



Minutes of the Annual Assembly of Hadlow Down Parish Council

Held in the Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7.00pm on Tuesday April 16th 2019

*Note – this is a draft copy to be agreed and amended
at the next Annual Assembly*

Present: Cllrs Sandra Richards (Chair), Damon Wellman, Rachel Lewis, Julian Michaelson-Yeates and Michael Lunn.

In attendance: Cllr Bob Standley (ESCC) Helen Johnson (Clerk) and members of the public.

The meeting started at 7pm

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Illingworth (WDC) and Turner, these were noted.
2. The minutes of the 2018 Annual Assembly were approved and signed.
3. A presentation was given by the Chair of the Parish Council on speeding and parking. A number of questions and comments were raised by members of the public, including:
 - parking outside the New Inn, Councillors confirmed that part of the pavement was still within the curtilage of the pub;
 - Public Space Protection Orders – Cllr Standley (ESCC and WDC) advised of their normal use and of conversations with the police regarding parking enforcement;
 - A suggestion was made that an article go in the Parish Magazine regarding Operation Crackdown, the *Parish Council will arrange for this to be done*;
 - Questioning the speed data provided by ESCC. *The Clerk will find out if the data can be broken down to the average per hour.*
Clerk

4. WDC Report - Cllr. Michael Lunn:

Council Tax

- Compared to our neighbours and many other Councils Wealden District is a well-run council with sound financial management.
- This year we have maintained Council tax to 2.7% increase.
- Less than 10% of the total council tax residents pay goes to Wealden District Council.
- The balance goes to the County Council, Police, Fire and Parishes.
- Our increase over the last 10 years has been lower than County Council/Fire or Police.

Local Plan

- The Local Plan has been approved by the Council and is now with the Planning Inspector who will conduct an Examination in Public starting in May 2019.
- The plan has new housing of 14288 of which approx. 50% has already been approved or built. Plan protects the Ashdown Forest and Pevensey Levels.
- Wealden cannot just make up an amount of housing. We have to meet the national guidelines (Objectively Assessed Housing Need).
- New housing has to pay a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to contribute to infrastructure
- The Plan also calls for a mix of housing including smaller family homes
- The Local Plan is not just about housing but includes employment.
- Encouraged sites at Chaucer, Swallow and Ashdown business parks. Farming and viticulture are also important economic drivers in Wealden
- Housing – Wealden still owns its own housing stock and is building more homes to rent. This is self-financing and is not a cost to the Council Taxpayer

Waste and Recycling

- Waste – The new contractor BIFFA starts in July to replace Kier.
- Kier's performance has been variable to say the least but on the plus side Wealden has the highest recycling rate in the County.
- The majority of waste not recycled is sent to the incinerator at Newhaven and used as fuel to produce electricity – enough for 20,000 homes.
- Less than 1% of Wealden's waste goes to landfill
- Missed bins remains biggest complaint but is getting better

Commercial projects

- As central government grants have been removed we have looked at other opportunities to replace that income but have been careful in deciding which projects and ensure they are in and benefit Wealden. Some Councils have bought property many miles from their own area. We have invested in:

- Crematorium at Horam opening shortly – Late May;
- Sussex Weald Homes – building smaller family homes for sale;
- Vicarage Field in Hailsham – part of the High Street for income and regeneration

Wealden is not all about planning and bins!

- Big Switch – scheme to assist residents to get a better deal on utilities . Many residents previously on basic tariff have saved hundreds a year- Scheme won gold award at the recent IESE innovation awards to Local Government
- Homelessness – duty to house those eligible
- Environmental Health - Licensing including Food Safety – Pubs and restaurants and taxis

Members of the public asked about social housing on new developments, *the new waste contractor and zero hour contracts which Cllr Lunn will investigate.*

ML

The Chair thanked Cllrs Lunn and Illingworth for their work at WDC on behalf of the Parish Council.

