ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL Alfriston War Memorial Hall

Mrs Suzanna Dry Old School House

 The Tye, Alfriston

 East Sussex BN26 5TL

Tel: 07936 904743

E-mail: clerk@alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk Monday 29th April 2024

**Draft Minutes of a meeting of Alfriston Parish Council (APC), held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 22nd April 2024 at 8.35pm**

**Present:**

Cllr D Monteath-Wilson (Chair) Cllr J Spring

Cllr N Parkinson Cllr Harris

Cllr S Daw

**In attendance:**

Mrs Suzanna Dry – Parish Clerk & RFO

There were approximately 15 members of the public present.

**203. Chairman’s Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**204**. **Public Questions**

A question sent in by Nikki Sansom was read out to the meeting together with the Clerk’s response. All Cllrs had been copied in to the correspondence. A copy is attached to the minutes, Appendix A.

Adrian Butcher of AWMH asked the Council to consider a request for a burger van to be parked for 2 hrs outside the hall for a wedding booked in 2025. Weddings are a really good and much needed source of income for the hall. AWMH look to have a maximum of 8-10 weddings a year, last year there was only 4. Last year was also the first year without pre-school and it was the wedding bookings that helped the hall break even. The hall has an agreement with APC that wedding food is parked by the side of the patio. This burger van is too big to park here. Adrian Butcher asked APC to please consider the hall’s finances when making a decision. If the wedding can’t have the burger van they will cancel the booking. The Chair confirmed this request will be considered under Clerk’s correspondence and APC will take this information into consideration.

**205. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Watkins & Cllr Rabagliati, who are currently away.

**206. Update from Maria Caulfield**

Maria Caulfield’s report was read out at the Annual Parish Meeting and was attached to the Agenda.

**207. Update from Cllr Stephen Shing – East Sussex County Council (ESCC)**

Cllr Shing was present at the Annual Parish Meeting and delivered his report. A copy is attached to the minutes, Appendix B.

**208. Update from Cllr Greaves – Wealden District Council (WDC)**

Cllr Greaves was also present at the Annual Parish Meeting and delivered his report. A copy is attached to the minutes, Appendix C.

**209. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Daw declared an interest as she is a Churchwarden and a member of the Patient Participation Group.

**210. Minutes**

Cllr Daw proposed and Cllr Harris seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the APC meeting held on 18th March 2024 and 25th March were a true and accurate record. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Chair duly sign the minutes as an accurate record.

**211. Finance**

211.1 To approve the Statement of Finances for the End of Year 2024 –As attached with the Agenda.

Cllr Parkinson commented that the overspend in last year’s figures due mainly to the water leak, unexpected election and costs of appointing a new clerk will have to be paid for by the village through the precept. Although quarterly tracking of finances has been sufficient in the past, in this unusual year it has not and we need to learn from this. A close eye will have to be kept on spending this year in view of last year’s overspend and being able to fund the Clerk’s actual hours. It is therefore important we have a finance committee meeting to look at each budget line for the current financial year . The Clerk confirmed as soon as the 2024/25 precept has been received (expected late April) a finance meeting will be called to discuss the depleted general reserves and how we bring these back up to an acceptable level. The Chair confirmed this will of course be a public meeting and the public can attend to hear what is discussed and decisions will be minuted. Cllr Spring commented that it was not clear during the latter part of the year what outstanding costs were against budget and suggested quarterly finance meetings with all councillors present. The Chair confirmed these suggestions and the terms of reference for the finance committee would be looked into to facilitate this. Cllr Daw proposed and Cllr Harris seconded that the Statement of Finances for the End of Year 2024 were approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED.**

211.2 To confirm sight and approval of Q4 2023/24 audit paperwork – As attached with the Agenda.

Cllr Daw proposed and Cllr Parkinson seconded that the Q4 2023/24 audit paperwork be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED.**

211.3 To approve the Statement of Finances for April 2024 – As attached with the Agenda.

Cllr Daw proposed and Cllr Harris seconded that the Statement of Finances for April 2024 be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED.**

**212. Update on Coffeehouse Conversations**

Cllr Daw reported that the last Coffeehouse conversation was very successful and thanked everyone who came. Cllr Daw suggested allotments meet 4 times a year, the Six Bells has offered to host these meetings at no charge. The defibrillator at the cricket pavilion is not operational, the cricket club are looking into it and will get it on line. Cllr Spring also reported that it was good to see everyone at the coffeehouse conversation. Cllr Spring will be getting in touch with a number of groups in the village over the next 2/3 weeks. Cllr Spring has volunteered to look at communications through websites for Alfriston Village website and have links on here to other websites. The chair thanked both Cllr Daw and Cllr Spring.

