ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

[www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk)

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL 33 Swaines Way

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**Minutes of a meeting of Alfriston Parish Council (APC)**

**held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 17th July at 19:15**

**Present:**

Cllr D Monteath-Wilson [Chair] Cllr S Daw

Cllr J Watkins [Vice Chair] Cllr S Rabagliati

Cllr A Harris Cllr J Spring

**In attendance:**

Mrs Victoria Rutt - Parish Clerk

Approximately 24 members of the public

**59.** **Chairman’s Welcome**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson welcomed everyone to the meeting. She reminded all that there is no meeting in August so the next meeting will be in September 2023. Cllr Monteath-Wilson announced that as most residents will be aware, the Clerk has resigned, she expressed her sadness at this and explained that she has worked with 7 Clerks over the years and has never worked with a Clerk so diligent, hardworking and efficient. Cllr Monteath-Wilson explained that she is not the only one who feels like this and has had numerous residents come up to her to express their sadness to lose an excellent Clerk. The Clerk will be missed by the majority of the Councillors and residents. The Clerk was applauded.

**60. Public Questions**

1. Cllr Monteath-Wilson explained that item 69 on the agenda relates to the resignation of the Clerk, so there will be no questions on this matter at this time.

2. Mrs Nicky Vassell asked about the Notice of Vacancy that was published this morning following the resignation of Cllr Baker and asked what the financial implications will be for the Parish Council. The Clerk explained that this will be discussed in full later in the meeting under agenda item 78.

3. Mrs Hilary Rawlins stated that at the last meeting there were a number of actions and whilst she believes they would have been actioned, it would be good to receive an update on them. The Clerk confirmed she has an action log that assists her to keep track of actions which she shares with Cllrs but she would be happy to share when she publishes the agenda for each meeting to show what actions have been followed up and any updates. Mrs Rawlins was happy with this response.

4. Mr Neil Parkinson explained that he did not have a question but wished to make the following statement. “*I think that over the years I’ve attended Parish Council meetings under 4 different parish clerks. Like many villagers I was extremely sad and taken aback to read of Victoria’s resignation. She will be a huge loss to our village. For many years I and Conserve Alfriston lobbied external stakeholders alongside APC on village traffic issues, and Victoria was supportive, organised and had complete integrity and our absolute trust. Indeed, as is reflected in the minutes of last month’s meeting, she often seemed to be the person who had to spend much of her time patiently explaining to others, including me, how things work. So, when I read that she is very sad to be going but has to put herself first, and that she has received messages with an inappropriate tone, I think it reflects very badly on our village. I wonder how we have got to this point.”*

**61. Apologies for absence**

No apologies. Please note that APC are carrying one Councillor vacancy at present.

**62. Report from Maria Caulfield MP**

Maria Caulfield MP was unable to attend the meeting, but she submitted a report which can be found in **Appendix B**.

**63. Report from Cllr Stephen Shing [ESCC]**

Cllr Shing echoed what the public have said about the Clerk. Victoria has worked very well for the parish and residents, she will be sadly missed in this parish and he wished her all the best for her new job. Within this uncertain national environment, County Council continue to experience increased demand for services locally, arising from demographic changes, increased need and the longer term impacts of Covid. There are also challenges securing the skilled workforce, ESCC need to respond to the pressures they face and to develop the services for the future. Taken together, these national and local factors make future service and financial planning very challenging. When the 2023/24 balanced budget was approved by Full Council on 7th February 2023, the deficit on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2025/26 was £40.672m. Updating the MTFP for normal factors (such as the latest inflation rates and an additional year), the position would have been a deficit budget position by 2026/27 of £55.499m. The MTFP position does not account for the impact of Adult Social Care reform, and if grant funding for social care, currently announced for two years, continues at the same level after 2024/25, the deficit would reduce by £28.2m. In this context, ESCC will need to continue to take action proactively to prepare for the time ahead, to maximise their resilience as an organisation and to best manage growing demand for our services. The report sets out that the Council’s relatively stable financial position for 2023/24 presents an opportunity to intensify ongoing work to maximise organisational resilience, make best use of our resources, and to equip our services for future demands, given the significant challenges ahead. Cllr Shing confirmed he will share with the Clerk the ESCC external funding officer’s email address who will be able to share any information about any funding that APC could have access to.

