



RODMELL PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held On 12th September 2023 8pm at Rodmell Village Hall

Present

Councillors: L Smart (Chair), S. Carroll (SC), William Meyer (WM), Nicki Myers (NM), Lindy Smart (LS), Chrissie Toye (CT)

Lynette Kemp (LK) Parish Clerk and one member of the public were also present

1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Dishington. There were no Declarations of Interest.

Public Questions

Agenda Item 8 Areas for natural wildlife habitats was moved on the agenda to allow Ali Walters to comment.

Potential sites were still to be identified. Ms Walters told the meeting there were two types of planting to be considered. An annual flower meadow, the flower meadow in Firle was an excellent example, flowering all through summer. The second option was a perennial mix, the results are less "showy" but once sown will grow again each year. Annual flowers would be sown in spring and perennials in autumn. The area for sowing would need to be prepared. Maintenance was minimal but this would still need to be considered. Following discussion the area around the Millenium Trees was suggested as a possible site for sowing perennials. The Dicklands was identified as a possible site for annual flowers, an area close to the hedge that wouldn't affect residents parking or children playing, hedge trimming must be considered. Residents will be consulted before any preparation or sowing takes place. This may also encourage volunteers. NM suggested that natural wildlife habitats could be included in the Parish Priority Statement. WM suggested photographs are provided of successful sites in the surrounding areas. Costs would depend on the size of the areas selected. NM would investigate sources of funding. A Parish Council contribution would be considered when costs have been calculated.

Decision: LS will meet with Ms Walters to identify sites, sizes and shapes of sowing areas, and costs. Findings will be presented at the next Council meeting on 14th November 2023.

2. Updates from County and District Councillors

No reports were received.

3. Minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 25th July 2023

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 25th July 2023, were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Chairman.

Rodmell Parish Council: Lindy Smart (*Chairman*), Sue Carroll (*Deputy Chair*), Claire Dishington, William Meyer,

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4. Planning

There were no outstanding Planning Applications to consider.

5. Rodmell Parish Priority Statement

5.1 NM, WM and SC have been working together and reviewing other Parish Councils' Priority Statements. It was considered that a "light touch" questionnaire would be the best approach. SC has put together a questionnaire, already circulated to councillors, WM said this was a sensible and robust approach for Rodmell, importantly giving residents a voice. This may help SDNP in future planning. The questionnaire would be circulated mid October with a return date of 31st October. SC was thanked for producing the questionnaire.

5.2 NM submitted a draft timetable and asked that Councillors agree the draft timetable in principle. NM felt that the process of taking part may unify residents, particularly new residents who moved into the village during Covid. Methods of distribution of the questionnaire were discussed, hard copy, on the Rodmell website and on Facebook. Posters would be put on village noticeboards. Following discussion it was agreed that the consultation event would take place after the questionnaire had been distributed. An invitation to the consultation event will be included with the questionnaire. The responses would be collated, analysed and a draft Parish Priority Statement produced, this would be discussed/agreed at the Parish Council meeting in January. A further community event would take place in the village hall to launch the report in early February. Engagement with the community would give the PPS legitimacy. The clerk will send the council header to SC. Costs involved for printing, refreshments etc would be reimbursed to councillors. LS thanked SC, NM and WM for their hardwork.

Decision: The Parish Priority Questionnaire and Timetable were agreed by all Councillors.

6. Safer C7

SC reminded Councillors that the target had now been exceeded. Pledges were now being called in. A meeting had taken place to discuss the terms of reference. Three companies had already shown a keen interest. The Safer C7 Project will be contacting affiliates, Rupert Clubb the Strategic Head of Highways, Vanessa Rowlands Chair of the SDNPA, Northease Manor School and local councillors involved in order to reach out and use networks used by highways consultants to attract the expertise required. Consultants will be asked to return the terms of reference documents by 31st October. It is then proposed to hold a meeting with all the affiliates, including Chairs of all the Parish Councils in the valley, to hear details of the shortlisted proposals, the selection will be made by the end of November. SC informed the meeting that Kingston have commissioned their own consultants and it has been written into the terms of reference documents for the Safer C7 project that the successful consultant would liaise with the consultant appointed by Kingston.

