

FAIRLIGHT PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 28th February 2023 at Fairlight Village Hall at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors – Ms I Horsley (Chair), Mr S Stewart, Miss C Sharpe, Mr D Shortman, Mr D Greenup, Ms L Cooke, Mr R Turnbull, Mr G Smith

County and District Councillors – Mr A Mier and Mr C Maynard
Proper Officer/RFO - Mrs P Collins

ACTION

2117222302 **Apologies for absence** (Including resolutions to accept reason for absence by Councillors)

4

Apologies received from Councillors - Ms A Hohenkerk
Resolved to accept the reasons for absence

23025 **Chairman's Report** (Civility and respect, code of conduct, public participation etc)
Councillor Horsley re-iterated details of the civility and respect pledge, the code of conduct and public participation. Other items included were reminders in respect of the May Parish and Town Council Elections, RDC Debate Not Hate campaign and the RDC Coronation grants.

23026 **Code of Conduct and Disclosure of Interests**
(a) To receive any disclosures by members, of personal or prejudicial interest in matters on the agenda
None

23027 **Public questions in respect of items on the agenda**
None

23028 **County and District Councillors reports (See below)**
To note the pre-election period starts on Wednesday 24th March and runs to Thursday 4th May.
Both County and District Councillors had submitted a report prior to this meeting. Please see reports at the end of the minutes.

23029 **Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 24th January 2023**
The minutes were distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting and made available to the Public at the meeting.
Resolved to approve and the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

23030 **Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda**
None

23031 Financial Matters

- (a) To consider and approve schedule of payments and receipts for February 2023
Resolved to approve the payments for February 2023.
- (b) To consider and sign the monthly bank reconciliations.
Resolved to note and sign the bank reconciliations as correct.
- (c) To consider monthly budget figures (Clerk's report)
The Clerk had previously circulated the budget monitoring figures. No issues to report.

23032 Planning Committee

- (a) To receive the monthly report
Details of the planning applications, decisions and comments from the Planning Committee meetings were reported (see below).

23033 Land Management Group

- (a) To receive the monthly report
 - Cllr Smith – Wood Field and Highways
Cllr Smith reported on Wood Field and Highways. (Report below)
 - Cllr Sharpe – Fixed Assets
Nothing to report
 - Cllr Horsley – Water/drainage issues
Cllr Horsley reported on issues
- (b) To receive an update on the Southern Water Pathfinder Project (Cllrs Cooke and Horsley)
Work has commenced on the project and another meeting was held on 24th February 2023. (See report below). Marsham Brook, Pett has been added to this scheme. Several solutions are being discussed with Southern Water in respect of viability, cost etc.

23034 Community Hub Committee (Faircomm.)

- (a) To receive the monthly report (Cllr Stewart)
Cllr Stewart reported on progress to date.
- (b) To discuss and approve the following quotations: (See reports)
Quotations have been received from Pump House for the next stages of work to be carried out.
Resolved to accept the quotations from:

Waller Gray Consulting (Structural & Civil)	£3825.00
Application to connect to main drain (SW)	£291.00
Specialist Soil Investigation Testing	
Ashdown site investigation Ltd	£4408.00
Award Energy Consultants	
SBEM & BRUKL Building Control docs	£910.00
Principle Designer (Health & Safety)	
Tennyson Suite	£2924.00
East Sussex Building Regulations	
Plan	£472.92
Inspection Charge	£851.26
GRAND TOTAL	£13682.18

Proper Officer to write to Pump House to accept quotes and confirm continuation of work towards RDC's planning condition.

Poff

ACTION

23035 Finance and Administration Committee

- (a) To receive a monthly report (Cllr Horsley)
Cllr Horsley reported on this Committee (See below).

23036 Fairlight Christmas Cracker and Warm Up Fairlight events

- (a) To receive an update on the Warm Up Fairlight project
Cllr Sharpe provided an update on this project.
- (b) To discuss and approve the payment to St Andrews church for use of St Peters
Resolved to pay St Andrews Church £198 for electricity used for Nov, Dec 2022 and Jan 2023 and Feb/Mar upon receipt of an invoice. **POff**
- (c) To discuss and approve the continuation of the WUF project as a drop in café/information/hub with effect from 1st April 2023
A budget has been allocated in 2023/24. A café/hub is one goal of the Golden Thread/Action Plan. Grants can still be applied for this project. **POff/CS/AH**
Resolved to continue WUF as a Drop-In Social Hub (Fairlight DISH) until 31st March 2024 when it will be reviewed.