**64. Report from Cllr David Greaves [WDC]**

Cllr David Greaves reported that he had sent his full report through to the Clerk which will be attached in full as Appendix C. He confirmed that the Biffa bin strike has now finished. There was a huge water loss in the North of the County recently which WDC was heavily involved in to get water access to residents who had no water for 6 days. Cllr Greaves updated that two motions were agreed at a recent full Council meeting; saving the Uckfield Leisure pool and dealing with potholes. He reported that Cllr Lunn continues to work with the water board regarding the Cuckmere. Cllr Rabagliati asked what was the conclusion regarding the pothole motion. Cllr Greaves explained that the new contractor, Balfour Beatty, have a plan to get on with this ASAP. Cllr Harris stated that the silting/dredging works for the Cuckmere are not planned until February 2024. Mrs Rawlins stated that permits are needed for this from the EA. The Clerk confirmed that when she spoke to Mr Levitt at the EA about the permits, he did not know what she was referring to. Mrs Adcock stated that she met someone from the Pevensey Water Board recently on a walk along the bank and he informed her that they are concerned that the Milton Lock is not working anymore, and that the EA are allowing salt water to flow through. The gentleman told Mrs Adcock that they have the money to do the work but don’t have permission from the EA to undertake the work as yet.

**65. Declaration of interests**

Cllr Daw declared an interest as she is a Churchwarden. Cllr Watkins is a member of AEG.

**66. Minutes**

Cllr. Watkins proposed and Cllr. Daw seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the APC meeting held on 19th June 2023 were a true and accurate record. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cllr. Monteath-Wilson duly signed the minutes.

**67. Finance**

67.1 To approve the Statement of Finances: July 2023

Cllr. Watkins proposed and Cllr. Spring seconded a motion to approve the Statement of Finances for July 2023. [**Appendix A**]. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cllr. Watkins signed the Invoices for Payment.

67.2 To discuss and agree whether APC should sign a 3-year agreement with current internal auditor, Mulberry & Co

Clerk explained that last year when Mr Robertson, APC’s internal auditor retired, APC sought a new Internal Auditor. In September 2022 they agreed to sign with Mulberry & Co and they undertook the audit in April this year. They are having to put their hourly rate up due to recent inflation, increasing from £60ph to £65ph. Mulberry & Co are offering Parish Councils an offer, that if you sign a 3-year contract, the price will remain fixed. All Councillors agreed this was a good idea and Cllr Spring confirmed it had been market tested just last year. Cllr Harris proposed signing the 3-year offer, this was seconded by Cllr Daw. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**68. To discuss and consider whether Councillors want to publish reports ahead of the meetings on the APC website**

Clerk explained that this issue was raised recently by Cllr Spring when he wanted a report he had drafted published with the agenda and a resident Ms Nikki Sansom enquired why reports were not attached to the agenda. Whilst it was explained that APC have not published reports previously, APC were open to the idea and the Clerk undertook further research. Parish Council websites were very split, it was 50/50 whether some published reports and some referred to them in the minutes yet didn’t publish them. The Clerk explained this would be an increase in Clerk workload and the website would need reconfiguring to ensure it was clear but could be done, the only concern is ensuring that the reports are correct and signed off by all Cllrs prior to being published. Cllr Rabagliati explained that Cllrs do need the opportunity to review and approve any documents before they get published with the agenda but could see the benefit. Cllr Spring stated he obviously does feel that the reports need to be published. Cllr Harris agrees with Cllr Spring that residents should have the chance to absorb the information and ask questions at the meeting. Both Cllr Watkins and Cllr Daw liked the idea of selecting reports case by case but is nervous about the volume of work it is going to cause both Cllrs and the Clerk, especially following to reduce the Clerks hours when advertising. It was agreed that reports linked to agenda items will be published on a case by case basis, at a Cllrs request, once all Cllrs have approved content via email. **Action 1.**

**69. Resignation of Clerk and ratify recruitment process being followed**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson explained that as stated earlier the Clerk has resigned. The Clerk’s resignation letter has been submitted to the Monitoring Officer, along with a formal complaint, which given the content could impact the duty of care to the current and future Clerks, Cllr Monteath-Wilson has supported an investigation into the complaint. Due to the process, it must remain confidential at this time but when Cllr Monteath-Wilson is allowed to share details, she will do so.

The Clerk explained that she resigned on the 3rd July and will be working until the 31st August but has some leave owed to her so may finish on the 25th August but discussions will be held with the Chair once a handover period is known, when an applicant is appointed. All Cllrs received sight of the draft advert, recruitment pack and application form which was agreed in full by all Cllrs, except Cllr Harris who was unable to attend, at a confidential Personnel Meeting on the 11th July. The advert was published widely on the 13th July, the closing date is Friday 28th July with interviews being held on Wednesday 2nd August. The interview panel will consist of Cllrs Monteath-Wilson, Watkins and Harris.

The Clerk explained that she is trying to keep her emotions in check but wished to thank everyone who has taken the time to send cards, emails and phoned the Clerk. It truly means a lot. The Clerk does not wish to say anything else as she wished to remain professional but explained that the resignation was for a reason, this is being looked into by the Monitoring Officer and that she is very sad to be leaving, it is not through choice.

**70. Report on Highways and Twittens – Cllr Rabagliati**

70.1 To discuss and agree signage proposals by WDC for Waterloo Square.

Cllr Rabagliati updated that APC have heard from Wealden that they have received complaints about the road names in the centre of the village, with specific regard to North Street, Waterloo Square and West Street.  Delivery drivers are very confused by the signage which, after inspection, Cllr Rabagliati can confirm it is very confusing.

Cllr Rabagliati would tentatively suggest APC ask them to consider the following:

1. Moving the West Street sign to the other side of West Street.
2. Moving the North Street sign around the corner so that it is actually in North Street
3. Creating a new sign for Waterloo Square and placing it between Hicks Newsagents and what is now “A Swallow’s Wings”.

It was agreed that a site visit with WDC would be beneficial to go through all the issues and to ensure not too much extra signage. This will be arranged. **Action 2.**

70.2 Cllrs to discuss and agree whether any new village name plates should have ‘twinned with Veules-les-Roses’ on

Cllr Rabagliati reported that as part of the ESCC 20mph scheme, it is proposed to implement new village name signage.  APC are at a very early stage of this process, however, it has been suggested that we incorporate recognition of our well-established twinning with Veules-Les-Roses in this design.  This is a principle decision, the actual design has yet to be created and agreed. All Councillors agreed that this should be implemented.

Regarding the Traffic Calming meeting, Cllr Rabagliati was pleased to report that a meeting was held recently with the Committee where members discussed the ESCC 20mph scheme and discussed the next steps for APC regarding the High Street.  The minutes of that meeting are on the web site and APC notice board.  Unfortunately, Cllr Rabagliati is unable to attend the scheduled August meeting for this Committee and combined with the small interval since the last meeting, the decision has been made to postpone the next meeting to September. Regarding potholes, the new ESCC contractors, Balfour Beatty, have recently been in the village and have filled a number of small potholes, principally in West Street and Star Lane.  These seem to be a better standard than the last contractor.  The large hole opposite Chestnuts has still not been addressed, despite being marked up for repair. The Clerk explained this has been reported many times but did not meet the safety criteria but she checked this morning and it now does and has been referred to the inspector for actioning. The bollard outside Clifton House was knocked down by the BIFFA green waste collection lorry last week.  There is a hole in the pavement that APC have placed a cone over but, despite being given a 48 hour response time, no repair works have been undertaken.  The Clerk has made representations about this, and the missing bollard in Waterloo Square to ESCC.

**71. Report on Allotments – Cllr Baker**

Cllr Monteath-Wilson explained that Cllr Baker had given her reasons for her resignation as being a working mother of two young children and not knowing the demands a Parish Councillor would have on her. Cllr Monteath-Wilson stated that Cllr Baker had a fantastic start, driving many initiatives forward on the allotments which will hopefully continue by the new Councillor.