In 2008 a Local Area Transport Strategy Group carried out assessment of the C7 and the C324 in Kingston, this was a very thorough assessment and identified nearly all the issues. There were some concrete proposals about junctions etc and when a consultant is appointed they will be given the LATS document, which it is hoped will save time. LS gave details of previous speed reduction schemes, involving several parishes. **SC was thanked for her update.**

7. Benches/Seats within the Parish

LS has spoken with Chris Wettren and he agrees in principle with a bench in Mill Lane and another in The Brooks. LS will speak with him again when the sites for the benches have been identified and the size and materials have been researched. It will be necessary to obtain a licence from Mr Wettren for the Parish Council to site the benches on his land. LS will speak

Rodmell Parish Council: Lindy Smart (*Chairman*), Sue Carroll (*Deputy Chair*), Claire Dishington, William Meyer,

with Jill Goldman regarding sites and types of bench. Past problems regarding the siting of benches along the riverbank were discussed. Maintenance of benches should also be a consideration. It was suggested that local businesses could be asked to sponsor a bench.

LS to provide an update regarding sites, bench materials and costs at the next meeting.

8. Areas for natural wildlife habitats – dealt with during Public Questions.

9. Introductions of a 20mph speed restriction in Mill Lane and The Street

NM had been approached by a resident. These roads are shared spaces, used by walkers, cyclists as well as motorists and a speed limit of 30 mph seems unacceptable. As ESCC are responsible for highways it was suggested that the Parish Council write to Cllr Sarah Osborne for advice. Kingston has a 20mph speed limit and the roads identified in Rodmell are not through roads and the introduction of a 20mph speed limit would not be unreasonable. SC suggested the introduction of a 20mph speed could be added to the Parish Priority questionnaire.

WM will draft a letter to Cllr Sarah Osborne, this will be sent by the clerk.

10. Provision within the Parish of Compost Caddy Liners

CT gave details of another parish where liners were provided. CT has contacted Lewes District Council and it was confirmed that the liners could be provided free of charge. The landlord at The Abergavenny is willing to distribute to residents asking for caddy liners. This can be advertised on the website, noticeboards and Facebook page. Council **agreed** this was an excellent idea. **CT will report further at the next meeting.**

11. Maintenance Reviews

11.1 Defibrillator Report

CT confirmed that photos of the defibrillator battery condition are sent to the clerk for filing on a monthly basis. Updates have been made to The Circuit portal. The pub staff have had first aid training and can use the defibrillator. Training would be possible for councillors, village hall committee etc.

CT will investigate training, including costs, and report back to the next meeting.

11.2 General Village Maintenance.

SC asked for an update on the overgrown hedge on the verge on the C7 leading up to The Abergavenny. The clerk informed members that the overgrown hedge had been reported on 31st July and she had asked for an update on 11th September. A steward from East Sussex Highways carried out a site inspection but no further action has been taken. The procedure for reporting the issue with the hedge was explained to councillors. Other issues were identified regarding road signs, these have been notified to ESH. The Parish Council requested and paid for extra cutting of the verges, but the verges still need attention.

LS will write to Cllr Sarah Osborne to highlight concerns that the defects reported have not been rectified.

11.3 Drainage in The Street and Mill Lane

CT explained the procedure for reporting drainage issues to East Sussex Highways, CT has reported the problems in Mill Lane. It was noted that a steward has attended and identified six blocked drains, his visit was approximately a week ago. No work has so far been carried out to unblock the drains. NM reported that the drains in Mill Lane had caused concern for a long time, and, although the drain vacuum lorries had attended the problem had not been solved. It was suggested that councillors report problems in other areas of the village.

CT will forward the case numbers to the clerk. CT will monitor the situation.

11.4 Noticeboard/Parish Communications

The parish noticeboards are often full, parish council documents take priority, and it was recognised that the noticeboards are quite small. Council minutes are a factual record of decisions taken and it has been suggested that a Parish Council newsletter, perhaps quarterly, would provide more information. It was also suggested that each councillor would write a section on their areas of responsibility. It was suggested that a newsletter should include other information about the village. Methods of distribution were discussed, it was acknowledged that not all residents use email/internet. SC suggested that a separate leaflet could be distributed with the Parish Priority Questionnaire asking for the preferred method of receiving Parish Council communications. It was generally felt a newsletter may be a good idea but needed further consideration. LS will create a draft newsletter for further discussion.

Deferred until the next meeting

12. Clerk's and Councillors' reports on progress on any items from the last meeting not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

SC reported that the fingerpost previously reported as missing has now been replaced. LS will check that the replaced fingerpost is the correct one.

NM reminded councillors of the invitation from Ovesco to Town and Parish Councils to a "drop-in" event on 13th September from 6 – 8pm at Lewes House. There would be an opportunity to be shown around the Climate Hub and Ovesco Energy Room.

13. Finance Report

13.1 To authorise payments on the schedule circulated.

Following questions relating to mowing the playground it was agreed that the parish council would invite tenders at the end of this mowing season.