**213. South Downs National Park Authority Nominations**

It was unanimously agreed that APC would vote for Timothy James Bryant as their nominee for the forthcoming election. The Clerk was instructed to return the ballot paper accordingly. Action 1.

**214. Report by Cllr Parkinson on APC Structure for 2024/25**

Cllr Parkinson ran through his ideas for APC structure going forwards, which was attached to the agenda. Cllr Parkinson suggested creating a Personnel Committee and that the Finance Committee be enhanced and meet more regularly. Cllrs should be more proactive and consider a 3 year business plan. Also suggested was that Cllr Harris’ portfolio of Transport, Rights of Way & Countryside be updated to Transport & Environment, public questions change to public participation and Chairmans Welcome change to Chairs Welcome.

The Chair commented that at this stage, cllrs need to discuss and bear these points in mind at the Annual meeting next month. Cllr Spring thanked Cllr Parkinson for his report and was supportive of these points.

**215. Update on APC A-Board**

The Clerk gave an update on the current situation with regard to A board. After writing to East Sussex Highways a response has been received to say ESH would not give permission for any A boards to be placed on Market Square, including any owned by APC. They did however suggest that APC may wish to consider applying for a licence to erect a noticeboard. ESH enforcement team had advised this would be the best option and could be erected at APC’s expense after completing an Erect A Structure Licence and Excavation Consent Form. APC own the land around the tree on Market Square and cllrs considered the option of replacing the railings around the tree, so that a noticeboard could be placed on the railings. It was unanimously AGREED that Cllr Daw would arrange for the railings to be replaced and look into a permanent noticeboard being attached to them. Action 2.

The Clerk was asked to write to ESH and advise them that APC will again be putting a Christmas Tree on Market Square this year, as has been the case for many years previously. Action 3

**216. Report on Highways & Twittens – Cllr Rabagliati**

Cllr Rabagliati sent in his report as follows:

There is little progress to report this month other than that a date of 2 May has been set for the meeting to discuss the Emergency Traffic Management plan with East Sussex Highways.  Steve Woodgate (from AEG) and I will be discussing various aspects of the plan, including diversion signage, in the hope that we can have a more coherent and comprehensive plan.

I am still awaiting an update from ESH regarding the implementation of the 20mph plan although, as reported last time, we do know that money for this is in in the ESCC budget.

A future Coffee House discussion will be held to discuss the gateway signage and to have a further discussion about how to progress other potential options, including High Street resurfacing.

I am not aware of dates having been set for the postponed High Street patching works, or the resurfacing of West Street pavements.

Following continued instances of overweight vehicles in the village I have written to Maria Caulfield asking for her help in running a stakeholder meeting to discuss ways of dealing with this issue effectively.

Finally, I am dismayed at the number of potholes in and around the village which remain unfixed, despite having been marked up for repair by the highways steward.  I propose that the clerk should contact ESH to chase up when these will be completed, and also asking for an update on the date for the 20mph scheme. It was unanimously AGREED to ask The Clerk to write to East Sussex Highways to chase up when the potholes will be scheduled to be repaired and ask for an update on the 20mph scheme. Action 4.

**217. Report on Allotments and Recreation Ground - Cllr Daw**

Cllr Daw reported that two people are interested in taking on an allotment, Cllr Daw will liaise with the Clerk on this . Action 5. Now that Cllr Daw has a plan for the allotments, all plots will be numbered. Action 6. There is a shed on the allotments that AEG use and this needs re-painting, Cllr Daw will raise this at the next allotment meeting. Action 7. APC have 31 allotments, the costs to run these are providing wheelie bins, water and strimming. The income is £800, Cllr Daw will liaise with the Clerk to look at the cost of running the allotments against the income received from them. Action 8. Cllr Daw advised the water meter reading as of today was 01819, which The Clerk noted. Action 9.