23037 Parish Council Website and Facebook

- (a) To receive a monthly report (Cllr Stewart)
Both websites and Facebook pages continue to be updated

23038 War Memorial Steering Group

- (a) To receive an update on the project (Haydon Luke)
A meeting has been held with EB. EB will continue to source alternative stones, provide new costings and designs. The receipt of donations and pledges is on-going

23039 Hastings Country Park

- (a) To receive a monthly update (Haydon Luke)
The Bale Centre is closed this week for remedial work.

23040 Parish Assembly – 29th March 2023

- (a) To launch the John Lutman award and nominate a judging panel
Resolved the judging panel to be Cllrs Smith, Shortman and Stewart

23041 Meetings/training attended

None

23042 Correspondence

All correspondence had been circulated to Councillors and was available to the Public.

- (a) ESCC Rural Verges
Resolved not to comment on this issue
- (b) ESFR The Ridge Station
A meeting by the local Labour MP has been arranged in the village hall for 11th March. Ms Sally-Ann Hart is also involved. A response will be made by the parish Council once a consultation has been launched
- (c) Hadlow Down – Highways
The Parish Council fully support Hadlow Down's campaign but would not back any legal actions.
- (d) RDC PSPO Dog Control consultation
No objections were raised against this consultation.

ACTION

23043 Information and/or Future Agenda Items

- Neighbourhood Watch Scheme
Discussions need to be had with the Pett branch

23044 Date of next meeting – Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

23045 Close of meeting

Meeting closed at 8.20 pm

Open Forum

Residents raised questions and concerns in respect of the Market Garden development and enforcement complaints, the Ridge Fire Station and the rebuild of Datcha, Clinton Way.

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: 28th March 2023

REPORTS FOR PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 28TH FEBRUARY 2023

Agenda item 8(a) - To consider and approve schedule of payments and receipts for February 2023

PAYMENTS	Date Paid	Invoice Date	Payee	Gross	Net	VAT	Details
DIRECT DEBITS							
	10/02/2023	02/02/2023	EE	24.72	20.60	4.12	Mobile phone inv V02073841720
	17/02/2023	17/02/2023	Public Works Loan Board	1236.51	1236.51	0.00	Second loan payment 2022/23
	03/02/2023	03/02/2023	Information Commissioner	35.00	35.00	0.00	ICO renewal
PAYPAL							
	02/02/2023	02/02/2023	Fasthosts	12.00	10.00	2.00	Web hosting inv 71150155
	06/02/2023	06/02/2023	Fasthosts	6.94	5.78	1.16	Web hosting inv 71190579
	02/02/2023	02/02/2023	Zoom	14.39	11.99	2.40	Zoom meetings INV187006927
	25/01/2023	25/01/2023	Netflix	4.99	4.16	0.83	Netflix 25/01/23 -24/02/23
	22/02/2023	22/02/2023	Viking	170.89	142.41	28.48	Stationery inv 2081836
	25/02/2023	25/02/2023	Netflix	4.99	4.16	0.83	Netflix 25/02/23 -24/03/23
CHEQUES							
	28/02/2023	28/02/2023	Pauline Collins	*****	*****	*****	Salary - February 2023
	28/02/2023	28/02/2023	Pauline Collins				Expenses - £647.01
		30/01/2023		6.25	6.25	0.00	Post Office - Rolls and Milk WUF supplies
		13/02/2023		7.65	7.65	0.00	Post Office - Rolls and Milk WUF supplies
		07/02/2023		15.83	15.83	0.00	Aldi - WUF supplies
		15/02/2023		506.75	423.95	82.80	Eco Green Communitis - Dog waste bags
		21/02/2023		84.59	84.59	0.00	Tesco - Supplies for Parish Assembly/WUF
		22/02/2023		21.99	18.33	3.66	Tesco - Mobile phone 1st month rental
		23/02/2023		3.95	3.95	0.00	Ebay - case for new phone
	28/02/2023	31/01/2023	Fairlight Village Hall	52.00	52.00	0.00	Hall Hire January 2023
	28/02/2023	24/01/2023	AB Fire & Security	61.83	51.53	10.30	CCTV Monthly maintenance inv 358271
	28/02/2023	16/02/2023	Mr P Banbury	180.00	180.00	0.00	Caretaker contract - Feb 23 inv 14
	28/02/2023	28/02/2023	Activate Fairlight Youth Centre	50.00	50.00	0.00	Use of hut by HFC for January 2023
	28/02/2023	31/01/2023	M Taylor Contractors	270.00	270.00	0.00	Cutting of Channel Way verge inv 817
	28/02/2023	28/02/2023	Activate Fairlight Youth Centre	50.00	50.00	0.00	Use of hut by HFC for February 2023
	28/02/2023	08/02/2023	Sussex Rural Community Council	144.00	120.00	24.00	Subs to AiRs inv 4144
	28/02/2023	17/01/2023	MOEducation Products Ltd	824.99	687.49	137.50	Tunnelled climbing wall inv #moe-01/23-001944
	28/02/2023	21/02/2023	Wicksteed Leisure Limited	198.00	165.00	33.00	Playground inspection inv 820896
	28/02/2023	21/02/2023	AB Fire & Security	61.83	51.53	10.30	CCTV Monthly maintenance inv 358764
	28/02/2023	21/02/2023	AB Fire & Security	42.00	35.00	7.00	CCTV Remote monitoring inv 358765
	28/02/2023	21/02/2023	AB Fire & Security	-42.00	-35.00	-7.00	CCTV Remote monitoring credit note 358809
			TOTAL	6004.12	5662.74	341.38	

