



## DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7pm on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

<p><b>Present:</b> Cllr Graham Zacharias (GZ) – Chairman; Cllr Tony Marshall (TM); Cllr Mat Chesshire (MC); Cllr Peter Williams (PW); Cllr Sam Cox (SC); Cllr Jeremy Hunt (JH WSCC); Cllr Henry Potter (HP CDC) 5 members of the public also attended.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 1 – Apologies for Absence – JR</b></p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 2 – Chair Update</b> – GZ thanked MC for carrying out maintenance on the playground and bus shelter. MC explained that the seesaw in the playground needed some serious maintenance and he is looking at whether it can be repaired. The bus stop will be stained at a later date.</p> <p>GZ gave an update on the Village Hall, two representatives from the parish council have been appointed and several new Trustees have been recruited. All aspects of the hall are being looked, e.g. updating the hall, marketing to increase bookings, review hire rates.</p> <p>GZ gave a reminder of the CPR &amp; AED Training Session on 11<sup>th</sup> October at 5.30, there is capacity for 50 people and it will be advertised again in the October Valley Diary.</p> <p>There are 3 vacancies for Parish Councillors, it would be good to have another representative from Charlton.</p> <p>Meeting dates for 2024, it has been suggested that we change the date of our bi-monthly meetings to a Monday, the current councillors didn't have a problem with this. VN will check with JH and HP to see if this will cause a problem with them attending due to their commitments to other parishes.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 3 – Declaration of Interests/ Dispensation Requests</b> - There were no declarations of interest or dispensation requests.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 4 - Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting</b> – to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023. It was <b>Resolved that</b> that the minutes were correct, GZ signed the minutes.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 5 – County Councillor Report – Mr Jeremy Hunt, Chichester North Division – WSCC</b></p> <p><b>New Government Grant Funding for defibrillators</b></p> <p>West Sussex County Council is urging organisations including clubs and local community groups to apply for government funding that could help increase the number of potentially life-saving defibrillators across the county. Applications are now open for grants from the Department of Health and Social Care's <b>£1million Community Automated External Defibrillators Fund</b>. The fund aims to help save lives by increasing the number of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in community spaces, where they are most needed. These include rural areas, places with high footfall and areas where there are vulnerable people. WSCC also supports and welcomes the initiative by central government to ensure all state-funded schools have at least one defibrillator, and highlighted they could be located at or near school gates to be accessible to the general public too. Vital to helping someone who is in cardiac arrest survive, a defibrillator needs to be found as quickly as possible. For every minute it takes for the defibrillator to reach someone and deliver a shock, their chances of survival are lower. We are therefore urging organisations,</p>	

including all schools, to register their defibrillators on [The Circuit](#), the national defibrillator network available to the emergency services, so they can locate the nearest AED and signpost to it if needed in an emergency.

### **Guidance for businesses and business owners ahead of fire safety legislation change**

I'm sure you are aware of the new fire safety legislation that comes into effect from 1st October, which includes new duties for businesses and buildings owners, including those responsible for Village Halls. However, I thought I would just reference this guidance in case you weren't aware and, as it also applies to residential properties that are let out, I thought your residents might be interested to see this latest information we have issued.

Changes to this legislation have been introduced through the Building Safety Act 2022, and represent the next phase of the Government's fire safety reform programme.

Just in case you are not familiar with the changes under the legislation, they include:

- Responsible persons will need to record both fire risk assessments and fire safety arrangements in full, regardless of the size or purpose of the business or premises
- Enhanced requirements for cooperation and coordination between responsible persons in premises where more than one is present
- Provision of information to residents setting out the risks from fire within their building and the fire safety measures provided to keep them safe (Residential buildings)

To help businesses and property owners prepare for the legislation WSFRS will be holding some free online Q&A sessions to explain the new legislation and answer any questions. To attend one of the sessions please book using the links below:

- [Monday 18 September, 1pm – 1.30pm](#)
- [Wednesday 20 September 5.15pm - 5.45pm](#)

You can read more about the changes on [WSFRS's website](#).

### **Performance and Finance Scrutiny Meeting - 7th September**

The Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee met last week to scrutinise the following papers:

- *End of June 2023 (Quarter 1) Quarterly Performance and Resources Report* - A report by the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Support Services setting out the corporate performance, finance, workforce, risk and capital programme positions as at the end of June 2023.
- [Update on Council Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) - A report by the Director of Finance and Support Services setting out the planning process for updating the Council Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy to support business and financial planning over the next five years.