71.1 To discuss the allotment noticeboard

Clerk updated that the Horticultural Society originally did say allotment holders can access but

recently the group decided that they would keep full access and allotment holders can request funds to be made available in next years budget for a noticeboard if required.

71.2 To consider installing a third water trough over the far end of the allotment site

Clerk updated that this is currently on hold until a new Cllr is appointed the allotments portfolio.

71.3 To discuss and approve changes to the allotment annual contract

Clerk updated that Cllr Baker made some amendments to the allotment annual contract which all Cllrs had received and had the opportunity to comment. All Cllrs agreed they were happy and this contract will be used for the next renewal date.

71.4 To discuss and agree whether allotment gates should have padlocks on

Clerk updated that children have been accessing the allotments and taking produce from plots. Padlocks have been discussed again but as Cllrs will be aware, for some reason padlocks go missing in Alfriston, or get cut off. With 4 gates at the allotments and the need for weather resistant padlocks, this is a costly exercise of which the allotments do not have a budget for. It was agreed that as Cllr Baker, before she resigned, spoke to parents and the school, and new signage has been purchased which is due to be installed shortly, padlocks will not be considered at this time.

**72. Report on Public Transport – Cllr Harris**

Cllr Harris reported on a survey that was sent to the Clerk recently regarding changes at rail station ticket offices. Clerk will send this out to residents to enable them to submit comments. **Action 3.**

**73. Report on Rights of Way and Countryside – Cllr Harris**

Cllr Harris received an email from a resident about cyclists not dismounting when they cross the White Bridge. Although there are tasteful signs, they are quite far back. Clerk will liaise with SDNPA about this and the fact that cyclists are lifting their bikes over the kissing gates in order to ride along the river bank. **Action 4**

Cllr Harris explained how he has received comments about the disruption of organised events that come through the village. The Clerk explained that whilst organisers do not need to ask permission, out of common courtesy they tend to let the Parish Council know. However it is becoming more common now to not be made aware and there is disruption in the village. It was agreed that all companies known to run events through Alfriston would be written to, to ask them to respect the village and look after the facilities. **Action 5.**

Cllr Harris reported that the sign at the top of Long Barrow has been reported to the Rights of Way team as someone has cut it off with an electric saw. The footpath closed sign near Pleasant Rise has been turned around and SDNPA has been contacted, asking them to remove it ASAP now the footpath is re-open.

Cllr Harris ended his report stating that whilst not much can be done, he can see holes all along the embankment which seem to have appeared due to metal detecting. Need to monitor this and if becomes an issue, liaise with SDNPA.

**74. Report on Strategic Planning – Cllr Spring**

74.1 To discuss and agree whether APC should submit a Parish Priority Statement for SDNPA

Cllr Spring updated that last week an email was received about the Parish Priority Statement from SDNPA. He referred to it as a lighter version of a Neighborhood Plan. It is linked to Planning and Strategic Planning portfolios so both Cllr Spring and Cllr Watkins will lead on this. Cllr Spring explained that the deadline is for October 2023 but he contacted SDNPA to seek an extension if possible. It was agreed that Cllr Spring would start work on this alongside the Parish Plan, once a template has been approved it will be shared with residents to ensure it is valid. **Action 6.**

74.2 To discuss and approve the TOR for the Parish Plan working group and agree which Councillors will sit on the membership

Cllr Spring explained that he had circulated the draft Terms of Reference for the new Parish Plan working group to all Cllrs to seek comments. All Cllrs confirmed sight of the final TOR and approved. They will be added to the APC website. **Action 7.**

It was agreed that Cllrs Spring, Monteath-Wilson, Watkins and Harris will sit on the group. In due course 12 representatives from Alfriston consisting of residents and traders will join the group, with the aim to producing a new Parish Plan early next year, using the 2009 plan as a starting point.

