**EAST HOATHLY WITH HALLAND PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**

**Held on 24th May, 2021 - 6.30pm in East Hoathly Village Hall**

**In attendance:**  13 Parishioners, including East Hoathly with Halland Parish Council Members

**Also in attendance:** Malcolm Ramsden – Clerk

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| **Item no** | **Minutes** |
| 1.  1.1 | **Minutes of the last meeting held on 20th May, 2019**  No meeting held in 2020 as a result of COVID restrictions. It was agreed to accept the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting. See appendix A. |
| 2.  2.1 | **Annual Reports from County Cllr. Nick Bennett (ESCC) and District Cllr. Geoffrey Draper (WDC)**  County Cllr. Bennett’s report previously circulated (Appendix B) and included with the agenda. |
| 3.  3.1 | **Chairman’s Report incorporating the War Memorial Sports Ground Trust and Finances**  See appendix C  An opportunity was provided to take questions. There were no questions from the floor. |
| 4.0  4.1  5.  5.1 | **Report and accounts from the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee**  See appendix D  **Neighbourhood Plan (NP)**  The District Council Local Plan had been withdrawn during 2020 and work with the NP is proceeding against the current core strategy. The current version of the NP is available on the website. |
| 6.  6.1 | **War Memorial Sports Ground**  See appendix E |
| 7.  7.1 | **Parish Woodland**  See appendix F |
| 8.  8.1 | **Garden Plots**  See appendix G |
| 9.  9.1  9.2 | **Any other Business and Questions**  There was no other business. Questions were raised, prompting debate regarding:-   1. Potential use of land raise and poor quality of current drainage at playing field with requirement going forward to budget for future drainage maintenance. 2. Use of outside contractors for playing field project. 3. Change in District Council housing figure growth from 950 to1,231. 4. Amounts spent on Garden Plots.   The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25pm |

**Appendix A**

**EAST HOATHLY WITH HALLAND PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**

**Held on 20th May, 2019 - 7.30pm in East Hoathly Village Hall**

**In attendance:**  17 Parishioners, including East Hoathly with Halland Parish Council Members

**Also in attendance:** Malcolm Ramsden – Clerk

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| --- | --- |
| **Item no** | **Minutes** |
| 1.  1.1 | **Apologies**  Apologies received from County Cllr. Nick Bennett, District Cllr. Geoffrey Draper, Cllr. Cole, Cllr. Deane and Malcolm Soane. |
| 2.  2.1 | **Minutes of the last meeting held on 16th April, 2018**  It was agreed to accept the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting. |
| 3.  3.1  3.2 | **Annual Reports from County Cllr. Nick Bennett (ESCC) and District Cllr. Geoffrey Draper (WDC)**  County Cllr. Bennett’s report previously circulated (Appendix a) and included with the agenda.  An opportunity was provided to take questions. There were no questions from the floor. |
| 4.0  5.  5.1  5.2  5.2.1 | **Defibrillator Demonstration**  **Chairman’s Report incorporating the War Memorial Sports Ground Trust and Finances**  The Chairman introduced Councillors and read from his report (Appendix b) which was made available to all attendees.  **Financial schedule of the Parish Council as at 31 March 2019**  There was opportunity to ask questions regarding the report which had also been made available to all attendees. No queries raised. |
| 6.  6.1 | **Report and accounts from the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee**  Unfortunately, Mr. Soane couldn’t be present but his report (Appendix c) was made available to all attendees. No comments received. |
| 7.  7.1 | **Neighbourhood Plan**  Cllr. Magness highlighted progress referring to his previously circulated report. |
| 8.  8.1 | **War Memorial Sports Ground**  Cllr. Ritchie referred to the continuing maintenance and improvements at the childrens’ play area and highlighted improvements to the shower and toilet facilities in the pavilion. Consultants had been engaged to see what might be done to improve the poor state of the drainage with a view to re-instating a playable football pitch area. It was clear that a considerable amount of money might need to be spent and that it would be important to involve the whole community before committing large sums of money. |
| 9.  9.1  9.2 | **Any other Business and Questions**  There was no other business. Questions were raised, prompting debate regarding:-   1. Progress and ideas for a suitable path/pavement for cycles and pushchair/pram users between the two villages. 2. Costing options for drainage at the playing field and importance of ensuring continued maintenance with not insubstantial costs. 3. Impact on ditches, ponds and car park of any drainage schemes. 4. Orientation of possible football pitch with probability of approaches from local football clubs.   The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55 pm with some attendees staying and enjoying the refreshments provided. |

**Appendix a**

**Driving sustainable economic growth**

**Transport for the South East** (TfSE), our partnership of the area’s 16 transport authorities, launched its

Economic Connectivity Review (the first stage of developing the TfSE Transport Strategy) in May 2018. At this event, it was announced that TfSE would receive a £1million grant from the Department for Transport to assist with the development of the Strategy. TfSE is currently undertaking a period of engagement with stakeholders to gain views on its proposals to Government to secure statutory status and a formal consultation will be launched in May 2019.

