

<b>POLO</b>  <b>PARISHES OF THE LOWER OUSE</b>
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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD (VIA ZOOM) ON MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025**  
**(and the beginning of the POLO meeting originally scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> May which was adjourned and re-scheduled due to low attendance, resulting from a clash with a full meeting of LDC.)**

**Present** – Alex Pett (POLO Chair) (Southease Parish Meeting), Sue Carroll (Safer C7 Project), James Harrison (Newhaven Town Council), Stella Spiteri (LDC), John Scaife (Piddinghoe PC).

**Apologies** – Cllr Cathy Gallagher (Telscombe Town Council and Peacehaven Town Council), Sarah Osborne (ESCC).

**Not present:** Chris Baker (Iford Parish Meeting), Claire Dishington (Rodmell Parish Council), Neville Harrison (Egrets Way project), Sarah Roberts (KRCRA), Ken Whitehouse (Kingston Parish Council).

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b>  Apologies had been received from Cllr Cathy Gallagher (Telscombe Town Council and Peacehaven Town Council) and Sarah Osborne (ESCC).</p> <p>This meeting had been re-scheduled from its original date (19<sup>th</sup> May) due to a clash with a full meeting of LDC on 19<sup>th</sup> May, which meant that many members of POLO were unable to attend.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Changes to council representatives on POLO</b>  Cllr James Harrison, who represents the Denton ward of Newhaven Town Council, has replaced Shaun Boniface as the NTC representative on POLO. James was welcomed to the meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that Ken Whitehouse has now replaced Christine Moulder as the representative of Kingston Parish Council on POLO.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 where not covered elsewhere on the agenda.</b>  <u>SDNPA Local Plan consultation</u></p> <p>Kingston Parish Council organised a consultation event for their residents on the draft SDNPA Local Plan kindly invited councillors and residents from other parishes to attend. This informative and helpful event took place on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Thanks to KPC for hosting this event.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Reports from councils on matters of potential common interest to other POLO councils, where not covered elsewhere on the agenda.</b>  <u>South Downs National Park Gateway Sign for the C7</u></p> <p>Piddinghoe PC have been trying to obtain a SDNP Gateway sign for the southern end of the C7 (southern end of Piddinghoe parish), without success.</p> <p>The Safer C7 Project plans also include the proposal to locate a SDNP Gateway sign at the southern end of the C7/Lewes Road. It was thought that this would make sense, not least because the C7 acts as a gateway for</p>	

	<p>people arriving by ferry from France, and because the C7 and Lower Ouse Valley are located entirely within the national park.</p> <p>The C7 Project team had contacted Alex Pringle at SDNPA concerning this matter because they wanted to include the costs within their application for CIL funding as part of Phase 1 of the project (<i>install village gateways</i>). Unfortunately, an extremely negative response had been received. The SDNPA Head of Communications was reported to have re-iterated that there is an established process for park boundary signage and these must have members' approval. She pointed out that the location had already been assessed previously, and it had not been possible to find a suitable point to locate a 'boundary sign on this road'.</p> <p>Alex Pringle had indicated that he had himself used Google maps to determine that the only sites that look as if they might be able to accommodate the smallest design are either 100m <i>before</i> the park boundary, which ESCC would not appreciate, or over 150m <i>after</i> the start of the park, at a location that would likely affect the sightlines of residents trying to leave their properties. He emphasised that the Safer C7 project should NOT include a SDNPA 'boundary sign' in their CIL application and should be aware that it was unlikely that it was even possible to locate a boundary sign here, regardless of whether or not there was agreement to install one.</p> <p>It didn't sound as though there is any flexibility about locating the sign anywhere except ON or very close to the actual SDNPA <u>boundary</u>, rather than an SDNPA 'welcome sign' a little way inside the park, for example.</p> <p>Sue Carroll reported that she had subsequently received some advice from someone who had previously worked in SDNPA signage. They had said that parish councils can fund the signs through CIL funding. This would by-pass the boundary issue. It was recommended that Piddinghoe PC should contact Ruth James, the SDNPA person responsible for signage, and ask for guidance on this matter. It was agreed that Sue would forward this information to John Scaithes. (It had already been sent to Paul Bevan in May.)</p>	SC
5.	<p><b>Police Rural Crime Team – Parish Surgeries</b></p> <p>As POLO secretary, Sue Carroll had written to Jennifer Edge, the Rural Crime Team co-ordinator, requesting possible dates for POLO to hold a joint surgery for councillors and residents, to be hosted by one of the POLO parishes. A reply has been received, offering a number of potential dates, but all the dates are in August. It was agreed that many councillors and residents are likely to be away in August and that Sue should request some dates after the school summer holidays have ended.</p> <p>A parish will need to take on the role of hosting the event.</p>	SC
6.	<p><b>Up-dates on Road Matters</b></p> <p><u>The Safer C7 Project</u></p> <p>Steve Pearce has joined the Safer C7 Project team and is leading the CIL application process. The project is benefitting from his previous professional experience in local authority project planning.</p> <p>An application for CIL funding to implement Phase 1a (village gateways) has been submitted to SDNPA. A decision is expected in the Autumn.</p>	