As usual this meeting was webcast and a recording of the meeting is now available on our website. For those interested in understanding the many services the County Council provides - and the challenges we face - the full Q1 PRR report and the update report on our Council Plan and our MTFS are available at: <https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=165&MId=3412&Ver=4>

### **A new multi-million-pound state-of-the-art fire training centre and fire station opens in Horsham.**

This brand new, state of the art fire station, which became operational in July is the first of its type in the county. This purpose-built training centre and fire station represents significant investment from the

county council, and the site has been designed to keep firefighters safe and prepared for incidents of any scale for many decades to come. Making the best use of resources is a key priority within our [Council Plan \(link\)](#), and this investment provides the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service with the best possible facilities to help keep our residents as safe as possible.

The training centre has also been designed to support the county council's aims to become carbon neutral with features including:

- a live fire training facility that emits smoke back into the environment as clean air
- solar panels and electric vehicle charging points
- air source heat pumps that provide heating.

The new centre, [Named Platinum House \(link\)](#) has completely modernised the way in which we train our existing and future fighters. It's enabled us to simulate more than 50 different emergency situations, so our firefighters can prepare and train to respond to a greater range of scenarios without having to travel outside West Sussex. The facilities have been built with a core focus on health, safety and wellbeing, and these requirements mean the site will be fit-for-purpose for future generations of firefighters.

#### **Introducing "Book-a-bus" - the new flexible transport option for rural areas in West Sussex.**

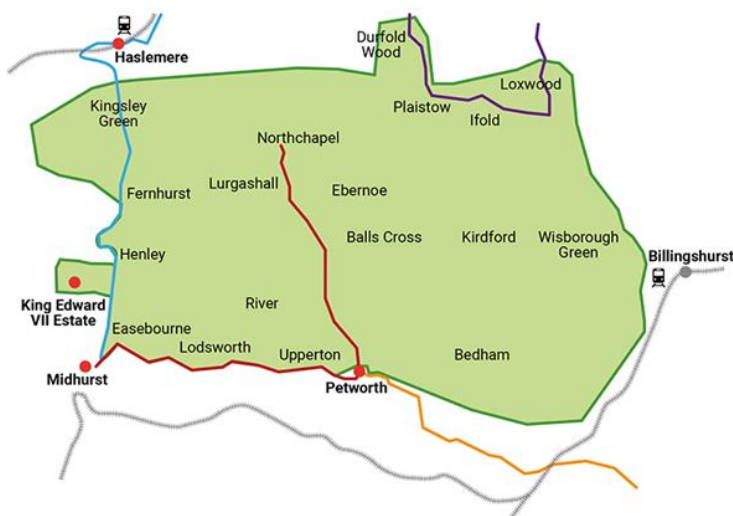
Travelling around parts of the county is now easier following the introduction of "Book-a-Bus", a new flexible and on-demand bus service recently launched by West Sussex County Council. "Book-a-Bus" now serves the rural areas between Chichester to Petworth and North Petworth - areas that previously had limited or no traditional bus services available. The service operates within set zones and offers to pick-up passengers in convenient locations when they need it, all for the same price as a standard bus fare. Fares are currently capped at £2 per trip until October 2023, thereafter £2.50 per trip until November 2024. With no conventional timetable or routes, the service operates on bookings received via the "Ride Pingo" app or by phone. Drop-off points with onward connections to travel by bus or train are also included within the service zone to ensure ease of onward travel.

*Introducing Zone 1: The "99 Semi Flex" and "99 Flex"*



Operated by Compass Travel, this zone serves the rural area between Chichester and Petworth. There are two types of service available to passengers: the “99 Flex” is fully on-demand, while the existing “99 Semi Flex” service incorporates some fixed stops, can deviate within pre-defined areas and can be booked seven days in advance. I note that there is one designated stop in Westhampnett (for details follow the link below)

*Introducing Zone 2: The “98 Flex”*



The second zone introduced under the “Book-a-Bus” service is the “98 Flex”, which covers the rural area to the north of Petworth. Operated by Community Transport Sussex, the “98 Flex” is an on-demand service that has no fixed timetable or route. The “Book-a-Bus” service is part of our [Bus Service Improvement](#)

**Plan**, a county council initiative, following a successful bid to the Department of Transport (DFT), which secured £17.4 million from central government to boost bus travel. The new service is part of a [series of initiatives](#) to make it easier and more attractive for residents and visitors to travel by bus.