**75. Report on Tye and Recreation Ground – Cllr Daw**

Cllr Daw reported that despite a new large, bright yellow banner on the Tye gate, the turning circle was chaos at the weekend with the turning circle full of cars, attending an event at the OCC, so the bride for the ceremony at St Andrews could not access the Church. Cllr Daw also commented that the sign is not just being put up for the event, it was up for the whole weekend and is very unsightly. It was thought it was agreed for a sign to be placed on the pedestrian side of the Tye gate, not the large gate which is opened for weddings. Cllr Daw also reported that an A board was put in the turning circle, which breaches the byelaws.

It was agreed that the large banner is not only inappropriate and unsightly, it does not work. It was agreed that Cllr Daw would join the users of the Tye; AWMH, St Andrews and the OCC to discuss this dangerous situation and see if there is another solution. Cllr Spring stated that perhaps if a smaller sign is made for the pedestrian gate, it could show all the group logos to show collaboration.

Cllr Daw stated that she spoke to Mr Geoff Ellis about putting a water butt on the Pavilion roof and he thought this was a great idea, Cllr Daw will attend their next committee meeting to discuss further. Cllr Daw commented that the Shot Coffee House continue to put out A boards despite knowing they are breaching the Tye byelaws. The Clerk reported that the owners have blocked APC’s email account but she will write a letter and arrange for it to be hand delivered. **Action 8.**

The Clerk asked how Cllrs would like to proceed with Tye Road. It was agreed that the Clerk would obtain a new quote in order to repair the edges of Tye Road so Cllrs have an idea of cost. **Action 9.** It was agreed that the Clerk will continue to replace the concrete bollards, with wooden ones, as and when required.

**76. Report from Planning Committee – Cllr Watkins**

76.1 Applications considered by APC Planning Committee since last meeting.

**SDNP/23/02387/LIS** 3 Waterloo Square, Alfriston, East Sussex, BN26 5UD Supported

**SDNP/23/02557/HOUS and LIS** 9 North Street, Alfriston, East Sussex, BN26 5UG Supported

**SDNP/23/02643/LIS** 7 West Street, Alfriston, East Sussex, BN26 5UX Objected

76.2 Applications notified or awaiting decision from SDNPA.

**SDNP/23/00730/HOUS** 1A Rose Cottage, High Street, Alfriston, BN26 5SZ SDNPA refused

**SDNP/23/01040/HOUS** 23 Deans Road, Alfriston, East Sussex, BN26 5XJ SDNPA granted

**SDNP/23/01305/FUL** Saddlers House, High Street, Alfriston, East Sussex, BN26 5SZ Ongoing

**SDNP/23/02324/HOUS** Pailin House, 6 Kings Ride, Alfriston, East Sussex, BN26 5XP Ongoing

76.3 Enforcement updates

No updates.

**77. Reports from Outside Bodies**

*77.1 Heartstart*: Cllr Watkins reported that they are liaising with SECAMB and getting a date in diary for them to come to the village and do a talk.

*77.2 Alfriston Emergency Group*: Mr Steve Woodgate updated that they are working on the equipment. They have seen that Deans Place is up for sale so will need to liaise with the new owners whether the equipment can continue to be stored there and access to the flood lines when pumping is required.

*77.3 Flood Forum* – no report.

*77.3 Neighbourhood Watch* – no report.

*77.5 Twinning Committee* – Clerk reported that the following report had been received.

*“The Twinning Committee had a very sociable time in July, with the "Sparkling Event", sampling - you've guessed it - sparkling wines in a lovely Alfriston garden, and then meeting twice more to play pétanque. The June boules evening was so pleasant that it was decided to play fortnightly through the summer. The Twinning Association Boules Evenings is being held at Deans Place Hotel, Alfriston on Wednesdays 9th and 23rd August at 7pm. Non-members also welcome and there is no charge for playing, but please buy drinks at the hotel bar - the food is good, too! The popular Quiz Night returns! Alfriston War Memorial Hall, Friday 25th August at 6:30pm. Non-members also welcome, entry £1 a head, cash bar available.*

*Members' Lunch, ACVTA members will be invited to a lunch being prepared by two of our members on Saturday 19th August. Numbers will be limited, so please check emails for the booking details. £5 per head, and please bring your own beverages. Friday 8th September to Sunday 10th, visit to Veules, a busy and fun weekend with our twinning friends in Veules-les-Roses. Tuesday 10th October, Seaford Seafront Stroll and chat. Meet at the Buckle car park at 09:45.”*

*77.6 St Andrew’s Church* – Cllr Daw reported that the music festival starts tomorrow, she recommends it to all. The wedding season has started so they are very busy. She reported that Pauline, the Church administrator, is retiring so the job advert is going out if anyone is interested.