5. ESCC Report – Cllr. Bob Standley

Financial challenges

- Net Budget 375.1m
- Funded by Council Tax 290.5
- Business Rates £83.8
- New Homes Bonus £0.8

Spending

- Adult Social Care 45.66%
- Children's Services 20.68%
- Community Transport and Economy 16.5%
- Central Services 17.16%

Core Offer

- In 2018 launched Core offer
- Close to Statutory Services Only
- Lobbied Government successfully - Extra £8.3m one off ?
- Comprehensive Spending Review
- Fairer Funding

Achievements

- Community Libraries
- Refurbished libraries Crowborough and Hastings
- East Sussex Children's Services judged outstanding
- 81.5% secondary schools good or outstanding
- 92.9% Primary good or outstanding
- 100% Special schools good or outstanding
- Improved exam results
- Investing in Skills
- Growing Economy
- 500 pupils took part in Open Doors
- Extra Funding on Roads – but needs more

A member of the public asked about the broadband speed. Cllr Standley advised that he has a meeting with BT and will raise that some areas are still getting slow speeds. The Chair thanked Cllr. Standley for his work at ESCC on behalf of the Parish Council.

6. Reports from Representatives:

(a) Mayfield Charities - I am Penny Eliot, one of 6 Trustees of the Mayfield Trust. I represent Hadlow Down. The Trust is a small charity which began in 1630. Its purpose is to give financial help to those in need and living within the old Mayfield Parish boundary. This includes people living in Hadlow Down and also families whose children are attending St Marks. In the past, for example, we have helped pay for school uniforms, school trips, and personal alarms for the elderly. And over the last 12 months, we have provided financial assistance to 5 people in Hadlow Down.

We do not delve deeply into peoples' affairs, but obviously we try to prioritise those with the greatest need.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the Charity's help do please contact me.

(b) St Mark's School (Claire Rivers & Annette Stow) - Annual Report 2019

St Mark's has had another interesting and exciting time since April last year. Ofsted paid us a visit in July 2018 and although we did not get the outcome we were hoping for we were very proud of the staff and children. We were judged as outstanding in three of the five areas:

- Effective leadership and management
- Personal development and welfare
- Early Year's provision.

We received the grading of good in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and, outcomes for children and learners, this meant we got an overall judgement of good. Data played a big part in the overall judgement, which we felt did not paint a true picture of our school, the children and the staff that we know and love. On the day Ofsted visited, our Year 6 data was

published, and we were extremely proud of our results and the children and teachers who work very hard to achieve them. However, this was not enough, as the Inspector classed them as unvalidated and would not consider them in her judgement. The areas that were considered needing development had already been identified by ourselves and were in our school development plan. Ofsted has since changed the way it inspects school and Claire will explain this in a moment. Before she does, I would like to explain how data can be used and misunderstood, if not explained fully.

Being one of the smallest village schools in the county, our numbers each year can vary and this can have a huge impact on our result. For example, last year we had nine children in year 6, therefore each child represented 11%. Whereas in larger schools, where there are classes of 30, each child represents 3% or in a school where there are two or three year 6 classes, each child could represent 1% or 2%. Therefore, if we have any children who are on the SEN register and are working below expected standard our results will drop dramatically, it only takes 3 children not to pass and we are down to 77%. Last year we got 100% at expected standard in Reading and 44% at Higher Standard in Reading, however these were not published on the government comparison data website and only the progress data was published, which classed these results as average. We also got 67% in Reading, Writing and Maths combined, which was above national, and we received a letter from Nus Ghani congratulating us on our results.

We know every single one of our children and the journey they went on through the school; how personal issues can affect their results; how they respond in test situations (remember these results are based on an hour exam) and where their strengths may lie - in drama, music, art or being a good friend – none of which are tested. We do not believe in cramming for a test but that every child that leaves our school has had a full curriculum and is prepared for secondary school. Therefore, unless you know the bigger picture and the story behind the data, it is very easy to be swayed by numbers and what someone wants you to see.