To “Book-a-Bus”, residents need to download the “Ride Pingo” app or call our call centre on 01243 858854. Bookings for the fully flexible service can be made for up to five passengers per trip, subject to availability. Anyone can use the service, anytime between 7am to 7pm, Monday to Saturday excluding Bank Holidays. For more information on “Book-a-Bus”, visit [westsussex.gov.uk/book-a-bus](https://westsussex.gov.uk/book-a-bus).

### **Local Issues.**

#### **Town Lane - Speed Limit extension.**

I have had no further update, but if I get one before tomorrow I will update you at the meeting. (*Late update: Consultation demonstrated overwhelming support and the scheme should be implemented in next 6 – 8 weeks*)

#### **The Leys Car Park**

I am delighted to see that this project has been completed. I hope the parish are pleased with the outcome.

#### **Communities Highways Project**

I had an update at the end of August saying that this project would be going out to contractor procurement in September, with construction scheduled for 2024/25. JH was surprised that the Parish Council had not been advised of the plans, he will look into why the plans have not been shared.

A member of the public asked if WSCC could do more to advertise the reduced rate bus service, JH agreed to look at what advertising has been carried out. The Weald & Downland Museum offer half price tickets if visitors travel by bus, this is not widely known.

JH advised that the new constituency boundaries will come into effect from mid October. Gillian Keegan will remain our MP until the next election. For the next general election we will be voting for Arun and SDNP candidates. All services will remain with CDC and WSCC.

JH asked for feedback from the meeting about flooding on Charlton Road, attended by Goodwood and WSCC Highways. VN gave an update, there were lengthy discussions, below is a report that I received from Goodwood following the meeting.

#### **Creation of the River Lavant Cluster**

Goodwood are leading early conversations to establish a group whose collective objective will be the management and health of the River Lavant, including flood mitigation.

This group may include, but is not limited to, the Goodwood Estate, West Dean Estate, local landowners and farmers who are in the catchment area of the river, the Environment Agency, Southern Water, Chichester District Council, Natural England, local wildlife trusts, and the National Park.

The group will focus on collaborative working at a river catchment scale, delivering a range of environmental, social and economic benefits and protecting our precious water environments for the benefit of us all.

#### **Water Meadow**

Goodwood are investigating nature-based solutions to flood mitigation in the catchment area of the river.

We are looking at reinstating the water meadow which runs adjacent to Charlton Road between the villages of Singleton and Charlton to reduce the flood risk. This Autumn the field has been sown with an organic flood plain seed mix which will improve the quality of the grassland. We are investigating other species which may help mitigate flooding through slowing the flow of water through the river system,

improving soil integrity and reducing run-off. This project is in the early stages and we will provide an update in the coming months.

Goodwood have cleared the river and have agreed to clear it again before winter sets in. There was a discussion with the WSCC Highways representative about the drainage on the road. It was suggested that the road alongside the river sloped towards the school thus causing the overspill from the river to flow towards the school, however, Highways didn't agree with this and didn't feel there was a problem. Another concern from Highways was that the hedging appeared to be collapsing and could compromise the highway. There were discussions about this and it would appear that the problem is that the soil has been washed away from the roots and therefore the hedge was unstable and there was little that could be done about this. It was also pointed out the flood water was possibly contaminated and therefore unsafe for school children to wade in, given that the river has warnings from the EA that humans or dogs should not enter the river. JH suggested that we could try and get the Environment Agency to meet with the PC, to understand their thoughts and solutions.

**Agenda Item 6 - District Councillor Report – Mr Henry Potter, Goodwood Ward**

Further to my comment at July's meeting, the Council has published a Supplementary Planning Document for a six week public consultation period beginning on 23rd September. This document gives details of the need for more funding towards mitigating the impact of future development on the unacceptable traffic issues with the A 27. In a nutshell, the SPD published in 2016 to support the 2014-29 Local Plan, which is now nearing the end of a review, raised sufficient funding to improve the Portfield roundabout and the removal of Oving traffic lights, these have been completed at a cost of £11.17 million from Developer contributions. However the planned improvements to the Fishbourne, Stockbridge, Wyke and the Bognor roundabouts, which have been agreed with National Highways, have a estimated cost of between £86,14 and £126.11 MILLION!! Subsequently the new charge to developers of new housing which will further impact on the A27 congestion is suggested at £3,049 per bedroom. 3 bedroom home will attract a fee of £9,147. experience tells me that developers won't pay this and reduce their profits, it will simply be added to the selling price of the house, just as Community Infrastructure Levy did. I dare say there will be much resentment to come from the building industry on this matter during the consultation period.