	<p>An application for Lewes District Council CIL funding has also been submitted, to fund the following elements of the plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1b) new and improved crossing points.</li> <li>- 2a) improved bus stop areas and access where needed.</li> <li>- Some elements of 2b) new and improved footways: to the garden centre from the bus stop opposite Wellgreen Lane junction; to the Abergavenny pub from the end of the footpath from Northease.</li> </ul> <p>The more complex crossing areas, at sites where there are also going to be changes to the layout of junctions, will be held over until phase 3. These more complex sites are at Cranedown, Wellgreen Lane (where PJA are suggesting there could be a zebra crossing), Rodmell, and Southease. Consultants PJA had sent draft designs for the proposed interventions at Wellgreen Lane, Rodmell, Southease, and the priority working sites at Rodmell and Northease.</p> <p>There were no parish representatives from Kingston or Rodemll present at the meeting.</p> <p>The Southease parish chair expressed his serious concerns about the draft design for Southease. Many of the proposed features seemed grossly inappropriate for the beautiful rural location; these included raised kerbs, red pavers, a zebra crossing (which would require lighting), a coloured 'implied pathway' down the lane towards the village. These concerns were shared by the Safer C7 Project team and had already been fed back to PJA, who had delegated this design to a designer who (it was thought) was not familiar with the site. A replacement design has been requested, along with the draft designs for the remaining sections of the C7.</p> <p>It was suggested that once all the draft designs had been received, a 'workshop' should be held for a small number of representatives from each parish, with the consultants, to consider all the plans in detail.</p> <p>The detail of the designs do not need to be confirmed until November. New guidance on rural road design being published by the SDNPA would be worth a look before the workshop; <i>Community Led Approaches to Traffic Solutions</i>, and its accompanying <i>Catalogue of Interventions</i>, SDNPA 2025.</p> <p>The Safer C7 Team envisage that implementation of these first phases will take two years (from funding being allocated), with work on the ground starting in July 2026 and completed by 2027. Funding applications for the next phase would be made meanwhile.</p> <p>The designs by PJA include the suggestion that bus stops should become information hubs for walkers, cyclists and bus users, perhaps with a map showing all the foot and cycle paths in the area. They also propose that there should be cycle racks located at the bus stops. POLO members did not think this would be practical or worthwhile – in terms of security for the bikes, or relevance to cyclists. Locating cycle racks within villages, e.g. near the church, village hall or pub, would be more useful. A cycle rack for each village has therefore been included in the LDC CIL application, since active travel is a priority for the council.</p> <p>Project management for the implementation phases is currently under discussion. 20% VAT will be payable on all costs unless the project is</p>	
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	<p>managed by a public body such as the SDNPA, district council, or ESCC Highways.</p> <p>The C7 project team may need to apply separately for grant funds to cover the costs of a suitably qualified and experienced part-time project manager. Both ESCC Highways and SDNPA have undertaken to provide advice and support for the project.</p> <p><u>The Egrets Way – Phase 7</u></p> <p>The landowners of land adjacent to the relevant stretches of road have all been visited. ESCC Highways, Sustrans and SDNPA are all actively involved.</p> <p><u>Kingston Parish Council</u></p> <p>In addition to the vehicle width project, PJA consultants have been commissioned by KPC to look at the whole route from the bottom of Ashcombe Lane to the Wellgreen Lane junction, including the pinch points near the school where there are significant traffic problems at the start and end of each school day.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Local Government re-organisation</b></p> <p>Not much is known at this stage.</p>	
8.	<p><b>C7 Clean Up Weekend</b></p> <p>It has been suggested that this might also include 'tributary' lanes and footpaths next year.</p>	
9.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>It was noted that local MP, James McCleary, is holding meetings for residents in the POLO parishes this summer.</p>	
10.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING : Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm via Zoom</b></p> <p>NB. This replaces the date originally agreed at the June POLO meeting (8<sup>th</sup> September).</p>	