Agenda item 9 – Planning Committee

Planning applications

Weeks 4 to 6 - No applications

Week 7

RR/2023/152/P 6 The Close, View Point, Fairlight TN35 4AQ

Erection of a single storey side and front extension.

Following discussions, the Committee agreed the following comments:

- 1) The Parish Council have no objections to this work being carried out
- 2) Small vehicles should be used for deliveries due to the size and condition of the unadopted approach roads. Also, likewise for the size and condition of The Close which requires access for all vehicles including emergency vehicles at all times.
- 3) A construction plan should be submitted for storage of all materials and construction vehicles to be parked on site rather than on The Close.
- 4) Comments from owners of neighbouring properties should be considered.

Week 8

RR/2023/325/O Midway, Commanders Walk, Fairlight TN35 4BE

Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed replacement of existing conservatory with a new rear single storey extension.

Following discussions, the Committee agreed the following comments:

- 1) The Parish Council have no objections to this work being carried out
- 2) Comments from owners of neighbouring properties should be considered.

RR/2023/319/P 10 Heather Way, Highfield, Fairlight TN35 4BL

Remove existing small rear extension and conservation - form new enlarged single storey extension with lantern roof light. Form new porch to front and changes to windows to property.

Following discussions, the Committee agreed the following comments:

- 1) The Parish Council have no objections to this work being carried out
- 2) This property is on the edge of the Article 4 area.
- 3) The installation of a lantern roof light raised concerns in respect of light emissions in relation to light pollution. Fairlight does have dark skies which could be rated at 3/4 on the Bortle scale and would like to maintain this.
- 4) A construction plan should be submitted for storage of all materials and construction vehicles to be parked on site due to the surrounding narrow roads and access is required at all times.
- 5) Comments from owners of neighbouring properties should be considered

RR/2023/287/P 57 Battery Hill, Treetops, Fairlight TN35 4AP

Erection of lower ground rear extension & garage conversion to the house to form additional accommodation for the family. The existing roof terrace increases over extended space (reduced).

Following discussions, the Committee agreed the following comments:

- 1) The Parish Council have no objections to this work being carried out
- 2) A construction plan should be submitted for storage of all materials and construction vehicles to be parked on site rather than on Battery Hill.
- 3) The lower ground extension should be permitted solely as ancillary use for the existing dwelling and shall not be occupied by any person who is not a member of the family residing in the family dwelling. Reason: To prevent the creation of a separate residential dwelling or holiday let/air bnb which would require planning permission in its own right, and would be subject to compliance with standards for internal space, separate external amenity space and the provision of separate parking facilities.
- 4) Comments from owners of neighbouring properties should be considered.

RR/2023/274/P Whinlea, Shepherds Way, Fairlight TN35 4BB

Proposed demolition of existing garage and construction of new car port and garden store room.

Following discussions, the Committee agreed the following comments:

- 1) The Parish Council have no objections to this work being carried out
- 2) A construction plan should be submitted for storage of all materials and construction vehicles to be parked on site rather than on Shepherds Way
- 3) Comments from owners of neighbouring properties should be considered.