Playground - Cllr Daw reported that the gate into the playground is not shutting properly. The Clerk was asked to report this to Wickstead. Action 10. Cllr Daw also reported that residents have complained about children swinging on the blossom trees on the north side of the recreation ground. It was AGREED to ask the Clerk to write to the school and ask them to raise this issue with parents. Action 11.

D-Day Afternoon Tea - Cllr Daw thanked the Alfriston War Memorial Hall for providing the hall free of charge. Cllr Daw has asked Cuckmere News to advertise the event. There will be music, memorabilia, high street decorations, cadets present, Clergy House is putting on a show and the school has been contacted and asked to take part. The Deputy Lord Lieutenant may attend and both the WI and Church are making cakes.

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

Cllr Harris reported that the car charging points in Willows Car Park are still not connected and he is still awaiting written confirmation from ‘Connected Kerb’ that they will be safe in flood conditions.

The Managing Director of Cuckmere Buses has issued his annual report, the salient points are:

No service to Alfriston for 10 days over the winter due to flooding

39 Sussex Arts Shuttle ran very successfully and have re-started on 30th March, running on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays until October.

The driver recruitment campaign was successful with 11 more drivers now on board.

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

Style on Steven Carr’s Land at France Hill – this was reported at the last meeting by Jilly Byford and Cllr Harris reported this on the East Sussex Rights of Way website. This has now been repaired.

Cuckmere Flooding – As a result of Cllr Harris’ meeting on 28th March with Maria Caulfield, Jamie Mansfield and James Dopson of Dean’s Place to discuss the issue of flooding, Maria Caulfield sent out a public letter on 11th April. This letter advised of a meeting being set with the Environment Agency. Cllr Harris has chased up this meeting with Maria Caulfield who advised some of the work has been started and the renewal of permits is being negotiated. A date for the meeting should be set next week. Cllr Harris reported the best way to progress the desilting of the Cuckmere is via the meetings with Maria Caulfield and pressure must be kept on to fix a date.

The increased incidence of flooding is not only the absence of maintenance of the Cuckmere, but also the effect of climate change. To assess this, detailed records of rainfall need to be kept. Cllr Harris has been recording rainfall for the Parish magazine but feels the record now needs to be more formal. At the same time it would be good to keep a village diary to record village events. Cllr Harris will come back to the next meeting with some ideas of how we can take both these ideas forward.

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

Cllr Spring had nothing further to report following his update from the Coffeehouse Conversation under Item 212.

**221. Report on Tye – Cllr Parkinson**

Cllr Parkinson reported that AEG are trying to source a replacement cover for the drain on The Glebe, however as it is on a hill the edge will stick out. Cllr Parkinson asked APC if they would give permission for a couple of inches to be taken off the hill so the drain can lie flat. It was **AGREED** that AEG can re-shape the hill surrounding the drain so that it lies flush. Cllr Parkinson thanked those who had donated plants for the Tye Garden. The Tye Team hope to re-paint the yellow lines this weekend. Cllr Parkinson will liaise with The Wingrove regarding the pot hole repairs and will try to get this under way in the next couple of weeks. The Clerk has sent the proposal of works for the Tye Road to South Downs National Park, who have a couple of questions which, the Clerk will reply to. Action 12.

**222. Report from Planning Committee**

222.1 No Applications considered by APC Planning Committee since last meeting.

222.2 Applications notified or awaiting decision on from SDNPA

SDNP/23/05421/FUL & SDNP/23/05422/LIS Saddlers House , High Street, Alfriston, East Sussex, BN26 5SZ Internal alterations to create staff accommodation, minor modifications to the previously approved rear terrace – creation of a new opening in the flint wall to the southern side of the terrace. Approved.

* 1. Enforcement updates - SDNP/24/00166/BRECON 6 Kings Ride, Alfriston, BN26 5XP.

SDNP have notified they will be making an inspection with regard to clear as opposed to obscure glass being used.