Over 160 **carriageway asset improvement schemes** were delivered in the first three-quarters of 2018-19, with significant improvement works delivered for the A267 and the A22. A major project to reconstruct Heathfield High Street was completed ahead of schedule, with the scheme also seeing parts of the pavement resurfaced and new street lights installed. Work also began on the construction of the Newhaven Port Access Road and on the second and most significant phase of the Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Scheme. Aimed at modernising the town centre, improving pedestrian conditions and attracting more visitors, it includes the installation of new bus lanes, bus shelters, a high-quality granite road surface and new paving, seating and landscaping.

Significant progress has been made in the implementation of the new Strategy for **Library and Information Services**, with a range of new library services introduced during the last 12 months. These include an enhanced, modern eLibrary with greater investment, a new children and young people’s offer to support literacy and numeracy, increased outreach work in our most disadvantaged communities, and new Community Library Membership and Teachers Library Memberships. In addition Hastings Library reopened in March 2018, following a multi-million pound revamp. This included the installation of a new roof and lift, lighting and furniture. Crowborough Library was also refurbished with an expanded children’s area, a newly created space for teens and young adults, new free access computer desks and new stock. Libraries at Ringmer and Langney opened as community libraries, with support from ESCC, after they were closed following the review of the county library services, prompted by the need to make budget savings.

We have been supported businesses to create over 150 jobs in the area during the first three quarters of the year . In addition, Locate East Sussex has supported 30 businesses to move into, or relocate within the county. The South East Business Boost service, offering grants of between £1,000 and £10,000 to small and medium sized businesses and start-ups for capital projects awarded over £900,000 of grants in East Sussex. In addition, Trading Standards launched a Business Advice & Support Partnership (BAASP) to help businesses and other professionals receive high quality regulatory support and promote their comprehensive range of training workshops including customer care, food allergens and selling on-line. To date, they have led 15 workshops, attracting 244 delegates.

ESCC was named as one of 20 **Careers Hubs** nationwide, so attracting £200,000 external funding. The East Sussex Careers Hub, which launched in November 2018, will link all secondary schools, special schools and colleges with employers, support organisations and higher and further education providers to improve the guidance and support offered to students. Projects which help young people make the right career choices will also be expanded, including the Industry Champions network (a network of more than 80 champions from local businesses), apprenticeship roadshows, Supported Internships and Apprenticeships for people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Open Doors, where businesses open their doors to allow students to visit and learn about the world of work. In November 2018, 44 businesses participated in Open Doors and received workplace visits from over 500 students.

81.5% of secondary **schools** are judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding, 1.5 percentage points above the national average of 80% as at end May 2018. 92.9% of primary schools in East Sussex are judged to be good or outstanding against the national average of 89.9%. 100% of special schools are judged to be good or outstanding against the national average of 93.4%. Across East Sussex, results for GCSE English and Maths improved with 41.9% of pupils earning grade five – a strong pass or above, an increase from last year’s figure of 38.4%.

**Keeping vulnerable people safe**

ESCC became one of the few local authorities to achieve the highest possible rating for its work with vulnerable families. Following an Ofsted inspection, ESCC **Children’s Social Services** is now rated ‘Outstanding’. Inspectors were particularly impressed with the ‘connected practice’ model which places emphasis on social workers creating enduring and trusting relationships with families and children.

**Keeping vulnerable people safe continued…**

Members of ESCC demonstrated their commitment to protect residents by becoming SCAMbassadors for Friends Against Scams. The **East Sussex Against Scams** Partnership, run by the Safer East Sussex Team, helps to protect residents by raising awareness through over 100 partner organisations, such as local businesses, charities, church groups, community enterprises and councils. Nearly 3,000 residents have participated in Friends Against Scams awareness sessions. Trading Standards have also continued their fight against rogue trading in the county, providing support to the most vulnerable and pursuing those who target them. To date, the team have carried out 180 positive interventions to prevent fraud and other scams, and installed 27 call blocking devices to prevent telephone scams.

ESCC was awarded a silver award under the **Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Support Scheme**, which honours employers that show a commitment to supporting current and former military personnel. Award judges were impressed with the support given to armed forces cadet volunteers and Army Reserve members

**Hastings Community Support Service**, based in Bexhill, which helps people with learning disabilities live independent lives was rated ‘Outstanding’ – the highest possible grading in its report from the Care Quality Commission. The service provides specialist support to adults in their own homes, including support with social activities, daily living skills and personal care.