Market Garden Site Update

- (a) RDC Enforcement are looking into complaints received.
- (b) A new site manager has been appointed
- (c) Cllrs Horsley and Smith will visit the site to discuss issues with the Site Manager
- (d) Issues raising concerns are the large vehicles making deliveries and reversing down access roads without a buddy, damage to the road and kerbs on Smugglers Way, and the number of contractors vehicles parking on surrounding roads.

Weeks 7 and 8 planning applications and the Market Garden Update were discussed at the Planning Committee meeting prior to this meeting.

Planning Decisions

RR/2023/64/T - Mays Platt, Clinton Way, Fairlight TN35 4DL - Approved

T1 - Eucalyptus - reduce tree by 3m from the side of barn and removal of lateral. T2 - Eucalyptus - Crown reduction by 4m and lateral reduction to prevent overhang on dwelling. T3 to T9 - Firs - reduction to prevent encroachment on the dwelling.

Agenda item 10(a) - Land Management Group

- Cllr Smith – Wood Field and Highways

Highways

I have had direct complaints regarding highways issue this month. There have been complaints on Facebook regarding deliveries to the Market Garden site. Mainly the reversing of heavy lorries up Smugglers Way. These have been reported to Rother DC and the developers. This will need monitoring. I do get the sense there is growing concern from local residents. The surface of the roads (Smugglers Way, Bramble Way and Shepherds Way) is beginning to suffer. Pictures were taken last year and I will take more and monitor this. In regard to Hadlow Downs circulated letter. Fundamentally this is only a request to show support of parishes within ESCC to try and get ESCC Highways to provide better road repairs. I believe it should get our support and if necessary, I will collate evidence of failures within the Parish in regard to highways. I will give a bigger verbal report at the meeting.

I continue to report potholes etc online. But I would welcome another visit with the Highways steward to discuss long term issues.

Wood Field

Now that spring is around the corner, I will endeavour to clear field edges especially around the newly planted hedge perhaps a small working party can be arranged. Hastings Athletic FC are still using the field and I have had no major complaints. They are meant to put signage up when they are there and will have to reminded of this.

Knowle Wood

The woods are really looking so much better with the greatest of thanks to Sue Clark and her band of volunteers. She has mentioned if FPC could be supplied with some light tools and gloves for the group's use. This has been agreed in principle and I believe we have a duty to supply.

Carly's Forest School has now become well established. However, the constant traffic on the lower paths has caused some 'bogging' due to the water flow through the woods. I have yet to inspect the area but will speak to Carly to see if alternating paths can be used. It may be necessary to trench and bark the affected areas.

Swing Park

The annual inspection has taken place and there are essential repairs to be carried out from These being the replacement of the flat swing seats and some chain links. This work will need to be carried out by Wicksteed. Other points mentioned in the report are more advisory and will be addressed in due course. It is acceptable with the safety inspector to repair the slide by having a new replacement steps and platform welded in position of the corroded ones. I have tried three Steel Fabricators around Hastings without success (to smaller job I suspect). Perhaps I can get the correct sized step made to order online and then find someone to weld it in place. I will look into this as soon as possible.

Other

I am in the process of communication with all major village groups to see if there is a 'real' call for the BBQ and shed in ear marked reserves. I now believe that if there is little real need amongst the main possible users perhaps this plan should be re thought out. Perhaps we good look at some future BBQ provision within the FAIRCOMM project.

- Cllr Horsley – Water/drainage issues

I was invited to attend a meeting of the Marsham Brook Residents Association. As you may be aware that area suffered flooding on 16th January 2023. Eighteen houses were flooded with water containing sewerage. Five of these houses remain uninhabitable and will probably be for the next 6-9 months. It is ironic that the area is not on mains drainage. The sewerage probably came from the water treatment works. The Association members are looking into ways of reducing the flow of storm water over the Chick Hill Road, and trying, so far unsuccessfully to engage with Southern water. A representative of the Environment Agency was present at the meeting and details of the Pathfinder project were discussed. Although outside the boundary of Fairlight, the water that caused the flooding did in part come from the Fairlight catchment area.

Agenda item 10(b) Southern Water Pathfinder Project Meeting Held On 24th February 2023 (Cllr Horsley)

The Pathfinder Project is a collaboration between Southern Water and the residents of Fairlight and Pett Level. The project's aim is to find solutions to the foul water flooding that occurs in the lower areas of Fairlight, and Pett level.