**223. Reports from Outside Bodies**

* 1. **Heartstart -** No report
	2. **Alfriston Emergency Group** - No report
	3. **Flood Forum -** Report attached - Appendix D
	4. **Neighbourhood Watch** - No report
	5. **Twinning Committee -** Report attached - Appendix E
	6. **St Andrew’s Church -** Cllr Daw reported the AGM was held on 21st April, all committee

 members carried forward.

* 1. **Clergy House** - Report attached - Appendix F
	2. **Cuckmere Buses** - No report
	3. **Alfriston War Memorial Hall** - No report
	4. **Speedwatch -** Cllr Rabagliati reported speedwatch continues to have a busy schedule and

 would be delighted if any new volunteers would like to join the team. The sessions are not

 onerous, and make a real difference. Please contact me for details.

* 1. **Events** - No report.

**224 Correspondence – Asking for permission from the Council**

Food truck to park outside the AWMH for a Wedding - The Clerk has received a request asking for a food truck to be parked outside the front of the AWMH for 2 hours for a wedding party on 5th July 2025. Cllrs **AGREED** on the condition the truck is only parked for 2 hours and is not more than 3.5 tonnes in weight. The Clerk was asked to write back accordingly. Action 13.

Dene Car Park - The Clerk has received correspondence from Wealden District Council regarding a complaint about traffic speed and confusion on the direction for traffic. WDC are considering speed humps and more signage. Cllrs **AGREED** on the need to keep the car park two way and for additional road marks and signage. The Clerk was asked to respond to WDC. Action 14.

**225 Public Questions**

The meeting was adjourned at 10.00pm by the Chair before Public Questions commenced. There were no public questions.

**226 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be the Annual Meeting on Monday 20th May 2024 in the AWMH at 7:15pm.

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 10.05pm.

**Appendices, as referred to in the minutes, attached below.**

**APPENDIX A**

**From:** Nikki Sansom
**To:** Alfriston Parish Council <clerk@alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk>
**Subject:** UPDATED APC meeting 22 April 2024 - Comment for item 204

Hi Suzanna,

Thank you for the information for the Council meeting on Monday 22 April. I can’t make Monday evenings but could you read the out the following on my behalf under item 204 Public Questions:

*I fully agree with suggestions raised by Councillor Parkinson in his paper circulated with the agenda.*

*Residents and some newly elected Councillors raised similar issues last year. Unfortunately at that time the Council was not ready to take them forward. In its new form I hope the Council can progress these issues.*

*In particular, I would like to see the work around financial management as a priority.*

*Several times in 2023 I raised concerns around the Council’s financial management with the previous Clerk and the Chair. I’m unsure if any improvements have been made to processes and transparency.*

*Reviewing the financial information circulated with the agenda I remain concerned about overspends on several budgets and the running down of reserves. The level of reserves was raised by the auditor as a risk in the November 2023 interim audit report.*

*Therefore what steps are the Council taking to control spending, ensure transparent decision making and replenish the depleted reserves?*

Thanks very much for doing this for me.

**Nikki Sansom**

**Reply from the Clerk:**

Dear Nikki,

Thank you for your e-mail and apologies for the late response, as I have only just returned from annual leave.

I can confirm your e-mail will be raised under public questions at the Council Meeting on Monday evening as requested, and I have copied in all Cllrs to this e-mail so that they are aware of your questions.

In order for us to answer your questions fully, can you specify the exact processes and transparency issues you refer to in your e-mail ?  If you can give specifics of what processes and transparency you are concerned with, we can answer more fully.

You mention that ‘I remain concerned about overspends on several budgets and the running down of reserves.  The level of reserves was raised by the auditor as a risk in the November 2023 interim audit report’.    I cannot see anything in the Nov 2023 audit that mentions this, and have attached a copy for your reference.   With regard to the current level of reserves, Cllrs are aware that as RFO I will be calling a Finance meeting once the 2024/25 precept has been received, to discuss and review the level of general reserves.  This will of course be open to the public and notice of the meeting will be sent out in the usual ways.  The three main areas of overspend last year were due to unforeseen circumstances – the water leak on allotments costing £4,250.00 over budget, unexpected councillor election costing £2,432.00 over budget and appointing a new clerk with courses and subscription costs resulting in an £1,259.00 overspend.