ESCC again took part in the White Ribbon Campaign’s 16 Days of Action to help eliminate **domestic violence** and abuse against women and girls. During the campaign, ESCC promoted a series of events designed to highlight support available to victim, as well as encouraging people to speak out against violence and abuse.

**Helping people help themselves**

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex visited our Joff Youth Centre in Peacehaven, where they met 50 young people gathered from youth groups around the county, including the elected Youth Cabinet. Their visit focused on the issue of **youth mental health** which has been a top priority of the Youth Cabinet this year. In November 2018 over 50 young people took part in our Annual Takeover Day to discuss mental health.

ESCC has worked with the 5 district and borough authorities to set up a new scheme which offers up to 100% **Council Tax discounts to Care Leavers** aged 18-24, using a single protocol and process. We are one of only nine shire counties in England to adopt such a scheme and one of only four to have a countywide scheme.

There have been further improvements against **Adult Social Care** . Delayed Transfers of Care from hospital per 100,000 population (aged 18+) has improved from 12.7 in November 2017 to 10.3 in November 2018. The November figure had already reduced from 24.4 in April 2017. The proportion of older people (aged 65+) who are still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement or rehabilitation services for April to September 2018 is 92.7%, up from 91.7% over the same period in 2018.

The end of 2017-18 saw the end of the current five year cycle for NHS **Health Checks**. In this period, the

Council achieved the highest proportion of people being offered and receiving their check in the South East.

**Making the best use of our resources**

The Council’s **budget** and Council Plan for 2019/20 were approved at the meeting of Full Council on the 5th February 2019. The budget includes spending of £375 million on services for East Sussex. It also includes savings of £5.1 million. The savings required in the budget were significantly less than first anticipated due to the success of sustained lobbying of central Government by the Council’s Leader and Deputy Leader. The additional funding amounted to:

* Health and Social Care – additional money to continue the Winter Pressures funding, plus extra for Adult and Children’s Social care – in 2019-20 this is an extra - £7m (2.586m+£4.417m)
* Business Rates Retention Pilot - £1.6m in 2019-20
* Potholes, bridges and other repair work – Capital Funding of £4.7m – received in 2018-19
* Children’s Services – ISEND funding - £1.138m – in 2019-20 (and the same in 2018-19)

ESCC also published its **‘Core Offer’** –a basic but decent level of service which we believe is the very least residents should be able to expect, even with the intense financial pressures we face. As well as meeting our legal duties across all services delivered, the Core Offer includes measures to grow the economy of East Sussex and make sure we invest resources in some preventative and early intervention work where greater costs may otherwise build up. Views were sought on the Core Offer and over 1200 responses to the questionnaire were received. Feedback from the questionnaire set out that most people – 78% considered that the Government should allocate more funds to meet the financial gap ESCC faces.

Through our capital programme we have delivered **improvements to schools buildings** and expansion of facilities across the county providing approximately 1,100 additional school places across primary, secondary and special educational needs provision.

**Appendix b**

**East Hoathly with Halland Parish Council Chairman’s Report 2019**

The last year has been a productive year and I am pleased to report that working together, your councillors have moved a number of important projects forward.

Sadly Diane moved away from the area during the year and as a result we lost her as a pc member. Diane had done a fantastic job as vice chair and also as head of the neighbourhood plan steering committee. She is a great loss to the PC and this community.

During the year there were a few changes to the PC - John left and Carolyn joined. Victoria stood down at the end of the term and we then had an election. We are now short of councillors once again.

The work that the people on the council does makes a difference to our community and, if you are passionate and energetic and want to help us improve our Parish then I would encourage you to get involved. We need people of all ages and from all walks of life, but I would particularly like to see younger people putting themselves forward.

All of the Parish Councillors are passionate about our community. Every Councillor gives their time freely and willingly. I would like to thank each and every one of them for their hard work and commitment. I am also appreciative of the support that I have had from them all during the year.

As a council we are supported by some incredibly hardworking people. Verne Heath our RFO and Malcolm Ramsden who joined us as Clerk and has done a great job. A good Parish Clerk is invaluable and Malcom has met the challenge admirably.

Derek Keeley continues to take care of our beautiful playing fields and maintaining the Pavilion. We appreciate his efforts which bring such a lot of pleasure to others in our Parish.

Much of the work in the Parish this year has focused on the Neighbourhood Plan. Diane and Chris have both worked tirelessly on this and I will not steal their glory - Chris will be providing an update on the considerable progress that has been made later. I would however like to thank both of them wholeheartedly for their efforts.