You may have heard Amanda Spielman, the new Ofsted Lead Inspector talk on television and she has led the drive for the new Ofsted framework which launches in September 2019. It outlines the need for a 'Broad and Balanced Curriculum' which provides the growth and development needed to be a well-rounded person in life and this is something in which we have always believed. Test cramming provides transitory learning but, deep learning which makes connections and networks in the brain is long lasting, as we know from the latest neuroscience discoveries. Your school may be top of the league tables but as Spielman says "Children are being done a great disservice by this approach". This isn't to say English and maths aren't important but that they should be learnt in a meaningful and purposeful context.

Finance, continues to be stretched to the point of breaking, we are very fortunate, that for this year, we are still able to afford to give the children the rich learning opportunities of a specialist music teacher and support their Mental Health and Well-being through our 'Talk Space' service, when so many other schools are having to make cuts. We are also very grateful for the community grant that our Year 5 and 6 children were able to access and enjoy during their WWI topic. We continue to look for grants and ways to enhance our budget and therefore the impact on the children's learning.

Safeguarding and online safety are extremely important within schools today and since the new updated government publication of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' we have been focussing heavily on Online Safety in our schools. At St Mark's, we regularly remind the children to be safe when using the internet, this includes lessons on Online Safety and promoting Online safety day, where they learn how to get the most out of the internet, whilst keeping themselves safe. This is Claire's last year as Co-headship at St Mark's School but she will be continuing as Director of the Teaching School in September. I would like to take this opportunity to publically thank Claire for all the support, encouragement and fun we have had over the last two and half years and I am grateful to have had such a wonderful mentor by my side. Thank you Claire!

The TSA thrives providing a myriad of benefits to the school from which the staff and children benefit, such as:

- Giving the school a status which keeps our school safer in challenging times
- Allowing our staff to tap into the top quality leadership and training courses we provide and have a 'career pathway' - most schools now have little professional development due to costs
- Additional finances, which have helped to keep the school afloat generated from profits on courses and wages paid for the services we provide in school-to-school support across the county and beyond
- Research- we developed a tracking tool for SEN children which has been adopted countywide
- Various Hubs to provide networks for teachers in Maths, SEN, Mental health and well-being, PHSE, EYFS and more
- Bespoke governor training
- Coaching to provide ongoing support for staff

We are also members of many partnerships which give us access to a range of skills and additional opportunities through the Wealden Education Improvement Partnership, which I co-chair, and the 'Satellite Alliance' which provides us with a link to a Special School, helpful for our children with SEN. St Mark's has above the national average of SEN children.

I would also like to say a big, thank you, to Annette, but also to this fantastic village which has strongly supported the school and myself since 2007. St Mark's and Hadlow Down has provided me with the best job in the world but also so many good friends. St Mark's is a wonderful place to be and we are proud to be part of this special village community, which continues to support the school so well. We continue to work together to give our children a safe and enjoyable place to learn and reach their full potential, incorporating our Christian vision of giving the children 'Wings to Fly'.

The Chair thanked both co-Heads for the work they have done at the school and especially Claire Rivers for all she has done over the years.

7. Financial Report - The Clerk presented the report that appears at the end of these minutes. No questions were asked. The Chair advised that the Parish Council had heated debates over the provision of grant payments and asked for the audiences' comments. Members of the public who commented supported the giving of grants.
8. Reports from Councillors

(a) Playing Field – Cllr. Julian Michaelson-Yeates

Playing Field Committee

As a village we are incredibly fortunate to have a wonderful Committee and team of volunteers running the playing field for the benefit of all parishioners. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee: Nigel Harrison, John Thompson and Peter Smythe. Graham Terry stepped down as a trustee this year and I would like to thank him for all his work and dedication over the years. We are also indebted to Bob Lake for his energy in connection with the football pitch drainage project as well as the continual repair and preparation work for the cricket square.

There is always a long list of improvement and maintenance projects and this wouldn't be possible without a committed team of volunteers.

