

**MINUTES OF SELMESTON PARISH MEETING
ALCISTON & SELMESTON VILLAGE HALL – Wednesday 24th May 2023**

Present: David Quysner (Chairman) (“DQ”); Paul Birch; Scott Brenman; Colin Buckthorp; Thea Buckthorp; Nancy Davey; Emma Drew; Margaret Hughes; Lewis Lewis-Grey; Stephanie Lewis-Grey; Jane Jellings; Jill Muggleton; Simon Muggleton (“SM”); Ruth Nares; Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann; Hilary Pogge von Strandmann; Graham Shaw; Helen Shaw; Valerie Shaw; Megan Smith; Bryan Stevens; Hilary Stewart; Andrew Thomas; Mairi Thomas; Margaret Wilmott; Nick Bennett (“NB”)(ESCC); Alison Wilson (“AW”) (Wealden)

DQ welcomed NB and AW and thanked them for giving their time to be present for our meeting. This was the first meeting for AW, who was recently elected to serve as District Councillor for the Arlington Ward as a member of the Green Party.

SPM/2023/01 Apologies: Maria Caulfield MP; Finn Curry; Laura Francis; Colin Horswell; Margaret Weller; Michael Weller; Elliot Vaughn

SPM/2023/02 Minutes of the meeting held on 9th November 2022 had been circulated by email and posted on the website. They were duly approved and signed by the Chairman.

SPM/2023/03 Matters arising:

- a. The Garage.** DQ had recently met the owners and management of the garage and he had circulated a note of that meeting. He said that plans to redevelop the site were likely to be put forward and that we had been promised advance sight of any proposals. The garage owners were keen to have the support of the Parish and, as a gesture of goodwill, had agreed to replace the fence behind the War Memorial. This had now been done.
- b. The Keep.** SM reported that not all the information contained in our original website had been transferred to the new version. In order to ensure that as much information as possible would be retained for posterity, key documents and a hard copy version of the original site had been deposited at The Keep, where they can be accessed on request (Accession Number: 1455).
- c. Police.** No progress had been made in getting a Sussex Police Community Support Officer (“PCSO”) to attend one of our meetings and explain their role. This matter was carried forward.

Other matters arising were dealt with on the Agenda.

SPM/2023/04 Reports from ESCC and Wealden Councillors:

NB had submitted a report in March, which had been circulated. A principal item was that ESCC has awarded a £297m seven-year contract to Balfour Beatty (replacing Costain) with responsibility for infrastructure services and the maintenance of highway assets across the county. The company will work alongside ESCC to maintain the county’s highway network and infrastructure, including roads, pavements, drainage, streetlights, traffic lights and bridges. A key focus would be on potholes.

AW had attended her first District Council meeting earlier in the day, where potholes had been one of the issues discussed. The Liberal Democrat and Green parties now control the Council and a major priority will be completion and publication of the Local Plan.

SPM /2023/05 Committee and Other Reports

a. Traffic and Roads Committee

Bryan Stevens said that the RIS3 programme is on hold for the foreseeable future. This means that plans to dual the A27 between Lewes and Polegate have been deferred.

The Committee will continue to look at “20’s Plenty” and other local traffic issues issues.

b. Planning Committee

Plans submitted by Scottish Power to develop an 80 Hectare solar farm near Claverham Manor (to which we had objected) had been rejected by Wealden.

Development proposals at Stonery Farm, which we had supported with some reservations, had been approved.

There was a current application for development at Fairfield House, to which we had no objection. We had objected to proposals relating to a telecoms mast at Stonery Farm because the developers had failed to respond adequately or in a timely manner to questions that we had raised.

c. WhatsApp Group

The introduction of a WhatsApp Group is considered to have been a great success and Jane Jellings was thanked for setting this up. It was noted that there were some teething problems. In particular, messages often led to follow-up comments that resulted in multiple “pings” that were irritating, particularly for people who were members of several WhatsApp groups. Members were asked to consider whether follow-up messages needed to be broadcast or if they could be sent only to the originator of the initial message.

d. Village Hall Committee

Helen Shaw was pleased to report that there were new members of the Village Hall Committee. A Summer event was being organised. The “Village Hub” had so far had three successful coffee mornings.

e. Footpaths and Bridleways

Andrew Thomas said that there were a number of new signposts and that stiles had been repaired at Ludlay and on to Langtye Lane. Particular thanks were due to Stonery Farm for maintaining their section of the bridle path.

f. Tree Warden

We do not currently have a tree warden. DQ was aware of some interest in taking on this role and would ask his successor to follow up.

g. Treasurer’s Report

The year to 31 March 2023 began with a bank balance of £1,215. There was a precept of £800 for the year. Income was negligible and, after total expenditure of £410, the year-end bank balance was £1,609. These are the principal figures reported in the Accounting Statement that forms part

of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (“AGAR”) that we are obliged to complete each year.

For 2023/24 a precept of £800 has been raised. Expenditure for 2023/24 will be small. The budgeted cost of repairing the garage fence has been met by the garage and repairs to the notice board and the nearby bench have been achieved at minimal cost, for which thanks are due to Graham Shaw.

The meeting noted and approved the following documents relating to the AGAR:

Certificate of Exemption from requirements for an external audit;
Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23;
Annual Governance Statement 2022/23;
Accounting Statements 2022/23;
Notice of Public Rights and Publication of AGAR

DQ undertook to publish the above as required by the relevant legislation.

SPM/2023/06 Election of Chairman

As previously advised, DQ wished to step down as Chairman. On a motion proposed by Colin Buckthorp and seconded by Andrew Thomas, Bryan Stevens was unanimously elected to replace him. The meeting thanked DQ for his service.

SPM/2023/07

There was no other business. The next meeting will be held in November at a date to be set by the new Chairman.