*77.8 Cuckmere Buses* – no report.

*77.9 AWMH* – Mr Adrian Butcher reminded all that the AWMH is now a licensed wedding venue so please spread the word. Mr Butcher expressed his thanks to the Clerk for everything, she has been very effective and on behalf of the management committee, thanks to her.

*77.10 Speedwatch* – Clerk reported that she is down to 4 members and would really like to do a training session before she leaves to get some new people trained and out there. It is a commitment of one session a month which is 1.5 hours and it is good to see that Alfriston is educating drivers. Please let the Clerk know if you are interested.

**78. Correspondence to the Clerk**

1. Clerk reported that an A board request has come in from the Alfriston WI for Saturday 14th October. This was approved by Cllrs.
2. Clerk reported that an email had been received that morning from Ms Nikki Sansom, sent to WDC, asking how residents can decide how to proceed with making a decision following the recent Notice of Vacancy, if there is no adopted Co-Option policy. Clerk explained this was on the agenda for the September meeting but has been brought forward due to the recent Notice being published this morning. All Cllrs had received the proposed policy ahead of the meeting and had time to make any comments. All Cllrs approved this policy so it can be shared with residents widely and it will be ratified with an agenda item at the September 2023 meeting. **Action 10.**

On the subject of the Notice of Vacancy, and following an earlier question from Mrs Vassell, the resignation of Cllr Baker was not expected, and no budget has been assigned. There are ringfenced reserves for the May 2023 election at £1,000 but the final invoice is yet to be received for this so if residents do decide to fill this vacancy with an election, rather than co-option, the funds for this will need to be taken from general reserves which will likely result in the precept having to be increased next year.

1. Clerk reported that two A board requests were dealt with via email since the last meeting. Both have been approved as a one off as both received at the same time. They are for Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd July for the Hailsham Art Network and the Alfriston Horticultural Society.
2. Clerk reported that an email received from Ms Alice Sloan about an idea she has proposed on Facebook which received support, to plant fruit trees on the Recreation ground as she feels it would not only add to the aesthetics but it would have a massive environmental and community benefit. Whilst Cllrs agreed it was a good idea, many questions were raised; who would fund the trees, who would plant, who would maintain the trees, who would water the trees etc. Also, the cricket club would need to be liaised with. It was agreed that further discussions would be beneficial, and Cllr Daw will start by speaking with the cricket club. **Action 11.**

**79. Public Questions**

1. Mrs Adcock thanked the Council for speaking about the thorny issue of the turning circle. She explained that enforcement is very hard but perhaps a flyer or similar could be placed on any cars illegally parked that refer to the deposit that OCC hold and are shown in their hiring terms and conditions. It was agreed this would be discussed at the Tye Road users meeting. **Action 12.**

