

**MINUTES OF SELMESTON PARISH MEETING
ALCISTON & SELMESTON VILLAGE HALL – WEDNESDAY 22ND NOVEMBER 2023**

Present: Bryan Stevens (Chairman) (“BS”); Colin Buckthorp (“CB”); Thea Buckthorp; Lewis Lewis-Grey (“LL”); Ruth Nares; Graham Shaw; Helen Shaw (“HS”); Valerie Shaw; Jeremy Shaw; Andrew Thomas (“AT”); Margaret Wilmott; Laura Francis; Chris Harris (“CH”).

In attendance: Nick Bennett (ESCC) (“NB”); Alison Wilson (WDC) (“AW”); Richie Davidson (PCSO) (“RD”)

1. **Apologies:** Finn Curry; Mairi Thomas; Matthew Jellings; Janie Jellings (“JJ”); Diane Lock; Brigitte Chandless; David Quysner (“DQ”); Hilary Stewart; Paul Birch; Simon Muggleton; Jill Muggleton; Laura Kenner; Paul Kenner.
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2023** had been circulated by email and posted on the website and notice board. They were duly approved and signed by the Chairman.
3. **Matters arising:**
 - a. **Police:** BS introduced RD as our new PCSO. RD gave a brief presentation in which he explained that PCSOs are no longer assigned to specific Wards but are generally “roving”. Resources are clearly limited and a PCSO is certainly not a phone call away. RD said that the 101 or 999 numbers are the best way to make contact.

ACTION: HS will invite RD to the Village Hub. BS to provide his contact details.

No other matters arising were reported upon.

4. **Reports from other bodies:**
 - a. **ESCC:** NB had nothing to report that had a specific bearing on our parish from a recent full meeting of Council.
 - b. **WDC:** AW reported that the draft Wealden Local Plan is to be finalised by 8 February 2024 after which it will go out to public consultation before adoption. In the meantime however we should feel free to input views and ideas direct to her.

ACTION: BS to provide AW with a copy of our 2022 Parish plan and related survey results.

- c. **MP:** No report was received from Maria Caulfield.

5. Other Reports

- a. **Transport and roads:** CH summarised committee activity as follows:
 - i. The remit of the committee principally covers the A27 and The Street but will extend to cover other roads in the parish at residents’ request.
 - ii. The status of RIS3 is being confirmed with our MP.
 - iii. Various traffic calming measures are being explored.

- iv. The installation of an “Amazon Locker” or similar is being investigated. This could reduce delivery van movements in the village for those who used it but would not replace doorstep deliveries for those who want them.
- v. Public transport: The committee has little work in this area but noted that there are limited stops at Berwick Station which is a deterrent to using trains; that the ESCC backed Flexibus scheme is now operational; and that there are limited taxi services available.
- vi. Access across the A27 to the new cycle/footpath and SDNP generally is an issue and the track to it near the Barley Mow needs improvement/maintenance.

ACTION: Points iii. and iv. are ongoing.

5. Other Reports (cont)

- b. **Planning:** CB reported that there is one new planning application (1 Old Town Cottages) to be considered shortly.
- c. **Village Hall:** HS reported that third party bookings are very buoyant since improvements to the website were made by LF who was thanked for her work. HS also reported that a circa £30k grant funding application for substantial hall improvements is in progress. If successful it will be granted on a “20% match funded” basis from village hall (not Parish) funds.
- d. **Footpaths and bridleways:** AT thanked the Winters for work in cutting back hedging from footpaths around Stonery. There was some discussion of building bridges at flooding points which AT will investigate further. A working party to clear ditches etc might be equally effective however.

ACTION: Working party to be organised?

- e. **Tree Warden:** BS to establish from DQ who is the mystery volunteer for this role.

ACTION: BS to enquire of DQ on his return.

- f. **Treasurer:** LL reported on the year to date finances, likely outturn and minimum budget requirements for 2024/25. BS explained that we are required to set a budget before considering a precept request and that whilst “unavoidable” budget expenditure may be minimal, there is merit in requesting a higher level of precept in anticipation of future expenditure on traffic related measures. He proposed a precept request of £800. This was voted on and unanimously agreed.

- 6. **AOB:** BS reported on behalf of JJ that the British Legion collection had raised £49.70 in Sterling and a yet to be evaluated sum in foreign currency. Next year JJ plans to register and run a formal Poppy sales event.

- 7. **Date of next meeting:** 29th May 2024.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30.