Last year we talked about making improvements to the Pavilion and I am pleased to report that under the steady guidance of Jonathan Ritchie these have started to come to fruition with works on the toilets and showers due to completed this week. The electrics have also been updated during the year too.

The playing fields and equipment in East Hoathly have been the subject of much debate and we are now moving forward with the project to raise the level of the football pitch playing surface which will then lead to improvements elsewhere. Jonathan Ritchie will provide a more detailed update later.

Work continues on trying to identify a suitable play area for Halland.

At long last we completed the project to provide covered seating and a new bus shelter in Halland. These, plus the new road surface and markings on the A22, have helped to give Halland a sense of place rather than just being a busy road that people rush through. We still need to address the concerns about speeding in the Parish. The Blackboys and Lewes Roads are currently under consideration and we are working with the Halland Speedwatch team and Highways to find some solutions.

The Wealden Local Plan continues to rumble on. We are maintaining a watching brief on progress.

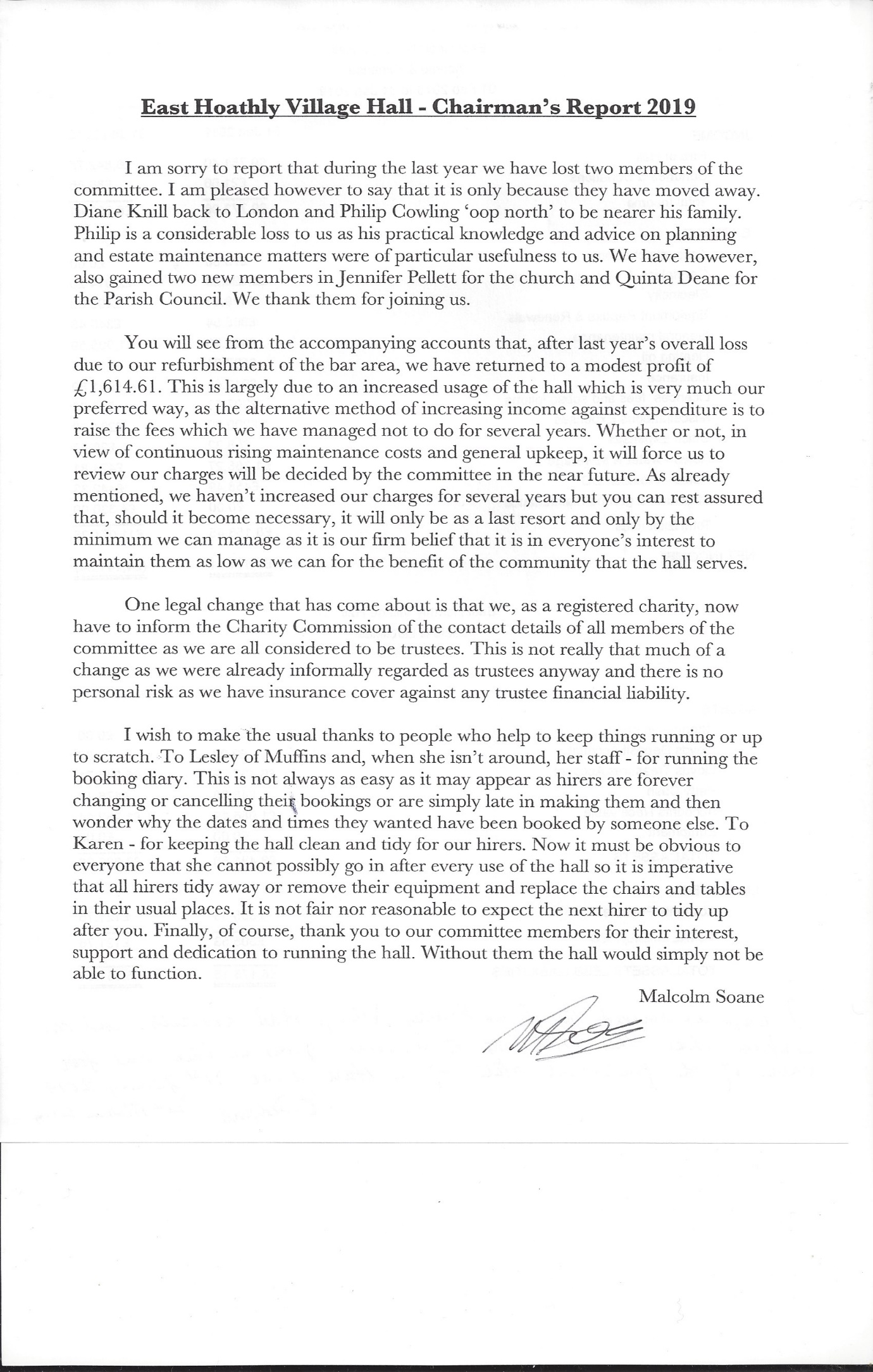
We’d still like to improve the links between East Hoathly, Halland and the outlying areas and would like to build a better path that links our two villages together. In the longer term we'd like to work towards a proper pedestrian and cycle path, that's lit at night.