What became apparent from reading the Pathfinder report, the meeting with Marsham Brook residents and the Pathfinder meeting, is that for this to succeed all local residents have to be engaged with it and 'buy in' to the suggestions and offers made by Southern Water.

The issues of foul water flooding appear at the lower end of Fairlight and beyond, but the problems start higher up in Fairlight and a solution would need to include that area as well. We all need to be willing to take up offers from Southern Water about measures that might help mitigate the situation.

Those present at the meeting:

Southern Water (SW)

LWLRMA committee members

Ms. Sally-Ann Hart - MP

Mr. Andrew Mier – District Councillor

Mr. Chris Saint - Pett Parish Council

Ms. Maggie Sullivan – Resident

Simon Young - National Trust representative

Ms. Issy Horsley - Fairlight Parish Council and Fairlight Preservation Trust.

The meeting was chaired by Chris Bunch LWLRMA

LWLRMA had a list of written questions and points for SW. These were not shared with the whole meeting but will be responded to by SW via email.

SW made a presentation, which demonstrated modelling for various solutions

1. Source control
2. Optimize existing infrastructure (tanks)
3. Have monitoring in place to automate some of the controls
4. Increase infrastructure

Hydraulic modelling showed that increasing the diameter of the pipes would only transfer the flooding downhill to the lower end of LWL and the area round Leather Waggon.

The sedimentation problems in the pipes especially where the gradient is small also needs to be addressed

Currently the monitors in the sewers (SLM) are in the settling in phase, so no readings are yet available.

The manhole covers in Waites field needs to be sealed before meaningful data can be obtained about flow rates and seepage into the pipes that run across the field.

SW will look at the possibility of enlarging the tanks at the top end of LWL, but this may not have much impact.

Water butts attached to most houses, which will hold back rainwater and then discharge half of their capacity (100 litres) over a number of hours is a solution which has worked elsewhere. This would require most householders in Fairlight to sign up to it this; especially those above the problem area. This project should be promoted to the residents of Fairlight in a positive and meaningful way to help to get them involved and be part of the overall outcome. If special water butts are a possible answer and SW says they will supply and fit them. This is an ongoing project so watch this space!

Agenda item 11 - Community Hub (Faircomm) Committee

Members of this Committee met with Andrew Gerken from Pump House to establish what the group should be doing next and in what order. The items below have been confirmed: -

(a) Structural and Civil Works – 3 quotes received

Company Name	Company Total	Type of Work	Amount
Waller Gray	£3825.00	Civil Structural	£1850.00 £1975.00
Adams	£7412.48	Civil Structural (Steel frame)	£1704.82 £5708.02
BdR	£5750	Civil and Structural	£5750.00

Pump House also recommend Waller Gray as they could not see why the price difference was far more from the other two quotes.

They were also asked who they suggest will be “The Principal Designer” as Waller Gray are not qualified do this. So, it will be a third party. (See below).

The Waller Gray quote includes the foul drainage applications to SWA to join the main sewer system which is not included by the other two quotes. Please note cost of the SWA application is **£291.00**

The above companies were to provide costs to supply structural and civil quotes for building control satisfaction. This will allow Pump House to produce final drawings.

(b) Ground Condition Inspections – 3 quotes received

Company Name	Company Total
Ashdown Site Investigations Limited	£4408.95
Ground and Environmental Services Limited	£3795.00
Ground and Water	£4800.00

GES are the suggested suppliers by Pump House.

Ashdown have quoted for 3 days testing whereas the other two have quoted for just 1 day.

However, knowing that soakaways do not work, it is unlikely that this test can be achieved in the one day.

Just one extra test day makes Ashdown the best price. Ashdown also say that should the test appear to be unsuccessful on the first day there is the option to abort the second 2 days at the discretion of our appointed Civil Engineer and the quotation remeasured to reflect this. This would make Ashdown cheaper.

(c) Award Energy Consultants.

For SBEM (Simplified Building Energy Model) energy rating calculation and BRUKL (Building Regulations UK Part L) documentation to satisfy building control £910.00

(d) Principal Designer – 2 quotes received

Company Name	Company Total
Tennyson Suite Limited	£2924.00
Quasur Limited	£13111.25

Tennyson are recommended by Pump House. Both BDR and Adams did not quote for the role of Principal Designer.