With regard to your final paragraph : ‘ what steps are the Council taking to control spending, ensure transparent decision making and replenish the depleted reserves’  I can advise as follows:

Control Spending – the forthcoming finance meeting will look at the general reserves for 2024/25 and whether a quarterly finance meeting would be beneficial going forwards.

Transparency – all financial decisions are voted on at a public meeting and the monthly, quarterly and year to date figures are published with the agenda for the public to see.    Both the internal and external audit are published, the only recommendation from the last audit was a requirement to publish accompanying documentation with agendas, which is now in place, and I hope is proving helpful.

Replenish Depleted Reserves  -  This will be discussed at the forthcoming finance meeting, with proposals being put forward to the next council meeting for decision.

I hope the above gives you some information, but rest assured your e-mail will raised under public questions at the meeting on Monday, and if I can be of any further help please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards

Suzanna

Mrs Suzanna Dry

**APPENDIX B**

East Sussex County Councillor Stephen Shing Report to Alfriston Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting 2024 We thank the Parish Council for inviting us to provide a County Report for the 2024 annual Parish Council meeting. In addition I would like to thank the residents for contacting me with their concerns and our Parish Council clerk for a good working relationship. Since the pandemic in 2020, our county council environment and needs have changes. Although Covid pandemic is gone, there are lots residents suffering the Long-term effects of COVID-19. As result it have high demand to county council adult social service. Parking, Overgrow, Potholes and Flooding are high on our mail box everyday. We continue working on residents concerns and our usual work on local schools, tackling road surfacing, footways and pothole repairs, traffic management in Alfriston, Exceat Bridge, the Hailsham – Polegate – Eastbourne movement and access corridor, Dittons Road Roundabout, A2270/ A22 Eastbourne Road. Here are some highlights

COUNCIL TAX On 6 February, East Sussex County Council held a Full Council meeting and set a balanced budget for 2024/25. To offset increasing costs and demand for services, and long-term reductions in Government funding, the council agreed to use £14 million of the council’s limited reserves as one-time only option. Residents will also be asked to pay an additional 4.99 per cent in council tax, which includes the additional two per cent for adult social care allowed by Government – the equivalent to an extra £1.62 per week on a Band D property. The County Council agreed to add more than £50 million to its annual spending for East Sussex in this year’s budget to help meet these pressures, though it is not being funded to match the increased spending. The council plan, published with the budget, sets out in more detail how services will be provided and how their effectiveness can be monitored. While the increase in council tax and the use of limited reserves allows the County Council to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25, the council expects the deficit will grow to £45 million in 25/26 when the use of reserves is no longer an option. By that time, if the Government does not provide the adequate adult social care funding to Local authority, the County Council is at risk of ‘bankruptcy’ or service cuts.

ROAD SURFACE AND KERBING After years of lobbing county highways about the deteriorate road surface and kerbing in our area, it is pleased that we have a number of roads been reinstalled in Willingdon. And few more in 20-24-2025 financial year.