Finally, I want to recognise and thank everyone who has volunteered during the last year or done something to make the lives of others in our Parish better. We have some incredible people who live here - Malcolm Soane and the village hall committee, the good folk who organise the tennis club, cricket club, rifle club, short mat bowls and toddlers group, the school, The Carnival Society, The Preservation Society, the Allotments and Community Gardeners, the litter pickers and the sign cleaners. There are many others who I have not mentioned here, for which I apologise, but you know who you are. All of these people give their time freely and contribute to the richness of our lives. Thank you all, very much, for the work you do.

We are a rural parish of many talents and we welcome volunteers to help with the jobs that need doing around the Parish. If you have an idea or feel you can contribute your time or expertise we would like to hear from you. You can make a difference.

David Vaughan

**Appendix c**

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**Appendix B**

**Driving sustainable economic growth**

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**Appendix C**

EAST HOATHLY WITH HALLAND PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN’S REPORT 2021

A pause for thought, before I start….. This is the 125th Annual Parish Meeting. It is quite remarkable to cast our minds back to 1895. I wonder if our worthy forebears would have been amazed by the events that overtook their descendants last year! They may well have been pleased though by one small item from today’s PC asset register. That was the replacement in the chain of historic mile markers of No.46, which we were able to achieve by getting a new mould fabricated.

Unfortunately, Covid 19 restrictions last year meant that the Annual Parish Meeting could not be held, so I will attempt to catch up on two years of activity within the Parish, whilst being brief. We have all been subjected to lengthy periods of restrictions of our normal lives with the threat of a highly contagious and dangerous disease hanging over us. Our sympathies go out, of course, to all that have been affected to whatever degree by the pandemic.

Our first virtual Parish Council meeting took place in March of 2020 and all Councillors and Officers have had to acquire new skills to continue to meet regularly without face-to face contact. Remember none of us have access to any sort of IT department to set up equipment and solve problems. I compliment all involved for their success in keeping the business going. We have been able to deal with many new but important issues regarding safeguarding, signage, risk assessments and the deep cleaning where mandated in a timely way. This was despite a mountain of regulations appearing overnight in these strange times.

There have been changes in the line up of members of the Council over the period - Jonathan Ritchie and Carolyn Robins have left for health and family reasons, also Quinta Deane. My thanks for their contributions. I am glad to say that new members have joined us and I welcome Richard Partridge, Jacqueline Bradley and Tania Freezer to the Council. They have brought new enthusiasm and ideas onboard. All our Councillors, past and present, have shown a passion for our community and made a difference to improving the villages with their hard work and commitment. Chairing the Council would be much more difficult without the support and time they give freely. We still have vacancies and I would encourage anyone with a similar community spirit to volunteer. Whatever your background, your experience and skills would be valuable. The real aim of the PC is centred on improving the quality of life in the Parish. This is an area that we all relate to, and I would really like to see the views of our younger people better represented here.

The smooth running of a Parish Council is almost entirely in the hands of our Officers and, here, this Parish is fortunate in having the most dedicated Clerk and Finance Officer (for miles around, I have been paid to say!). I heartily endorse a vote of thanks to Malcolm Ramsden and Verne Heath for their patience and consistency in the administration duties and their accurate record keeping. Also, our thanks to Derek Keeley, who has seen a change in his job to Pavilion Caretaker this year, as his outdoor responsibilities are being handed over to a contractor. Finally, I would note my gratitude to the Vice Chair David Vaughan for his wise counsel – he manages to bury some of my most excessive ideas and mad schemes before the rest of the team get a chance to put them (and myself) in the “proverbial” stocks!

The big events for the Parish have undoubtedly been the failure of WDC’s new local plan and the approval of the Hesmonds Stud application for up to 205 houses in July last year. Meanwhile, other applications, re-applications and appeals have come forward in the villages with the majority being refused (so far). Exceptions have been 6 houses in Old Hartfield, Halland and 2 houses in Buttsfield Lane, East Hoathly. However, we remain under the constant threat of continual over-development, it seems, from all sides. It remains vitally important that the Parish moves forward towards a completed Neighbourhood Plan. This has seen encouraging progress, as Cllr. Magness will present later.