1. Mr Bruce Sutherland asked whether it was worth putting a sign at the bottom of Tye Road about parking. It was agreed there used to be one there so this will be looked into and replaced if necessary. **Action 13**.
2. Mrs Amanda Sutherland asked whether the OCC, AWMH or St Andrews could have a parking warden. Mrs Adcock stated she was on duty at the weekend and she visited Tye Road 6 times but vehicles refused to move and just asked for a ticket.
3. Mr Mike Rawlins asked why there is no enforcement on the High Street. Cllr Rabagliati suggested that all residents write to WDC requesting them to decriminalize parking in Wealden so this is no longer a Police matter and enforcement can happen. The best email for this is: [chair@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:chair@wealden.gov.uk)
4. Mr Neil Parkinson stated that the top bar of the 5 bar gate along the bank near Burnt House has been removed. Clerk to report. **Action 14.**
5. Mr Nick Beechey has 3 matters. Regarding the Tye Road resurfacing, the Tye is held in Trust so grants may well be open to the Trustees, so do not rule any out that are not open to the Parish Council. He also asked this Council not to allow ignorance to trump history, name plates are important as they tell a story. The square in the middle of the village with the big tree is Market Square, it is called Market Square as it had a market place held on it for 650 plus years. It also has the only grade 1 listed cross in East Sussex on it. It is worth preserving it as Market Square. Waterloo Square is the boundaries of 1-14 which encloses the Square that you can’t see from Market Square. Would ask this Council to not distort the history of the Square and encourage WDC to have residents refer to it as Market Square, and not Waterloo Square. Lastly, would like to echo all the positive things said about the Clerk tonight, they are thoroughly deserved and he wishes this Council the utmost luck to find someone with the efficiency, effectiveness and the dedication that this Clerk has shown over the last 6 years. If you find one, you have done very well. It is a great shame, that from sitting here, what seems to be the actions of a few, has led to this Clerk’s resignation.
6. Mrs Hilary Rawlins asked whether people living in Waterloo Square could give delivery directions to their properties? Mr Beechey explained it is tricky as their back doors are within Waterloo Square but their front doors are in both West Street and North Street. Cllr Rabagliati stated that the WDC provided map shows some properties have taken on the name of Waterloo Square which is not the case so this needs to be looked into. Cllr Rabagliati will liaise with WDC about this. **Action 15.**
7. Mrs Amanda Sutherland stated that reports being published, linked to the agenda, could just be placed on the website and the agenda refers to them. Cllr Monteath-Wilson liked this idea and Clerk will action. **Action 16.**

**80. Date of next meeting**

Please note there is no meeting in August.

The date of the next APC meeting is Monday 18th September 2023 in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall at 19:15.

Signed: A black signature on a white background

Description automatically generated with low confidence Mrs Victoria Rutt – Clerk and RFO

**APPENDIX A**

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**APPENDIX B**

**Report from Maria Caulfield**

**Chancellor Agrees New Support Measures for Mortgage Holders**

Under the plans, anyone worried about their mortgage repayments can call their lender for information and support, without any impact on their credit score. Moreover, if you change your mortgage to interest only or extend the term of your mortgage and want to go back to your original deal, within six months, you will be able to do so – with no impact on your credit score. For people who are at risk of losing their home, mortgage lenders have agreed to a minimum 12-month period before any repossession without consent. I hope that these measures offer comfort to those who are anxious about their mortgage in light of recent interest rate rises.

# **Major Broadband Boost for Rural Homes and Businesses**

The government has pledged an additional seven million pounds to bring reliable high-speed internet to rural businesses. This new scheme seeks to enable farmers to take advantage of new technologies through improved connectivity. To help rural tourism with high-speed connections, rural businesses establish a strong online presence.

**Meeting with the Housing Secretary**

I have been asking the councils for years to create local plans, with no luck. This month I met with Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Housing, to encourage him to put Lewes District and Wealden Councils into special measures. Only with a local plan in place can we protect our green field sites from being concreted over.

**Opening ‘Rampion Bridge’ on A27**

I was thrilled to join National Highways recently to celebrate the scheme's completion on the A27 East of Lewes. The shared cycle/pathway will make a huge difference for local cyclists, horse riders and walkers. Residents can be happy knowing that they are safe and can enjoy the stretch between Firle and Polegate whilst motorists can benefit from a reduction in traffic.

I know residents are still keen on further improvements to the A27 and there are plans to consult further as to whether to dual the road at certain points so do look out for the survey to submit your thoughts and ideas.

**Improvements to Local Walking and Cycling Routes**

I welcome the government’s investment of 200 million pounds into creating new walking and cycling routes across the country. This new scheme will help the environment and ease congestion during the school rush. Locally East Sussex County Council have secured 1,223,826 for improvements aimed at increasing the safety and accessibility for all immediately outside of schools.