POTHOLE AND GULLY County Councillor Stephen Shing submitted two written questions at East Sussex County Council Full Council meeting on 6 February (if you would like to have a copy of the questions and answers please contact parish council or Stephen). After a long debate at the meeting, Stephen believes that County Highways can further improve their service than what is currently provided. It is hoped that the need to implement better practices to stop more potholes appearing and then re-appearing in our roads will be recognised. This will help the Council to save resources and deliver improved roads for our residents. Stop debris from falling back into cleaned gullies, help reduce road flooding and maintain better road surfaces with less potholes. Due to the recent wet weather and climate change, our county is experiencing an increase in flooding across roads and blocked gullies. I have received complaints from residents about the poor practice of our County’s contractors when they are clearing gullies; specifically that cleared debris is being left next to the gullies, rather than being disposed of. Residents tell me that the uncleared debris is then washing back into the gullies. I am therefore asking the Lead Member on behalf of residents what could be done to ensure the gullies are cleared properly and that the Council’s contractors use the appropriate actions to clear debris effectively as this will help reduce flooding and maintain better road surfaces with less potholes. Answer by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment We do not expect our gulley cleansing contractor to leave gully debris on the verges and it should be taken away by our contractor. We do allow the contractor to deposit leaves and vegetation on rural verges, that may have collected on gullies. If Cllr Shing is aware of examples where debris has been left behind, please report this to his Stakeholder Liaison Officer to investigate where further action can be taken and the matter raised with our contractor. To help deal with the higher number of blocked gullies and pipes resulting from the wetter winters we have increased the drainage resources working on the network to reduce the frequency of blocked gullies and flooding in the future. LAUNCH OF EAST SUSSEX LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 4 (LTP4) County highways should already inform your parish council about current public consultation the draft East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), which began 27 November 2023. I invite you to contribute your views to this important statutory document that outlines the transport policy and strategy framework for the area. The LTP4 Strategy, Implementation Plan, and supporting documents are available on the County Council’s consultation hub http:eastsussex.gov.uk/DraftLTP4 from November 27 November 2023, to 25 February 2024. .

 NEW APPOINTMENT In October at the East Sussex County Council meeting, Stephen was appointed as a member to East Sussex Fire Authority. Since the appointed Stephen have trained for the East Sussex Fire Authority and joined the Christmas event for children at the Eastbourne fire station. POLEGATE CROSS ROAD TRAFFIC LIGHTS Late last year, we have received many complaints that the traffic lights at Polegate cross roads are not working properly. As a result of the faults, traffic congestion has been occurring more often and for longer. County Highways have completed the renewal of the detectors and this has resolved the issue and improved efficiency.

ROAD GULLY FLOODING Due to the recently wet weather, it seems flooding most of the roads and streets. Therefore it is overload to county highways, it have course some delayed in action. We reported flooding in Wannock Road, C40 Jevington Road, Seven Sisters Road, Polegate High Street, Eastbourne Road A2270 and A259.

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REVIEW The Local Government Association has a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) held every five years to make an assessment of local councils. In June, CPC was invited to visit and make assessments of East Sussex County Council (ESCC). The CPC team spent three and a half days on site at Lewes and Newhaven, during which they gathered information and views from over fifty meetings. The team spoke to over a hundred people which included members, council staff, external stakeholders and partners. The initial feedback presentation and CPC final report are very positive, finding ESCC to be a well-run and well-managed council, a trusted and respected partner with a strong track record of service delivery. Comments made during the site visit included that one person was ‘Astounded by the breadth of knowledge in the organisation’ and that the Council is ‘Brimming with moral purpose’. Staff members said that they are ‘Proud to work for ESCC. No egos. Well run and positive’ and that the Council is ‘the most inclusive place I have worked’. Moreover, the team found that: The Leader and Chief Executive are well respected by staff, partners and members, described as accessible, approachable and responsive. The peer team commented that the managerial and political leadership of the council is well established. The whole council is open, approachable and inclusive with a genuine commitment to equality and diversity. Staff are loyal, proud and dedicated. There is no particular fixation on hierarchy and staff work together collaboratively to achieve the best outcomes they can for residents. The council is financially prudent, an evidence-based organisation, with a strong foundation of financial and governance processes as well as robust procedures in internal audit, risk and assurance. The council has a good record of financial stability and on the delivery of savings. There is evidence of a strong track record of delivery across all key service areas and the peer team commented that ESCC is an organisation that does what it says it will do and does it well. The council has a strong commitment to partnership working and is considered to be a trusted and respected partner. There are good memberofficer relations built on trust and mutual respect, with members reporting that they get good support from officers. County Councillor Stephen Shing said: “The CPC team also met with me, seeking my views and discussed the Chief Executive, staff, the communication and working relationships with members. It was a good opportunity for me to have my say. I agreed and supported the findings of report at the meetings for Cabinet and Full Council”. Thank you.