Road safety within the villages remains a priority. Halland is subject to speeding problems on the B2192 and, following the Speedwatch group’s involvement, the PC paid for actual speed data collection in two locations, which verified an ongoing problem. Following this, a feasibility study was commissioned from ESCC for potential improvements. Regrettably, they will not automatically fund these, due to a lack of fatalities or serious injuries within the last 3 years. However, village gateways and movement of the village sign to the Knowle Lane junction are now planned, to be paid for from our CIL funds. With renewed interest in addressing speeding problems now in East Hoathly, the PC has assisted in re-forming the Speedwatch group here.

With the potential for East Hoathly to increase in population by 50%, it has become urgent to examine improving facilities, particularly the Recreation Ground and the Pavilion. Needed repairs, maintenance and small improvements have been conscientiously tackled throughout the period. However, with the age of the equipment and premises here, it often feels like an uphill struggle. Renewed emphasis and enthusiasm are being applied to this project and Cllrs. Bradley and Freezer will address this shortly. Before I leave this subject, I must make mention of the proposed Woodland Play Area in Halland. Considerable effort has been expended here by Cllr. Magness in planning, obtaining quotes and other work. Funding is already in place from the Bentley Solar Farm, but the project is held up over the acquisition of the land and permissions needed from the District Council.

Small improvements do make a significant effect on the Parish scene and this is part of our everyday business. Over the period since the last meeting, benches all around East Hoathly have been refurbished. We have contributed to new flower displays under the village sign. The planter by the café has been replaced and I would like to mention Cllr.Cole’s support for the planting schedule, also John Tarry for his building work. In October 2019, the refurbished GPO phone box was re-opened as a Book Exchange, a project headed up by Cllr. Deane. New additional litter bins are to be installed in Back Lane, Halland and at the South Street entrance to the woodland. A major clearance of the overgrowth from the bank at the Susans Close end of the Recreation Ground, involving the removal of brambles, excess tree growth and ivy, has been completed. The Village Sculpture just off the Shaw roundabout has been cleared of undergrowth and cleaned.

The financial summaries of the Parish Council and the War Memorial Sports Ground Trust for the last year are available on our website show a healthy situation. They have passed the independent internal audit. The Trust had essentially no income from Pavilion bookings last year but has been kept solvent by the Covid grant from the local authority. In recognition of the Tennis, Cricket and Rifle Clubs being unable to use the facilities, they have been given a “rent holiday”, as have the Carnival Society. We look forward to normality returning to all these parts of our village life. PC expenditure was less than budgeted for 2019 and, in view of the constrained circumstances of many residents and the fact that adequate reserves are in place for routine costs and planned maintenance, it was decided to hold the precept for 2021/2 to the same level as last year, ie. £62K. Small grants were made from Parish funds to the CPRE, the local Citizens Advice Bureau and the Plunkett Foundation, this latter in connection with the evolving East Hoathly with Halland Community Benefit Society.

**Appendix D**

East Hoathly Village Hall – Chairman’s Report

It cannot have escaped your notice that these are very unusual times and so this will be an unusual report. Normally it would be a report on our trading year but since we had next to nothing in the income column, we had almost entirely expenses. Indeed, were it not for Jane and John Tarry spotting that we might be entitled to a government grant because registered charities are considered to be businesses. They followed it through, and we received a grant of £10,000. It was very timely as, if it was not for that, the hall might well be bankrupt. Obviously, we try to plan for any foreseeable problem but we missed this one. Since I have mentioned the committee let me say how grateful I am to all the trustees for their continued help and their opinions which we managed to secure by voting via the internet.

I feel I should also mention our caretaker Karen who, particularly in the early stages, took the lead in procuring materials we needed to conform with the government requirements of signage and safety materials and John again who bought in the devices necessary for distributing the sanitizing material. Karen has continued to look after our hall during this period

I am pleased to report that we have found someone who is willing and able to take over from me as treasure. Having acted in that capacity for in excess of 12 years I will be quite pleased to relinquish the post. A handover though is not an easy matter and there is bound to be difficulties during that period such as changes to banking signatories, so we ask for your understanding as we make the necessary adjustments.

Malcolm Soane

**Appendix E**

The East Hoathly with Halland War Memorial Sports Ground is a charity set up in September 1963 as part of a Trust established in 1947. East Hoathly with Halland Parish Council are the sole trustees.

The playing fields are divided into 6 main areas: the old football pitch, the cricket pitch (in current use), the Pavilion and Car park, the Tennis Courts, the Rifle Club and the top portion of the playing field which includes 2 play areas for children. The playing fields are in use all year round by walkers and local residents.

The Parish Council is seeking to ensure that the playing fields are renovated and landscaped to enable all year round use and to ensure that the clubs, parishioners and other users have a sports and recreation ground that is fit for the future.