This winter just passed is the first since the completion of the football pitch drainage project and what a difference it's made. The ground was firm and it will prove to be an excellent playing surface. Discussions with a local team are currently in progress and more will be announced shortly.

Do go and look at the website www.hdpf.uk and you will see all the excellent work that is going on, the 25 cricket fixtures planned for this year as well as keeping up to date on the social events including the pavilion dining evenings which are very popular. The next pavilion dining is on the 7th June with French theme so remember to book early. The Village Fair returns to the Playing Field on the 20th July, the theme is the The Peace Day Celebration 100 years since the end of the First World War. This is always an excellent day and for this special year there will be a recreation of that rather poignant photograph of Hadlow Downers back in 1919 at the Peace Celebrations in front of a marquee in the gardens of The Grange. There is also going to be a Race Night at the end of September in the Village Hall with a bar and evening meal, this is going to be very popular so please set aside the 28th September in your diary.

Finally and now one of the established highlights of the year is the bonfire night, a key village social event as well as being an important source of funds for the Playing Field Committee. It's a very professionally run event that requires an extraordinary degree of organisation by the committee and the many bonfire volunteers. We are indebted to the pyrotechnic and bonfire experience of Guy Osborne and Ben Floyd who volunteer their services without which this very enjoyable evening would not be possible.

Play Area

Rachel Lewis has been very successful in securing funds for the play area, and as a result the Parish Council has £10,000 for more play equipment. A Tesco Bags for Help scheme is currently topping this up so we wait to see how much we will have to spend on new equipment.

There is now a seating area near the play area, which is a lovely addition and a great place for a picnic. Special mention and thanks is due to Paul James who collected these tables and assembled them. The benches were to have been in a wooded glade but the winds are progressively taking its toll on the few remaining scotch pines that were planted in the 60's by the School House Trust. The trees that didn't get cut down to sell as Christmas trees in the 60's are now fully grown but they have rather shallow roots and I wouldn't be surprised if the upcoming tree survey recommends a couple more by the new benches to be removed. I notice that Foxgloves are now growing by the benches so perhaps the wooded glade might become more of a meadow clearing.

ROSPA have just announced they will be scheduling another inspection of the play equipment in June. Whilst we are on the subject of health & safety I would like to take this opportunity to thank Lucy McConachie for undertaking the weekly H&S checks and to John Thompson who is assisting the Parish Council in checking the zip-wire tension. I would also like to thank Guy Osbourne who provided the use of his cherry picker to help inspect the bolt securing the swing rope to the oak tree last autumn.

(b) Planning, Highways and Rights of Way – Cllr. Damon Wellman

Strengthening Local Relationships:

The Chair and I attend our bi-annual meeting with Highways and try to iron out local issues to do with roads, pavements, drainage etc. I won't lie, this is an ever increasing battle trying to get ESCC to do the jobs they are supposed to do with your council tax money, but in most cases are still failing. It's not all bad news, as we do get some progress but I fear without us at them constantly even less would get done. The processes and bureaucracy that local authorities are tangled up in is a major factor and the lack of collaboration to achieve simple goals is disappointing, parking enforcement, or the lack of it being a particular example.

Planning:

The quarterly planning panel gives an update on current and future planning changes and legislation, planning has and continues to change at an astonishing rate but now that Wealden have finally submitted the new local plan we may, once this is fully adopted, hopefully get a bit more consistency in planning decisions, but don't hold your breath!

Highways:

Over the last 3 years or so I have done a lot of work and spent an exhausting amount of time trying to get some Bob Standley.

Again the bureaucracy and institutionalised inefficiencies of the ESCC highways department is an ongoing battle and one that I feel we are not winning, it disappoints me no end to see this major department, that affects pretty much everybody on a daily basis, still failing miserably.

But, on the bright side, your council tax still goes up!

I have attended the 101 call centre recently for a tour of operations, as they have come under particular fire, and would be happy to take any questions now or after if anybody has any.