Pump House will produce final plans for the Building Control. This cost has already been passed by the PC.

We need all of the above reporting done to satisfy firstly the conditions set against the planning application (Pump House will deal with these) and for Building Regulations.,

Once soil testing has been done and the method of base construction has been decided we can move forward with getting the sewer pipe quoted for as well as the rest of the job.

Quotes to tender will be sent out to as many as we can find.

(e) Building Control Fees

Pump House are seeking a Building Regulation fee proposal from East Sussex Building Control Partnership;

Plan charge cost £472.92

Inspection charge £851.26

Pump House will require written confirmation to continue with the discharge of the planning conditions and with the application of East Sussex Building Control Partnership.

One small amendment was asked of Pump House regarding adding an additional junior wc in the disabled wc. This will increase the hiring capabilities of the new hub.

The cost of the completion of Pump House final drawings has already been granted by the PC. See outstanding balance on budget listing.

Recommendations by Faircomm Committee to be discussed and approved

	£
Waller Gray Consulting (Structural & Civil)	3825.00
Application to connect to main drain (SW)	291.00
Specialist Soil Investigation Testing Ashdown site investigation Ltd	4408.00
Award Energy Consultants SBEM & BRUKL Building Control docs	910.00
Principle Designer (Health & Safety) Tennyson Suite	2924.00
East Sussex Building Regulations Plan Inspection Charge	472.92 851.26
GRAND TOTAL	£13682.18

Agenda item 12 - Finance and Administration Committee

The current year’s budget is broadly on track for this stage in the year. Earmarked reserves remain the same. The Proper Officer needs a new phone to be used solely for Parish Council business. Some research has been done and Tesco has a deal which offers a new phone and a chrome book for the same monthly cost as the present contract plus 4 months free. A chrome book will enable the Proper Officer to work more efficiently and bring all documents to meetings in a digital form. The Committee agreed this proposal.

The budget for 2023/4 has been approved and the precept request has been sent to Rother DC.

Agenda item 13 - Warm Up Fairlight and its future

The Warm Up Fairlight project continues to go from strength to strength with Mondays in the Village Hall being well attended by our regulars as well as attracting newcomers each week.

I have reported recently that although the project started as a way to alleviate fuel and food poverty, we came to realise that social isolation was as much, if not more of a problem for Fairlight residents.

The Warm Up Fairlight project, which is due to come to conclude at the end of March seems to have naturally morphed itself into fulfilling one of the targets in our Golden Thread, that is to set up a community cafe.

We have had, and are still getting a lot of support from local businesses and residents alike. We’ve had donations from: -

- Jempsons
- Guestling Hall Hotel
- Tesco
- Frankonia Bakery
- Charles & Co
- Fairlight Post Office/Store
- Various residents and Village groups

At the moment, WUF displays a range of helpful information and contacts. This information includes advice on heating, benefits, Priority Registers, Fire Safety checks etc. We are planning to extend this to include other information and visits from the Fire Safety Officer, Care for the Carers and we have already booked a visit from the SCAMS Community Engagement Officer. We can also offer residents assistance including applying for Voter ID, or a fire safety check. We are regularly visited by the local PCSOs who find WUF a useful place to be available to the public, and the same applies to Parish Councillors and the Proper Officer

who often drop in to chat with residents about their concerns. Our Harold Road Dispenser tells me she is much more comfortable now that she can lock the door and use the hatch to give out prescriptions.

Moving forward, we would like to continue this project and grow it into the community cafe outlined in the Golden Thread. We have allocated funds which will cover the hire of the Village Hall on Mondays for a year. We can raise the funds needed for consumables from grants and donations. I have recently had an offer from the new head chef of The Windmill to come and see what we are doing and give us some tips and advice. I'm sure we can also persuade him to give us the occasional cottage pie tray bake.

As we head into spring and summer, Warm Up Fairlight will start to lose its meaning and so we will soon begin to phase it out and introduce a new logo and name that better reflects what it has become - Drop In Social Hub or "DISH".

I have been with this project since its inception and I'm more than happy to carry it on. Once Cllr Hohenkerk is back on her feet, she is keen to get back to being involved as well. I hope the Parish Council will agree to continue with DISH on Mondays through the summer. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr C Maynard – District Councillor - Report

Full Council approved Conservative-run East Sussex's 2023/24 budget. Vital services across the county are set to be protected once again.