Improvements to the playing fields have been under consideration for a number of years, more recent history includes a consultation with Penfold Verrel in 2**017**. It was considered that the poor drainage was a result of the low-lying nature of the pitch and the height of the water table in the area of the football pitch, compounded by the presence of underground streams. It was considered that these factors resulted in the regular blockage of the drainage system and the saturation of the ground. A proposal was made to raise the level of the pitch by 1m, using Penfold Verrall to provide inert and screened soil for a landraise scheme. It should be noted that :-

1. There is no evidence of a water table test being performed.
2. The area is not within a flood plain, according to the Environment Agency.
3. A new drainage system was considered an “optional extra” at this time (it is accepted that landraise alone will not solve the problem, a drainage system is needed but by doing this in tandem with a landraise exercise the payment for the deposit of the inert and cleaned soil would cover the cost of the drain installation.
5. PV had completed similar projects in the area with a good degree of success, eg. Ringmer Gliding Club.

There is considerable interest remaining in this proposal, but the PC have continuously debated the drawbacks and advantages over several years without any resolution. In the meantime, it has become clear that the whole of the Recreation Ground is poorly drained and further landscaping is required to provide a “complete area upgrade”.

**In 2020**, a comprehensive feasibility study was commissioned for a full re-instatement of a natural turf winter football pitch from contractor TGMS. This was a turnkey solution for a complete job. The PC were advised against landraise as a solution here and no problems were indicated from the water table situation or streams. Once again, an ongoing maintenance schedule was considered mandatory. So far, there has been no progress with this study due to the high cost of this proposal, around £130k, and the cost of ongoing maintenance.

**Coming up to date,**  with the possibility of funding now on the horizon, the refurbishment project has been re-started and the drainage aspect has been identified as the limiting factor to progress. Because of the depth of professional knowledge required for this project, advice is needed to indicate how the first phase can be completed with successful results for the Parish. This advice will realistically involve payment from existing Parish funds, so that we can be assured that we are presenting an outside qualified opinion, in view of the conflicting proposals that have previously been put on the table. We would want to include an income stream from a landscaping contractor, such as PV, if it is appropriate to work in conjunction with them.

As already stated, various surveys and investigations have been undertaken and the Parish Council are currently seeking a contractor that can pull this information together, interpret the results, determine if further investigations are needed and lead on these. Following this we would ask them to propose remedial actions needed to ensure the objectives of the project can be achieved. We are then seeking for this contractor to oversee the required actions through to Phase 1 project completion.

A consultation exercise will be undertaken with the community to ascertain specific improvements but initial findings, provided largely by the PFWG, include a fenced play area for ages ranging from toddler through to teenager, a hard perimeter track to enable year round access, a further track from the car park to the Weald Way, picnic and BBQ areas, wildflower meadows, space for more memorial benches, a formal access driveway and parking area for the Rifle Club, a skate/bike track, adult exercise equipment, a useable playing field for team sports, improvements to the cricket outfield, and hopefully an improved Pavilion. A map of these proposals is available for you to view after this meeting.

It is anticipated that the project will be split into phases:

**Phase 1** – investigation for the whole playing field area and definition of solutions, drainage resolution, and reinstatement of playable sports area, handing over at project completion a fully serviceable playing field.

**Phase 2** – identify via public consultation the soft landscaping features to be included such as improved play areas, paths and wildflower/conservation areas, establish funding streams and implement these plans. Consultation for this Phase will run concurrently with Phase 1, but work would start once Phase 1 is complete.

**Phase 3** – replacement and/or improvement of existing pavilion facility.

The Playing Field Working Group have already met with Penfold Verrel earlier this year and we are grateful that Penfold Verrell are still willing to work with us should the best solution involve landscaping by importing inert and graded soil. Further meetings with the Bourne Group, who have been recommended to us by Freedom Leisure, and who have recently carried out improvements for Buxted Football Ground and Hadlow Down Playing Field Committee to very satisfactory outcomes, are scheduled for........ . The Bourne Group have also worked with Bedes School, East Sussex National Golf Course and Cranbrook RFC, to name a few further local sites. We hope to be able to update the Parish soon on the results from these meetings. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the PFWG for their continued interest and energy in this project.

**Appendix F**

PARISH WOODLAND WORKING GROUP (PWWG) REVIEW - MAY 2021

Background

Our PW Ancient Woodland is at least 400 years old and is therefore an important part of our national heritage. As such it richly deserves to be properly cared for, which care hopefully will bring the maximum benefit of this valuable community asset to future East Hoathly generations.

Wealden District Council passed over control of the PW to the PC in 2010.

The PWWG was set up by the PC in 2017 as it was realised that the PW would benefit from more detailed consideration and attention. The PWWG has six members, one of whom is a Parish Councillor.