A member of the public raised that WDC are already making planning decisions based on the Local Plan. Cllr Wellman

advised that he has already raised this with them. Cllr Standley (WDC) advised that planning law allows them to do this.

(c) New Community Centre – Cllr. Michael Lunn.

Planning Applications

- Two stage approach
- First to secure additional trip credits for the redevelopment in principle of the old village hall as part of an outline planning application
- Second to submit full planning application for the new community centre as previously presented in numerous public meetings.
- Consultation, Consultation, Consultation.
- Great credit and thanks needs to go to the volunteers and trustees of the Committee to get us to this point! Bob Lake as Chair needs particular thanks.

Delays

- The Parish Councils aspiration and stated desire to have the application submitted earlier were thwarted by: -
- i) a delay in the publication of the Framework Travel Plan
- ii) a late insistence by Wealden District Council that we produce a Noise Survey and
- iii) the mix-up at their end with regard to the payment of the planning fees. The application was submitted during the week beginning 4th December 2018
- Finally, the planning application received over 60 letters/comments of support

Next Steps

- Planning application for the new community centre is before planning officers at the moment.
- It is likely to come before the Planning Committee on May 30th
- Following this we will know if the project moves to the next phase or not.
- I suspect a number of conditions will be placed on the application if approval is given
- The next phase will clearly include fundraising, and grant applications to numerous bodies but the design and size will meet the numerous criteria which should assist this.

Questions on the old Village Hall

- First point to state – NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN
- It will be only when a decision has to be made will a debate take place and that will be for the Parish Council at the time to agree the process.
- The gifting of the land in which the hall sits has a condition that any disposal must be in consultation and agreement of the Parishioners.
- All options are open for debate. But the outline permission was only indicative to secure trip credits to allow the new community centre to be the size it is.
- At this stage the Parish Council has not even discussed the matter but it is likely that a public meeting would be held followed by some form of referendum. At this stage no budget has been allocated for such matters.

(d) Village Hall – Cllr. Rachel Lewis

What a busy 12 months the Village Hall had- new activities, new opportunities and recently new committee. The hall has been completely redecorated as indeed has the committee room, the chairs have been cleaned and the kitchen has new equipment- dishwasher, microwave and fridge.

There are an amazing amount of activities that now happen in the Hall- from Scouts group to Homefront LindyHop, a ballet group, Tai Chi, martial arts and puppy training group,

As most of you will know, after 11 years of wonderful service Janet decided to stand down as chair of the Village Hall committee along with Mike Garner, who was the Treasurer, and Barbara Ball and Joan Wiltshire. The Parish Council would like to thank each one of the committee members for all their hard work and commitment over the years and for their excellent contribution to the life of the village.

The Village Hall now has its new Chair- Sally Blyfield- her committee members are Teresa Chapman, Kathy Cracknell, Olga Gracia and Alison Bentley. Beatrice Felicité will continue doing her sterling work as the Bookings secretary.

The new committee have already interviewed and appointed a caretaker who looks after the day to day maintenance of the hall and ensures that it continues to remain fit for purpose for those who have events or activities within the Hall.

England's 10,000 village halls are at the heart of rural community life- used by over million people every week with nearly 250,000 volunteers running them.

Here in Hadlow Down we have a thriving community and the village hall has always, and will continue to, play such an essential role in the wellbeing of our village.

In 2018/9 the Parish Council made a grant of £695 towards the cost of a microwave oven and some funds towards the booking secretary's fees.

The Parish Council wishes to offer its ongoing support for the new village hall committee and our appreciation for all those who volunteer both for the committee and in supporting Hall activities.

The Chair thanked the old committee and the new members for all their work.

(e) Burial Ground– Cllr. Sandra Richards

There is very little to report this year regarding the burial ground other than very persistent moles!! We have had to take the decision not to allow trees/shrubs to be planted on graves as whilst these start off small they can grow and the roots disturb the grave and it then becomes awkward if they have to be removed at a later date. We have also had quite a lot of

correspondence over what is/or isn't suitable as memorials in a village burial ground and we have tried to maintain a balanced approach which suits the bereaved but also does not look out of place in its surroundings.