Approval of the Cabinet's proposals means that the authority will spend just over £500 million in the upcoming financial year on services including schools, roads, libraries and support for the most vulnerable residents, with no new cuts to spending.

This positive outlook stands in stark contrast to other less financially prudent local Boroughs, Districts and Unitary Authorities run by opposition parties, who are financially challenged and preparing further cuts to services.

A decade of careful financial planning and discipline, often involving tough decisions, and adopting imaginative service delivery strategies, has put the Conservative-run County council in this strong position, Government funding calculations for 2023/24 assume councils will take both the higher level of council tax and additional adult social care precept. This combined with a significant increase in demand for services, coupled with rising costs, means residents will be asked to pay more in council tax under the proposed budget. This will include a 2.99 per cent increase in council tax combined with a two per cent increase for adult social care.

Councillor Nick Bennett, lead member for Resources and Climate Change said:

"In order to deliver a balanced budget, and keeping a responsible weather-eye on medium term financial risks, we've taken the full rise in council tax; the additional funding will safeguard services for the future and enable the council to continue to deliver on its priority outcomes, ensuring it keeps vulnerable people safe, makes the best use of resources, drives sustainable economic growth and helps people across the county to help themselves."

Under the budget, the council's ongoing capital programme includes continued investment in improvements to the highway's infrastructure, school places, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) provision, as well as further supporting the council's commitment to reduce its carbon footprint from its operations.

East Sussex Conservative Council Leader, Keith Glazier said:

"It is no coincidence that the only financially sound local authorities in this county are Conservative-run. Where we govern, we work very hard to spend local taxpayers' money prudently, to avoid running up massive debts on their behalf, and to deliver highly rated services."

Locally I have continued to work with the Highways Steward to inspect and deal with issues in the division. I have a number of live cases. Thankfully most of the issues are now in hand.

District Councillor's - Report for Parish Council – 21st February 2023

The improved performance of the planning department continues. The statistics can be viewed under agenda item 13, page 91, to the February Planning Committee agenda -

<https://rother.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g709/Public%20reports%20pack%2016th-Feb-2023%2009.30%20Planning%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

My thanks to the outgoing interim Development Manager, Myles Joyce. His permanent replacement, Kemi Erfevieme starts on 24 February, and I look forward to meeting her.

Malcolm Johnston, Rother's Chief Executive, has announced his retirement effective from the end of May. Malcolm is 60 and his retirement will put a new Chief Executive in place to work with whichever administration there may be after the District Council elections. The current proposal is to appoint an interim CE, as the recruitment process together with extended notice periods for the successful candidate may mean a permanent replacement is not in place until September. I have enjoyed working with Malcolm, who has been very helpful, knowledgeable and professional and wish him well in his retirement. Rother has been awarded a £19 million government levelling up grant, split between the De La Warr Pavilion and the deprived area of Sidley. Although inevitably controversial this was a considerable achievement by officers, the manager of the DLW, councillors and Huw Merriman MP. I have written in the Rye News on the topic.

Tomorrow, Wednesday 22nd Marsham Brook Residents Association is holding a meeting in this hall to discuss the recent flood. I shall attend and have arranged for a member of the Environment Agency to attend. The cause of the flood appears to have been heavy rain on saturated ground at time of high tide at the sea sluice at Winchelsea Beach. Despite pumping, systems were overloaded and it is suggested (probably correctly) that the Fairlight WWTW was overwhelmed, with predictable consequences.

On 21 February Rother Full Council met and the following points of interest were decided -

- Council resolved to encourage the Pension Scheme managers (run by the County Council on behalf of local authority staff) to commit to divest themselves of investments in fossil fuel industries. This follows Rother's declaration in 2019 of a climate emergency and our commitment to become carbon neutral. We cannot tell the managers what to do, and they have to act within legal constraints in the interests of members of the scheme. However, a number of unitary, District and Town Councils in Sussex have passed similar motions.
- The budget was passed, with an increase in council tax of about £5 per year for a band D property – that being what is allowed under Council Tax capping. Rother collects council tax on behalf of the Parish Council, fire, police, County Council (including social services), so the actual increase paid by a householder is considerably more – but don't shoot the messenger.
- Council reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the principles underlying Holocaust Memorial Day
- Council agreed to sign up to the Local Government Association's "Debate not Hate" campaign. The campaign aims to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage health debate and improve the response to and support those in public life facing abuse and intimidation. Parishes will be sent details.