Role

The role of the PWWG is defined as the development of a Woodland Management Plan, indicating what work is required under that plan and, where practical, carrying out such work.

Objectives

To assist the PC with the preservation of the PW, together with its wildlife and network of paths.

Conservation Grant Application

An application was made in March for a grant to assist in forestry work, pond resuscitation and path improvements. Hopefully an award will be advised shortly.

Improvements previously carried out

Following advice from the Woodland Trust, twenty five oak saplings were planted by the PWWG to help replace the thirteen mature oaks felled in 2011.

A variety of bird and bat boxes have been introduced with the intention of encouraging an increase in wild life habitation of the PW. This was especially targeted at Barn Owls and Pipistrelles, as both species had been recorded close to the PW.

The marking of the main pathways has been implemented to guide visitor usage, in order to protect both plants and seedlings. Concentrated, inappropriate, off-route usage, particularly in the bluebell growth areas, damages the seasonal flower display unnecessarily and disturbs wildlife. Therefore it is considered important that an alternative location is found for such activities to avoid continued significant damage to the PW habitat. 2.

Woodland Management

Work in the woodland is not permitted during the period February to September to avoid unnecessarily disturbing wildlife during the nesting season.

The progressive removal of certain tree species, such as Bamboo, Sycamore and Cherry Laurel, which are alien to an Ancient Woodland site.

The coppicing of Chestnut, Holly and Hornbeam trees, which will help to maintain more beneficial light levels for woodland flora. Thinning of Silver Birch can also assist in this regard.

Improvement of various aspects of the pond and marshland areas, in order to encourage more varied plant growth and provide increased habitat benefit to encourage reptiles and amphibians.

It is hoped to create a permanent improvement of the footpath at the Nightingale’s entrance by raising the level above the flood area.

To improve the scope of PW education with the younger members of our community, a coordination programme is being organised with the village school.

The PC is actioning a plan to provide prominent notices to inform visitors of the flora and fauna species to be found within the PW. This plan should assist in the wider education of visitors of the value of the PW to the community.

Planning for the Future in accordance with the Woodland Management Plan

The PWWG aims to carry out progressive planting of the most prominent types of broadleaf trees, which traditionally have formed the backbone of Ancient Woodlands. These are likely to include Oak, Beech, Chestnut, Hornbeam and Cherry. Introducing such trees will best support the PWWG aim that the PW is handed over to the next generation in the best possible condition.

JD.

**Appendix G**

**Report from East Hoathly with Halland Garden Plot Sub Committee May 16th 2021**

**Committee**

Chris Magness and Cheryl Herriot have resigned from the committee. Many thanks for their contribution.

New Committee

Chair David Buroughs

Secretary Kate Richardson

Treasurer Roger Discombe

PC representative Tony Pope

Community Plots James Hamilton Andrews

Members John Tarry,Frances Mills

New members this year Andy Jeavons, Maz Beal.

**April 2020 to April 2021 Progress report**

1)On March 24th 2020 it was announced that people could attend their allotments for exercise during Lockdown,

The Committee issued Covid safety guidelines. Subsequently the Garden Plots have been a haven for many people during this difficult time. We have had several new plot holders who have proved to be excellent and enduring gardeners. We have let all the workable plots for 2021/2022. The Committee have held Zoom meetings throughout the Year

2) Pete Crawford has continued to keep the hedges and grass well maintained and John Tarry’s handyman skills have been invaluable. Repairs to the track was financed by the Garden Plot fund and work carried out by volunteers. A new trough has been purchased by the Parish Council. The old trough has been planted out, thanks to Andy Jeavons ,and is now a feature at the entrance to the plots.

3) Rodent Control. It was agreed to raise the rent in April 2021 and possibly in April 2022 to cover the cost of professional pest control.

4) An application has been submitted to Wealden for the Garden Plots to be listed as an ACV. Kate Richardson has submitted this on behalf of an unincorporated body of 21 people’

Awaiting adecision

5) A composting toilet would be a great asset especially for the Community Garden’s work.

The lack of an on site toilet is preventing some people accessing the site and the excellent work carried out by James.

We already have a grant of £1400 held by the PC . Applications for funding have been put in to Calor Gas and Hall and Woodhouse. When Wealden Community Grants open we hope to apply for funding from this source.

6) The Garden plots are operating at a profit. Further details from RFO

**Future**

We have a very strong community of Gardeners now and we hope, in the not too distant future, that we can hold social events and share ideas and produce as we have done in the past. The plots are also much valued by walkers through the site.

It is now an accepted fact that gardening is invaluable for people’s physical and mental health. We are fortunate to have such a beautiful Garden plot site for the Parish.