A member of the public raised that the kissing gate from the burial ground needs work done to it, *the Clerk will investigate.*

Clerk

9. Chairman's Report

We are at the end of a four-year term for the Parish Council and I am pleased to say that we have had new people putting themselves forward to join the Parish Council for the next 4 years and so we will be having an election in May for the first time in a long period. I believe that this shows that the Parish Council is trying to do a good job for the village and that parishioners want to ensure that we continue to do so and remain independent.

We will be saying goodbye to Iain Turner – I am extremely grateful to him for his support over the years as he is extremely busy with his own work but joined the Parish Council, with a bit of arm-twisting from myself, and has given a lot to the Parish Council in all aspects from digging ditches, helping with the water shortage and trying to get the Emergency Plan into some kind of order.

In the last four years, we have been short of one Councillor and, unlike a number of other Councils, we have not had any 'retired' people on the Council – everyone has their own work commitments as well as trying to keep up with all of the paperwork and meetings (not just Parish Council meetings) that need to be attended as part of their remit for the Parish Council. I am extremely grateful to all of them for their continued support, good humour and, on occasions, lively debate! Hadlow Down is extremely lucky to have a group of volunteers who help run the old Village Hall, the new Community Centre, the Playing Field and the Village Fayre – the work that is carried out by the Committees and, in particular, the Chairmen/women is enormous and the Parish Council are very grateful for their invaluable contributions. I would also like to thank Graham Terry who is no longer part of the Council but continues to help us with our Newsletters and Annual Report which helps get the message out to the village about what we do.

Finally and, last but not least, I have to (yet again) give thanks to Helen our Clerk for her invaluable contribution to the Parish Council over the last year. We are extremely lucky to have Helen who as always continues to keep us working professionally. The rules governing a Parish Council are strict and exacting and can sometimes prove frustrating for Councillors who just 'want to get on with the job' – however, Helen manages to keep us 'under control' and does it with a sense of humour alongside the professionalism of her position.

10. Questions from the floor – a member of the public asked what members of the public could do if they identified a planning enforcement issue. A Councillor advised them to report to WDC, the Parish Council Clerk and their WDC Councillor
11. Closure of business – a member of the public thanked the Parish Council for all their work.

The meeting closed at 8:42pm

Draft final accounts 2018-19

INCOME	2017-18		2018-19	
Balance brought forward	13,170.63		2,910.04	
Precept	28,712.00		31,455.00	
Burial ground	7,630.00		920.00	
VAT reclaimed	280.41		2,782.68	
ESCC contribution for fingerpost costs	-		795.00	
Rent for playing field	0.25		-	
Compensation from Barclays	100.00		-	
UK Power Networks playing field rent	3.55		3.61	
Grants	-		10,000.00	
Transfer from reserves	1,150.00		2,076.00	
Total	51,046.84	51,046.84	50,942.33	50,942.33

EXPENDITURE				
Clerk's salary	13,279.26		14,527.78	
Clerk's training	369.31		416.35	
Administration	1,292.39		1,490.22	
PC insurance	280.00		308.29	
Subscriptions	487.32		548.98	
Grants	3,532.48		4,865.00	
Hire of hall	400.00		400.00	
Audit	467.10		318.00	
Maintenance of Burial Ground	1,303.96		1,072.61	
Litter & dog bin emptying	1,440.00		1,500.00	
Parish Projects Plan	581.17		-	
Fingerpost maintenance	-		1,150.00	
Chairmen's expenses	177.49		118.32	
Councillor's training	80.00		175.00	
Chair and Councillor's allowance	-		-	
Election expenses	-		-	
Website	10.98		632.51	
Maintenance of play area & inspection	2,537.02		3,127.87	
Tree work at playing field & play area	1,430.00		-	
New equipment at playing field & play area	1,265.97		-	
Legal fees	1,703.00		-	
Entrance to playing field	20.00		-	
Loan payment	1,134.14		1,134.14	
Footpath 27c from grant	1,377.00		-	
Celebrate expenses from grant	8,896.20		-	
Telephone box	1.00		250.00	
Defibrillators	172.35		34.90	
Contingencies	195.98		1,208.40	
Transfer into reserves	2,920.00		3,573.00	
VAT paid	2,782.68		1,327.76	
Total	48,136.80	<u>48,136.80</u>	38,179.13	<u>38,179.13</u>

