



## **RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY**

**ON 21<sup>ST</sup> April 2023 8pm,**

**At The Village Hall, Rodmell**

1. Councillors present: John Gillies (Chairman), Lesley Prosser (LP), Nikki Terry (NT), Sue Carroll (SC), Claire Dishington (CD) and David Smart (DS)  
There were sixty five members of the public present.

#### **2. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the first speaker.

#### **3. Jim Redwood – The work of the Monday Group**

Mr Redwood commented on the excellent numbers attending the meeting. The Monday Group had been privileged to be involved with Lenny's Path. Mr Redwood told of the history of the Monday Group. After the war the downland areas were scattered with landmines and munitions and access was very limited, and so a group was founded in 1961 by Harold Rowling with the Ditchling Footpath Association and around 50 volunteers. The group is a charity funded by donations, bequests and grants. Working every Monday rain or shine, their work is to improve and maintain rights away, erect and repair finger posts, and improve pathway surfaces to keep Rights of Way open across Sussex, their core area being Ringmer to Sayers Common. In 2022 they carried out 241 jobs in 23 parishes assisting landowners and local authorities in their duties. The group has received much recognition including Mid-Sussex Applauds and in 2023 the Kings Voluntary Service Award. In answer to a question regarding access to the bank on the River Ouse, Mr Redwood said that possibly some help could be given if the path was a right of way.

#### **4. Geraldine Hoban – The Changing Face of Healthcare in Lewes**

Ms Hoban explained that Foundry Healthcare was a single practice, Primary Healthcare Network serving 28,500 people in the Lewes and Ringmer area, with 125 staff. Ms Hoban detailed the care that was given during Covid, the systematic approach to patient records, using the red-amber-green classification according to need. Analysis of data showed that Foundry complex needs patients have good outcomes compared to other PCN's. The Foundry was continuing to consult with users and act on their feedback. One example is the release of appointments later in the day not just early morning. Ms Hoban further explained the challenges with existing buildings and the problems throughout the NHS of recruiting staff.

Answers to questions from the floor:

- Although interesting to hear about the categories, those in the green category need to have easier access to appointments. Ms Hoban explained the percentage of appointments allocated to each classification.
- Attention was drawn to the NHS app, it was felt The Foundry does not make enough use of this. Ms Hoban said that the Foundry would promote digital access, Digital Ambassadors can help patients access information provided.
- Greater communication is required between primary and secondary care providers, this is a problem throughout the NHS.
- Ms Hoban was asked to feedback to doctors at The Foundry that excellent care had been received.

## **5. Nathaniel Hepburn – Plans for the village school**

Mr Hepburn is the Chief Executive of the Charleston Trust and Director and Chief Executive of Charleston. Mr Hepburn told the meeting of Kim Jones, the new owner of the school, and his lifelong passion for the Bloomsbury Group. Kim, a designer with Fendi and Dior, has an extraordinary collection of Bloomsbury art and an extensive library of Bloomsbury first editions, and very much wants the library to come back to the area, and encourage scholars to share in the remarkable collection. Mr Hepburn said that Charleston is working with Lewes District Council to take over Southover House and turn the building into a major cultural centre. There were conversations with the National Trust on how to improve the visitor experience, but it will take time to explore the partnership. There would be conversations with the community, not just the National Trust, South Downs National Park, Lewes District Council as well as transport opportunities with Southern Rail and various cycle path providers. The plans would take some time to materialise, but Kim has a deep commitment and will look after the school building during this time. Answers to questions from the floor:

- When asked about parking, Mr Hepburn explained that parking problems in the village were clearly understood, linking cycle routes, public transport providers and a shuttle bus were being investigated.
- It was also understood that transport connectivity was vital.

## **6. Angus Walker – plans for the Village Hall**

Mr Walker told the meeting the committee were trying to do as much as they can on limited funds. Among the plans were improving access for those with limited ability, including work at the rear levelling access with Martens Field, and work on the outside area to provide an attractive area for a variety of uses. Fund raising events were planned for 13<sup>th</sup> May and 3<sup>rd</sup> June. The committee needs an enthusiastic group of people who want to get involved. Claire Dishington is leading on this. Answers to questions from the floor:

- When asked if the committee has a budget in mind, Mr Angus said that the large opening door onto the proposed terrace alone would cost in the region of £10,000 and although the committee had just about sufficient funds available to cover this further fund raising was required to complete the works.

## **7. Resident of the Year**

The Chairman gave a brief history of the award. The Parish Council had been unanimous as to who should receive the award for 2023.

The award was made to Mr Neville Harrison for his outstanding work on Lenny's Path and Egret's Way

**Rodmell Parish Council:** John Gillies (*Chairman*), Lesley Prosser (*Deputy Chair*), Sue Carroll, Claire Dishington,

David Smart and Nikki Terry

The Chairman explained that the current council was coming to the end of its four-year term. There would not be a need for an election, and two members of the existing council will be joined by four new councillors. John thanked his fellow Councillors, Lesley Prosser, Nikki Terry, Sue Carroll, Claire Dishington and David Smart, and introduced the new members of the council. William Meyer, who has been very supportive of Rodmell Parish Council as member of Lewes District Council for the last four years is now joining the Parish Council, as are Nicki Myers, Lindy Smart and Chrissy Toye. John will continue to work on the website which is undergoing a major upgrade.

John made a presentation to Yusuf Mehmet for his hard work on Lenny's path with gates and fencing.

William Meyer addressed the meeting to thank John for his hard work over the years, John has been an exemplary Chairman. The quality of the presentations at the meeting showed how John excels as Chairman. Mr Meyer proposed a vote of thanks to John, which was warmly agreed by the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm