

# East Lavington Annual Parish Meeting

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting Of THE PARISH OF EAST LAVINGTON held on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 18.15pm in The Recital Room, The Music Block, Seaford College, Lavington Park

**Present:** Charles Britton, Barry Gosden, William Yates and Simon Longman

**In Attendance:** Amy Harte (Clerk), Cllr John Cross (District Councillor),

**Apologies:** Patrick Limpus & Cllr Tom Richardson (County Councillor)

**1. Opening**

Charles Britton opened the meeting at 18.20.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were approved. They were duly signed as a correct record by C. Britton.

**3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Annual Meeting 2022**

No matters arising.

**4. Chairman's Report**

A copy of C. Britton's report is attached as Annex A

**5. Parish Council Finance Report**

A copy of the finance report is attached as Annex B

**6. District Councillor's Report:  
Fittleworth Ward; District Councillors Report**

This will be quite short, as there has been no council sitting during the election and the first full gathering of the new Council does not sit until Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May. As yet no one has been appointed to Chichester District Council committees and/or panels, and the Cabinet and Leader of the Council is not officially in post until the full Council sits.

What I can tell you though is the result of the election and make-up of the new council. The Liberal Democrats have overall control with 25 seats (11). The Conservatives now have 5 (17), the Greens 2 (2) and the Independents 4 (2). Labour lost both its seats. It is likely the Greens and Independents will form a group and therefore become the main opposition on the Council. The share of the vote; Liberal Democrats 52%, Conservatives 31%, Greens 7%, Labour 6% and Independents 4%.

Finally, I thank my predecessor for all his work and commitment to this ward, and to his conduct throughout the election and at the count.

I look forward to working with residents, and all the parish councils in the ward, in improving our environment for the good of all.

John Cross

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### 7. County Councillor's Report:

- work started today on the angel in Midhurst to shore up. The big machinery arrives on site tomorrow.
- Highways have made a good start on repairing the local roads with the jet patcher, which gives permanent repairs rather than the emergency repairs that last 5 minutes. There is a lot to do and they are very much behind because of the weather. No proper repair can be done when it is wet as the materials won't bond.
- Some of the road repairs have been delayed due to the abuse & threats the crews had for holding traffic and these repairs will now need to be done under full road closures.
- Highways will go around all the local lanes and repair roads and verges once Midhurst reopens.
- Fitzlea wood road remains closed as southern water continue to try and fix the pumping station. The closure here has been extended until 12th June currently. I am chasing SW for an update as it's been closed for 2 months already.
- Openreach have applied to close Popple Hill/Graffham Road between the shop and Cathanger Crossroads. This will be a 24:7 closure for 4 weeks. This is scheduled for when Fitzlea Wood Road is supposed to be reopened by, but will be stopped if SW have not finished. I tried getting street works to postpone this until after the summer due to the impact on local tourism, and the problems that will be caused for access to the caravan site, but apparently they are unable to do this.

Kind Regards

Tom

### 8. Question Time

None

### 9. Conclusion of the Meeting

The meeting closed at 18.28

**These minutes are an accurate record of the meeting.**

Signed .....  
Chairman, East Lavington Parish Council

# East Lavington

## Annual Parish Meeting

### Annex A

#### East Lavington Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023

The major event for East Lavington Parish Council so far this year has been the local elections in April. I am pleased to say that the team that assembled in 2019 is still together...with just one minor error, that I hope we can resolve at our next meeting that follows on from this one.

In addition, even more important in many ways, Amy Harte, our Parish Clerk is also still with us...a key member of the team.

I should also say that we have had great support from Tom Richardson, our County Councillor for the Rother Valley Division, since his election in 2021, and from Alan Sutton our outgoing District Councillor for Fittleworth, and we wish him well for the future.

In his place we welcome his successor, John Cross, our new and recently elected District Councillor. We are delighted that he is able to join this evening so we can congratulate him on his election! We hope that he will be able to join us at our meetings whenever his diary allows. John has already sent us his first report.

It may seem far away now but more than anything else this last four year period has been marked particularly by Covid. After March 2020 all our meetings were 'Zoomed' for the remainder of that year, and for the first meeting of 2021. After that, we were able to meet face to face again but a negative Lateral Flow Test became a prerequisite each time we met, and we cancelled our Annual Parish meetings for two years.

All that stopped one year ago in May...no more Zoom, no more tests, and our first Annual Parish meeting in for three years.

As usual for a small parish located wholly in the rural area of the National Park planning has played a significant part in our council activities. We often have twenty to thirty live applications on the SDNP website. In this regard, the SDNP Local Plan adopted in July 2019 has been a great help, as its policies are more prescriptive and restrictive than were the 'saved policies' of the 1999 CDC plan that we used previously. As I mentioned, our parish lies in a very rural area...barely 2,000 acres of countryside with mostly small scattered settlements, with Seaford College being the exception. So, we have many miles of footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways. A number of them are inspected each year by the County Council's Footpath Inspector. Councillor Gosden...Barry...has also been a footpath inspector supporting the County Council for many years.

We don't have a lot of roads in the parish and we don't have a village green...probably the nearest we come to having one is what I call the 'Norwood Triangle'...patch of grass at the end of Norwood Lane. There is a nice traditional finger post on the triangle which is a bit care worn and is due to be renovated next month. In addition Barry has asked the Highways Department to replace two of the hazard warning post at the corners of the triangle. They do get hit by cars or caravans or horse boxes from time to time.

Next, a topic dear to most of us: Broadband.

Openreach have been installing the necessary fibre across the parishes of Graffham and East Lavington since September 2022. However, the final connection has been delayed as Openreach have been unable to close several roads due to existing diversions being in place for the A272 closure in Midhurst, and ongoing Southern Water closures of Fitzlea Wood Road. East Lavington will be the first connected in the scheme, hopefully before the end of June, with the remainder of the scheme following within a couple of months. We are keeping our fingers crossed this time and appreciate Councillor Longman's (Simon's) IT expertise in keeping us up to date.

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I will finish by thanking my fellow councillors and Amy for all their support and advice over the last year

## Annex B

### East Lavington Parish Council Finance Report 15th May 2023

The 2022/23 financial year ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and the final accounts have been prepared.

#### East Lavington Parish Council Financial Report 2022-2023 East Lavington Parish Council

Balance b/fwd at 1/4/21	£3,138
Receipts	£4851
Expenditure	-£4246
Balance c/fwd	£3,743

**Income - Precept** £3,450

#### **Expenditure**

Clerk Salary and expenses	£2925
Insurance	£234
Laptop	£425

The internal audit has been completed with and following a meeting to review the internal auditor's comments and complete the audit form the Annual Return will be published on the website.

**Amy Harte, Clerk & RFO to East Lavington Parish Council**  
**15<sup>th</sup> May 2023**