on 21st July 2025 was £20,389.63 which included interest of £39.22.

Alexia said she would start the process of updating the signatories on the Lloyds Bank Account.

7. Correspondence

Alexia said she had received an email from The South Downs National Park about a planning the future survey which can be completed by the 15/08/2025 at www.southdowns.gov.uk/nationalpark-authority/our-work/partnership-management/

Martin Gibbard forwarded a letter he had received from Sophia Llewelyn, The Goodwood Estate Sustainability Team which outlined a proposed meeting on the Chapel Row Allotments with the allotment holders. She wanted to explain their work with the Western Sussex River Trust which would enable them to improve the health of the River Lavant and how to sensitively manage to ensure a positive effect on land and in the river. The meeting was scheduled for 22nd July 2025 and Martin said he would report back.

8. Pond Green Tree Survey

Chris had asked Alexia to confirm the date of the last survey on the trees on Pond Green as it had been a stark reminder after the recent accident in Southend . Alexia reported that the last survey was carried out in July 2019 and the quote for a new survey had been prepared which was £780.00 including VAT. The Parish Council voted to go ahead with the survey and chase SW as they had agreed to pay for this after the winter of 2023/2024 when their machinery and flooded water had affected the trees .Alexia was asked to go ahead and request the survey from Beechdown.

Martin Gibbard also added that the build-up of silt from SW pipes during that period had decreased the volume of water that can be held in the pond during high rainfall or when the springs are running. Josh said he would chase SW as they had also agreed to fund a dredging of the pond.

9. Update on Flooding and Sewerage

Jon Bailie said that the drain by Walnut Tree Cottage was blocked and that added to the runoff across the road in times of heavy rainfall. Helen had video footage that she would share with Jeremy so he could forward to highways. Jeremy added that the drain clearing team are now equipped with cameras so they should be able to assess the drain at the time of the visit.

10. Update on Highways

Chris said that there had been many comments about the volume and speed of the traffic through the village during Festival of Speed and the signage did not stop people taking a route through the village. Jeremy will follow up to get an invite for East Dean to be represented at Goodwood so we can mitigate the volume of traffic during Goodwood events.

11. Planning

Alexia reported that there had been a planning application at Oak Cottage to re-roof and repair to the East, North, and West slopes of the existing 1960's built re extension. The Parish Council had discussed and voted to support the application before the due date.

12. Updates from Councillors

Nothing to report from councillors

13. Any other Business

- **Bonfire Night 2025**

Chris said due to the October meeting being later on 27th October any plans for bonfire night needed to be well under way before then. He outlined that changes to the site for lighting the fireworks due to updating the risk assessment had worked well. He suggested that following last year's changes would enable the Bonfire Evening to go ahead.

Some parishioners added that in the past it was more of a community event with people bringing garden tree cuttings and building the bonfire over several days and it would be better if it was bigger. Martin Gibbard commented that the larger it was meant a greater area to be tidied afterwards and would require more topsoil to replace the soil which is removed to clear the site afterwards. Adrian Murphy added that the bigger the bonfire the greater the risk to the buildings nearest the site. Sam Hook also said that it would increase the risk level.

Chris summed up saying that he would work to find a balance to make it a more inclusive community event.

- **Tim Calloway Memorial**

Jim McDonald said he had been approached by several people wanting to know if there were any plans to have a lasting memorial for Tim Calloway as he had been a longstanding member of the community volunteering for many things and working in the background around the village. Notably cutting Pond Green and at the Football Club. Jim said he would like to donate the proceeds from the first quiz at The Star and Garter in the autumn towards the fund. Tim Weeks suggested a more permanent bridge at the western end of Pond Green. Chris asked Jim to liaise with Lesley Calloway.

14. Date of Next Meeting

27th October 2025

Next meeting at end Jan/early Feb 2027 to be agreed

Report from Cllr. Henry Potter Member for the Goodwood Ward.

Devolution:

Included in the government White Paper on devolution is giving devolved Authorities the power to transfer public assets to private bodies. To this end the Council have agreed an Assets Transfer Policy, there has already been interest shown to acquire some of these public assets. Subsequently it was agreed to set aside £30,000 to engage specialist assessment and valuation personnel to consider the Transfer of Pallant House Gallery out of the Councils ownership. Should this transfer not take place the findings will be used in any other interest in the Gallery.

The Councils assets are vast and include Industrial Sites, leisure centres. Shops and offices and the Contact Services Works Depot at Westhampnett to name just a few. The total value of the Councils assets is £113 million bringing in annual revenue of £3 million which helps towards the annual Council Budget, keeping your Council Tax as low as possible.

On the 1st July, the Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee met to receive the Chairs annual report and to review the 2025/26 work programme. It has become practice at these meetings for each Cabinet Member in turn to attend and expand on their portfolios and answer questions from the Committee Members. In

December '24 it was the turn of Adrian Moss the Leader of the Council, in March this year Tracie Bangert, portfolio holder for Communities and Wellbeing and at the meeting last week Jonathan Brown, the Deputy Leader and portfolio holder for Environment. This was a poignant attendance because on the Agenda was the consideration and scrutinisation of the 2025-30 Climate Emergency Action Plan which has just been published. The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and its primary aim is to reduce the Councils emissions to Nett Zero by 2040!! Nett Zero is the amount of greenhouse gases released to the atmosphere balanced by the amount that are removed or captured. There appears to be no consideration that the atmosphere is constantly changing as the earth rotates each 24 hours, this I find confusing whilst other nations choose to do nothing. This drive to nett zero is also very costly with subsidies for renewable energy production adding to our energy bills. The Council is also considering transferring fuel for our vehicles to Hydrogenated Fuel Oil to power vehicles as well as the acquisition of EV's though we've reached capacity for these so far, as the electrical infrastructure is at capacity at the Depot, this will need extremely costly upgrading which at present is not an option. The additional cost of this HFO will be close to £85,000 per annum which, as I said, don't come cheap! The greatest emissions come from the household waste collection vehicles being currently 1,300 tonnes of greenhouse gases per annum, this can only worsen as more housing means more people, more waste and therefore more dust carts! but compared with emissions in the A27 corridor, they are minimal. Are we doing the right thing spending considerable sums of taxpayers money chasing an unachievable goal. I wonder!

At the forthcoming Full Council Meeting on 15th July approval is sought to release funds to refurbish a further eight public conveniences across the District, these are located at Bracklesham, Petworth, 2 in Selsey, Northgate Car Park, Avenue de Chartres car park, West and East Witterings. This follows on from the refurbishment of the Tower Street conveniences in the City which was done to a very high 21st century standard even though there was much public criticism for demolishing the below standard toilets in Tower Street. Finally, the opening of the Centurion Way from West Dean eastwards is moving a bit closer, the stretch from the east end of the controversial West Dean tunnel through the Station and on to the Singleton bridge is expected to be opened in August. Users will still have to use the pavement between the Motor Road and the West Dean bio mass boiler facility where you will scale a ramp back up onto the railway track. There is a plan to eliminate the need to use this unsafe stretch pavement in the not too distant future.

And that concludes my report.