Another decision made by the Cabinet is the implementation of the Public Spaces Protection Order-Dog Control 2023 which is such a lengthy document it is best read on the CDC website. It includes fouling of land by dogs, dogs on leads by direction and the exclusion of dogs from "Restricted Areas" all detailed in attached maps. Many of the areas highlighted are CDC owned or managed, others are foreshore areas but there are no areas included within The Goodwood Ward Parishes. This doesn't mean though, that the new directives don't apply, generally they must be adhered to, everywhere.

Finally, to continue with the "Trees outside Woodlands" project the Council will agree to accept Government funding of £120,000 per year 23/24 and again in 24/25. This will enable anyone to apply for more tree saplings to plant as we did last year. Those that were planted in various places throughout some Parishes seem to be doing quite well with about a 40% failure rate. This is fairly consistent with other Authorities which took part in the scheme and I hope we can repeat this in January and February next year. I have actually raised at least six saplings from seeds in my garden this year and look forward to moving them out as well in the spring.

The latest update from the SDNPA regarding the progress of the Centurion Way extension isn't very encouraging I'm afraid, there are still a number of hurdles to be overcome not least of which is future funding for the required works. I do know that the proposed deviation through the woods on Cucumber Farm is of great concern and yet to be resolved. Any further information from the new CDC representative on the Park membership is lacking. The latest update we've seen was as a result of my request for it.

<p>HP stated that the plan to widen the path along the A286 will never happen. There was a discussion about other options and the situation of the bats in the West Dean tunnel. A MOP suggested that the Parish Council should be involved in the decisions that could affect the Singleton section. GZ pointed out that once the new planning application is submitted the Parish Council will have the opportunity to comment. As yet we have not received any notification of a planning application.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 7 – Public Open Forum</b> – An MOP suggested that we should make contact with The Times Newspaper about the pumping of sewage into the River Lavant, they are running a Clean Water Campaign. TM explained about his communications with Southern Water and in the last communication he requested an update yet again and indicated that if no response was received we would contact the BBC. No response has been received to date. GZ felt that if a satisfactory response is not received, the matter should be escalated and The Times Newspaper should be contacted. Another MOP raised concerns about speeding through Singleton and especially past the school. TM explained that during a meeting with WSCC about the Community Highways Scheme it was indicated that it should be possible to have a 20mph speed limit through the village. During a telephone conversation with Highways TM asked about the speed strips that were installed on the sharp bend near Corner Cottage, as to whether that meant we would be getting 20mph through the village and he was told yes. However, we are awaiting feedback as to what is included in the CHS. JH is going to chase the team for feedback. If the 20mph is not included TM will then apply for a TRO. SC suggested that a 20mph road sign would probably not make much difference, especially to the cars attending Goodwood events, as there would not be any police enforcement. He suggested that other traffic calming measures might be more successful. MC explained about the traffic calming outside his school and felt that there is very little that schools can do about getting drivers to observe the speed limit. An MOP mentioned that a Friends Meeting will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> September where there will be Community Vehicle representatives from 3 big local oil companies who have court cases pending, IGas will also be discussed.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 8 – Council Matters</b>  <b>Policies</b> – GZ and VN are reviewing all 19 policies to establish whether all of them are appropriate for a small parish council. VN has consulted with NALC and other clerks and once the relevant policies have been reviewed/amended they will be circulated to all councillors for approval, this will be then agreed and minuted at the November meeting.  <b>Local Plan/Parish Priorities Statement</b> – All parishes have been invited to submit a Parish Priorities Statement (PPS) by the 20<sup>th</sup> October. SC feels strongly that we should submit a statement and is willing to put this together to be approved by all councillors. If we do not respond an area for housing development could be added to the local plan and he feels that we should be representing our parish views. Our Parish Design Statement is being developed by TM and MC, a representative from the SDNP submitted further comments in August which will be reviewed and a revised version will be re-submitted. SC felt that sections of this document can contribute to the PPS. In a previous SDNP plan no suitable areas for housing development were identified, however, a MOP raised the old rectory site owned by Dignity, which has recently closed and suggested we should be investigating whether there are any long term plans for this site.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 9 - Village Matters</b>  <b>Village Clean Up/Bulbs</b> – There was a discussion about the scope of the clearing up of weeds etc., following some adverse comments from a couple of residents during the last clean up. It was felt that clearing weeds on paths/roadside was acceptable as long as it was done with consideration to wildlife and it was pedestrian friendly. SC will circulate a date for the next Clean Up, which will be in October/November. With regard to the pond, it is accepted that it is necessary to leave about a third of the weed and what is removed should be left on the bank to drain for a few days. As the pond is not dry it may not be able to be incorporated into the next clean up.  <b>Maintenance</b> – MC reported that the fencing in the playground has been repaired and that wire netting would be installed around the bottom of the posts to try and prevent them from deteriorating further from strimming. The see saw needs some serious work carried out, MC intends to investigate replacing the</p>	