**APPENDIX C - Cllr David Greaves, Wealden District Councl**

**Report – Alfriston PC - Monday 22nd April 2024**

1. **Cliff Collapses**

The Council have issued warnings about the dangers of people going close to cliff edges along the South coast. Local Councils have teamed up with HM Coastguard and landowners to launch a campaign reminding people of the risk posed by unstable chalk cliffs. The risk is not just with the cliff edges but also at the base of the cliffs.

The joint campaign to raise awareness of cliff dangers is being promoted by HM Coastguard, The National Trust, South Downs National Park Authority, Sussex Wildlife Trust, East Sussex County Council, Seaford Town Council, Wealden District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council and Lewes District Council.

**For further information contact:**

Stacey Robins, Head of Planning & Environmental Services, Wealden District Council, Email: Stacey.robins@wealden.gov.uk

1. **Climate Change**

Wealden District Council have released surveys to find out residents’ opinions on climate change. This is with a view to creating a new climate change strategy and action plan based on those opinions.

To complete the surveys, visit [Climate Change | Let's Talk Wealden](https://letstalk.wealden.gov.uk/hub-page/climate-change). The survey will be open for eight weeks and closes at 12 p.m. on Friday 10 May 2024. For more information residents can contact the Climate Change team at sustainability@wealden.gov.uk

For further information contact:

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| Nichola Watters Head of Planning Policy, Economy and Climate ChangeWealden District CouncilEmail: Nichola.watters@wealden.gov.uk  |  | Sian KilleanMedia and Communications officerWealden District CouncilTel: 07970 233231Email: Sian.killean@wealden.gov.uk |

1. **Food Waste Collection grant**

Wealden District Council have received a grant of £1,637,844 to support Food Waste collection (capital) costs from 2023-24.

1. **Postal Votes**

Changes take effect from 2nd May 2024:

* Ban on political campaigners handling postal votes (there are certain exclusions but also strict controls)
* Limits on the number of postal votes that ca be handed in at a polling station (limit to be 5 plus their own)
* Completion of postal vote documents form (incomplete forms = postal vote rejection and the voters will receive a letter following the election telling them why).
* Handing in postal votes to the Returning officer - same restrictions as above. Any such votes must be handed in personally at the Elections Office (in Hailsham).
* Secrecy requirements apply as per requirements at Polling Stations

Anyone dealing with Postal Votes needs to check out the new requirements to ensure compliance with the Elections Act 2022.

Just to give you an idea of the scale of this - for the Police and Crime Commissioner election at the beginning of May 25,000 postal votes have been sent out.

1. **A22** **overnight roadworks**

There will be road works overnight on the A22 Hailsham bypass between Monday 22nd April and Friday 3rd May. There will be road closures and significant diversions – check it out on the ESCC website if necessary.

1. **Net Zero workshops**

Wealden District Council have partnered with Brighton University to deliver one-day courses to help businesses across the District to cut their carbon footprint and save money on energy and waste bills.

The session is to be held on 20th June at the Horsted Place Hotel near Uckfield and are open to micro, small and medium sized businesses including not for profit businesses and charities.

1. **New funding available to help community spaces and facilities**

The Wealden Community Infrastructure and Spaces Funding Programme to help partners improve local rural green spaces and community infrastructure within the district is being launched by Wealden District Council.

The council is inviting organisations such as Not for Profit organisations and town and parish councils to apply for grants between £1,000 and £20,000 for projects that will help Wealden residents improve and enhance green spaces and community assets, and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups. A total funding pot of £120K is available.

This will be a rolling programme and applications will be processed on a first come first served basis. The fund closes in autumn 2024, or sooner if all funds are allocated.

The funding programme has been made available through the government’s Rural England Prosperity Fund. The England-wide initiative is a new £110million, two-year capital fund from the Department for Environmental, Food and Rural Affairs, complementary to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund - run by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities. It will enable the council to support projects in rural areas of the district.

Further details about the grant scheme and information on how to access the application can be found at <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/information-for-businesses/economic-development-and-growth/rural-england-prosperity-fund/wealden-community-infrastructure-and-spaces-fund/>

For organisations wishing to register their interest, please contact the council via email on communitygrants@wealden.gov.uk.