Balance at 31st March	2,910.04	12,763.20
Plus cheques drawn but not presented	10.98	1,162.51
Current account balance at 31st March	2,921.02	13,925.71
(carried forward figure for following year)		

Earmarked reserves:		Movement	
Brought forward		36,690.00	
Burial Ground Landscaping	1,200.00	200.00	1,400.00
Property Maintenance	1,662.00		1,662.00
New Village Hall Fund	5,944.00		5,944.00
Road Safety Improvements/Highways	3,695.00	-1056.00	2,639.00
Election Fund	432.00		432.00

Finger post costs	1,700.00	-420.00	1,280.00
IT	754.00		754.00
Community Plan	4,700.00	3,000.00	7,700.00
Play equipment	4,692.00		4,692.00
Pensions		223.00	223.00
Total earmarked reserves:	24,779.00	<u>1,947.00</u>	26,726.00
Unearmarked reserves	11,911.00	-378.00	11,533.00
Total reserves & Active Saver balance:			
at 31st March	<u>36,690.00</u>		<u>38,259.00</u>
Carried forward		38,259.00	

Notes to accompany 2018-19 figures

We received £530.00 from ESCC Highways as their 50% contribution to the work undertaken on 2 fingerposts. We also received a contribution from Framfield Parish Council, due to a fingerpost on the border and transferred funds from fingerposts reserves to help pay for the remaining cost.

A grant of £10,000 was received from the Big Lottery Fund which will be used to purchase new equipment for the play area.

The Clerk's salary included extra hours that were required in order for the Parish Council to be GDPR compliant.

Administration included the printing of the annual report and a newsletter and increased broadband and telephone costs.

Subscriptions included 2 years' worth of subscriptions to The Keep archive.

Grants were made to ENGage, Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance, Wealden CAB, Parish Magazine, Hadlow Down Village Hall and the Playing Field Committee.

Maintenance of burial ground covered the normal grounds maintenance and some extra work on some of the plots and the removal of a pillar in the parking area.

Councillor's training included new councillor training and attendance at the Wealden District Council conference and the East Sussex Association of Local Council's meeting.

The website cost included a contribution of £600 to the setting up of the new village website, the cost of this was taken from unearmarked reserves.

In addition to the regular inspection costs at the playing field, the Parish Council have also paid for the clearing of an area, the installation of paths to the new picnic tables, repairs to play equipment and tree work.

We are awaiting an invoice from the solicitor for legal fees incurred for the playing field. £3000 has been transferred to Community Reserves to ensure that there are funds available for this cost.

Contingencies relate to work to the surface of Hut Lane, cleaning and painting the village name sign and the public notice for the Village Hall planning application. The cost of the work to Hut Lane was taken from road safety improvements/highways reserves fund.

Of the £3573 that was transferred into reserves, £3000 went into Community Plan reserves for legal fees costs, £200 went into burial ground landscaping reserves to cover an invoice we are awaiting for work at the burial ground. £223 went into a new pensions reserve which will be available for any deficit in the pension fund.

Councillors continue to not claim the allowance to which they are entitled and haven't claimed for travel expenses, despite attending various external meetings and training courses.

Notes on Precept

The Parish Council tried to keep the precept as low as they possibly could, however due to extra demands on their budget, they have unfortunately had to increase the precept this year. Although the increase only equates to 42p per month for a Band D household.