<p>wooden platform and screws, if this is not successful it may need to be replaced. Rust treatment is required on the metal structures. This work will be completed in the next few weeks.</p> <p><b>Parking Project/Rees Jeffreys Funding Criteria</b> – The full grant of £21,000 has been received, however, we need to install a bike rack and they have asked that we endeavour to install the EV chargers by the end of March 2024. SC is exploring the EV Chargers with regard to positioning of them and is liaising with WSCC about their Connected Kerb Sussex wide scheme, regarding installation. Awaiting feedback from the WSCC contact. SC felt that the March deadline may be difficult to meet. VN will keep Rees Jeffreys informed of progress. With regard to payment of the bike rack, we are waiting to hear if we have been successful with our grant application for CIL money, which includes an amount for a bike rack. It may be necessary for the Parish Council to pay for the bike rack prior to hopefully receiving the grant from the SDNP. A MOP suggested we contact SDNP Trust to ask if they would provide the money for a bike rack, as they provided the West Dean Bike Rack. SDNP have installed a number of wooden bike posts in West Dean by the Centurion Way which look very rural. VN will investigate.</p> <p><b>Charlton Road Flooding</b> – Covered in Agenda Item 5.</p> <p><b>TRO – 20mph outside school</b> – Covered in Agenda Item 7.</p> <p><b>River Lavant</b> –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>Pollution</b> – An MOP has reported what looks like untreated sewage under the bridge by Cowper Lodge. TM would investigate and report back. It was agreed that VN would contact the Environment Agency to request them to take samples from the river.</li> <li>b) <b>Riparian Responsibilities</b> – GZ reported that the river weed behind the houses by the cricket pitch are worst than any previous year. Is there any support/help available to clear the weed? TM suggested contacting the Environment Agency who have a remote-controlled machine that they use to clear the river bed, do they hire it out?</li> </ul> <p><b>Vulnerable’s List</b> – GZ reported that VN has come up with a plan to contact all the households in Singleton and Charlton to ask if they would like to be contacted to check if they require assistance if there was an emergency e.g., flooding, Covid etc. An MOP who has experience with gathering sensitive information suggested that we need to document guidelines for this exercise and publicise in the Valley Diary that the Parish Council will be carrying out this exercise, also, the list needs to be kept in a secure place so that it can’t be accessed by individuals that could use it in the wrong way. It is important not to label people, make it clear that we are offering community support. It was agreed to give some more thought to this project before proceeding.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 12 – Finance</b></p> <p>Useable Funds in Current Account (12/09/23) £2,990.22</p> <p>Accessibility Project Reserves held in Current Account - £37,158.54</p> <p><b>Total in Current Account – £ 40,149.26</b></p> <p>Balance in Savings Account – £7,028.55</p> <p><b>Funds Received since 19/07/23</b></p> <p>Maverick Corporation Donation - £100</p> <p>VAT Refund - £7,459.63</p> <p>Rees Jeffreys - £21,000</p> <p>Private Donation for Playground - £25.00</p> <p>VN reported that the Annual Audit figures have been approved.</p> <p>VN asked for a vote on what the donation from the Maverick Corporation should be allocated to and it was unanimously agreed that it would be put towards the bike rack.</p> <p>It was also agreed that the Landbuild invoice for the Leys parking project should be paid, with the VAT being paid using the precept and them immediately claimed back.</p>	
<p><b>Agenda Item 13 – Planning</b></p> <p>Reports have been circulated, posted on the notice boards and website.</p>	
<p><b>AOB</b> – A member of the public asked a question as to how members of the Village Hall Committee are voted for. GZ reported that there was a new constitution document that was about to be registered with the Charity Commission that outlines the voting process.</p>	



<b>Meeting Closed – 21.15</b>	
<b>Confirmed that these minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting.</b> Signed: GRAHAM ZACHARIAS Name & Position: CHAIRMAN Date:	