The clerk answered questions relating to the payments to Business Stream and Castle Water, these being waste water services and water supply to The Pavilion. The earmarked funds were explained and that the additional sum for the Village Illustrative Map would be from council reserves.

The schedule of payments was approved as follows:

39 ESALC	Councillor training	£	96.00
40 Emerald Services	Mowing-playground	£	100.00
41 HMRC	Tax/NI	£	29.20
42 Team4	Payroll services	£	12.00
43 L Kemp	Clerk Salary August	£	350.93
44 L Kemp	Expenses 50%phone/50%printing	£	10.00
EDF	Electricity	£	47.00
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45 J Brown	3 x grass cutting The Dicklands	£	90.00
46 New Leaf Tree surgery	Treework at The Dicklands	£	220.00
47 Emerald Services	Mowing-playground	£	100.00
48 Team4	Payroll services	£	12.00
49 Joe Grace	Cleaning-Pavilion	£	15.00
50 The Safer C7 Project	Contribution	£	3,000.00
51 Countryman's	Mowing The Dicklands	£	66.00
52 Pyrotec	Fire safety	£	224.88
53 Castle Water	Water supply The Pavilion	£	91.91
54 Business Stream	Waste Water	£	136.64
		£	4,648.56

13.2 The bank reconciliations were approved

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13.3 Playing Field/Pavilion hire agreement Following discussions relating to the Booking form it was agreed that:

LS to investigate lettings and charges and report back to Council.

14. Website and Council Emails

No further problems with emails were reported. Following discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council should have direct access to the website for editing purposes.

LS and the clerk will arrange a meeting with John Gillies.

15. Other Updates

15.1 Tree Warden (NM) The tree works at The Old Rectory have been carried out.

15.2 Countryside, agriculture, allotments, playing field (LS) The allotments are all taken and one person is on the waiting list. The playing field is looking the best it has for a long time. Councillors were told of the Ploughing Match to be held on 20th September 2023.

15.3 The Street including Egret's Way works issues CD informed LS prior to the meeting that there was nothing to report. SC has spoken with Neville Harrison of the Egret's Way Project, the contractors are making good progress and are on course to complete the work next month.

15.4 Village Hall The minutes of the committee meeting were circulated at the last council meeting. There has been an extra meeting to discuss fund raising. Attention was drawn to the Strum for Fun event on 30th September. LS explained that problems encountered regarding the tidying of the outside areas. It was anticipated that the gardening would be undertaken on Friday 15th September.

15.5 The Dicklands (CT) The treeworks have now been carried out. Another mow is required, the clerk will contact the contractor. LS will inform residents of the mowing date. The hedges will be cut in October.

15.6 Road, Paths and Transport It was noted that the steps from the car park towards the playing field have now been repaired.

15.7 Village Illustrative Map (SC) The drawing has been on display during Artwave and had received a lot of attention. Captions relating to selected buildings will be added and the drawing will be colourised, this should be completed by the next Parish Council meeting. It was agreed that the planning permission process should be started as soon as possible. NM will assist SC with this if required. Positioning of the map was discussed, NM and SC will meet to identify the most appropriate site.

15.8 SDNPA (WM) An email invitation has been sent out to Councillors to attend the SDNPA Parish Meeting, up to two councillors from each Parish Council may attend. SC has agreed to attend. It has been asked that questions are forwarded before the meeting, SC will request information regarding Planning Enforcement, it was stated in the recent newsletter that of 219 enforcement complaints only 4 had been settled. WM will be attending in this role on the SDNPA board. WM explained that although Parish Representatives are chosen by the parishes they are appointed by the Secretary of State (subject to the usual scrutiny), the appointment of five of the six parish representatives was only made official in mid August, despite the elections being completed by the end of June. WM explained challenges regarding his appointment to the Planning Committee.

15.9 POLO (SC) The next meeting will be in two weeks time. The minutes of the last meeting were circulated at the Parish Council meeting on 25th July 2023.

15.10 Signage (NM) carried forward to the next meeting.

15.11 LDALC (WM) currently there is no date for the next meeting.

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15.12 ESALC (WM) the AGM will be held on 30th November 2023.

15.13 Parking at Marten's Field (LS) there has been communication with Lewes District Councillor Stella Spiteri to ascertain ownership of the grassed area, this area is owned by Lewes District Council. Anyone has the right to walk across the area. It is still to be ascertained how many parking spaces belong to No.2. Information from the Land Registry will be required.

It was agreed that future meetings will commence at 7pm.

The next full council meeting will be held on **Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 7pm.**
Items for the agenda should be submitted to the clerk by Friday 3rd November 2023