**For further information please contact:**

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| Nichola WattersHead of Planning Policy, Economy & Climate ChangeWealden District CouncilEmail: Nichola.watters@wealden.gov.uk | Or | Annemarie FieldSenior Media and Communications officerWealden District CouncilTel: 07985 812076Email: Annemarie.field@wealden.gov.uk |

David Greaves

April 2024

**APPENDIX D**

**Notes for Alfriston P C concerning Flood Forum meeting 22 April 2024**

These notes cover items discussed that are of direct interest to Alfriston.

1. The EA representative stated that the winter period of 6 months from October to March 2023/2024 had the second highest rainfall total since records began, beaten only by 2000, which helps explain why the flooding was so severe.
2. There was discussion about the function of Milton Lock, and in particular its role in providing fresh water to the freshwater stream for the SSSI South of Litlington, and concern over the perceived flood limitation role of the Lock. It was clear that when the river floods the fields to the East, brackish water entered the freshwater stream. At other times springs along the East side of the river contributed significantly to the water in the freshwater stream, and the contribution from the river was perhaps not necessarily essential.
3. It was agreed that the on-going limited shingle removal programme for the river mouth continues to keep the river flowing and tidal and has functioned well through the recent heavy rains.
4. The river bank works from the White Bridge to Deans Place have clearly been delayed by the weather, the progress to the next stages of the work will take place later this year if conditions allow. The granted EA licence was for 3 years so even if the work cannot be done this year permission has been granted to allow the work next year. The only outstanding licence that will again be required is from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) who are a UK Government body.
5. Now that the water levels have fallen Wealden District Council are shortly going to check/clear/repair the drainage pipes etc at the Willows car park, work which was scheduled for last October but stopped by flooding.
6. It was agreed that we should try and get a raised area of hard-standing where the EA pump stands in the Willows Car Park. An approach to WDC for this is needed (from Alfriston PC?) and it was suggested that the recent community help fund should be approached for funds for this work.

Notes written by John Hurwood for APC

23 April 2024

**APPENDIX E**

Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Twinning Association

The Annual General Meeting was very well attended, with more people than we have ever had before. All committee members were happy to stand for another year, and with no other candidates, it was agreed the committee would continue to work as last year. Reports were given by the officers, along with information about the plans for the official visit in June of our friends from Veules-les-Roses. We were delighted to welcome even more new members to the AGM, and a call for more hosts for the official visit was quickly answered with several generous offers of accommodation.

If you are reading this before the end of April, don't forget the

Big Fat Quiz

Friday 26th April 2024

6:30 pm onwards

The Old Chapel Centre, Alfriston.

£1 per person entry, and Non-members welcome.

RAFFLE

Bring your own snacks and soft drinks

Beer & wine available

And in May we have a

Social Seafront Stroll

Tuesday 14th May 2024

 Meet at 10 am

Buckle Car Park, Seaford

Join us for an easy stroll and a chat, with an option to find a coffee afterwards.

We have members in a wide area of the Cuckmere Valley, Alfriston and Seaford.

New members are always welcome, and there is no need to speak French, or to have a huge house- just come along and say hello!

**Wendy Little**

**APPENDIX F**

**From:** Jones, Holly, National Trust**Sent:** Friday, April 19, 2024 2:44 PM
**To:** clerk@alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk
**Subject:** Parish council meeting report

Hi Suzanna

Hope well.  Here is the Clergy House report for the next parish council meeting.

With our season well under way and even with the weather being rather blustery we have been busy welcoming visitors from all over the world and sharing some of the fascinating stories about the Clergy House.

We have lots of exciting events taking place in May including a Dawn chorus event on Thursday 2nd May 5.30am to 8am where you can sit in the garden watching the sun rise over the Cuckmere Valley listening to the magical dawn chorus.   We will be joined by one of our knowledgeable Rangers who will be on hand to explain about all the birds that we hear.

On the 15th May  we  will be supporting Mental Health Awareness Week by offering a sensory friendly visit day.  A chance to explore the property in peace and quiet or simply sit in the garden and soak up the atmosphere or try out our sensory touch trail around the house and the garden.  Places are limited so booking is essential.  To find out more call 01323 871961 or visit our website <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/sussex/alfriston-clergy-house>

Thanks

Holly