

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FRANT PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL IN ERIDGE ON WEDNESDAY 20th MARCH 2019 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Rutherford – Chairman
Cllrs Macdonald-Brown, Howell, Crookshank, Rowland and Park

County Cllr Bob Standley
Mrs Rosie Karim – Clerk
Mr David Huskisson – Friends of Frant Green
Three members of the public

1. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Wallis and Stevens. Apologies were accepted.

2. To receive declarations of interests on items on the Agenda and changes to the Register of Interests

None.

3. To approve the Draft Minutes of the meeting on 20th February 2019

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. To determine matters arising from the previous meeting

- Cllr Howell confirmed that Wealden District Council was looking into who owns various parcels of land in Rushlye Close and they would write to any private owners to cut back overgrown planting. County Cllr Standley said he did not think there would be any grant funding available to support the provision of streetlighting in the Close.
- County Cllr Standley said he had both written to and telephoned the Broadband team, but had not yet had a response.
- The Clerk confirmed that she would be writing to both the Church Youth Worker and the Frant Friendship Group to ask if they would speak at the Annual Parish Meeting in May. **Action: Clerk**
- Cllrs noted that the risk assessments of the Parish's assets were underway.
- With regards to the recent burglary at Lambs Larder, Cllr Howell said the response she had received about how the police in Sussex and Kent had responded was unsatisfactory and she recommended that the Parish Council take this further. Cllr Rutherford agreed to do this. **Action: WR**

5. Public forum

Two local residents of Rushlye Close addressed the Council about their ongoing concerns with the lack of streetlighting in the Close and the risk this poses to people's safety. They noted that they had raised this issue some 13 years ago and yet the problem was still ongoing. They referred to injuries that they and a close relative had sustained as a result of the lack of lighting after dark and the perilous state of the six steps at the end of the Close. They pointed out that there are several families living there and they struggle to navigate the street safely with their small children, particularly in winter.

Cllr Rutherford said the Parish Council were aware of the issues and were also very concerned. He noted that there were a number of considerations around providing lighting, including land ownership, maintenance and cost. He noted that the Parish Council were being proactive in attempting to find a way forward, including talking to BT about their pole in the Close and liaising with Highways and Wealden District Council. Cllr Standley confirmed that ESCC

were trying to find a solution. Cllr Howell agreed to keep the local residents updated with progress and it was agreed that it would be raised at the next SLR meeting with Highways. **Action: Clerk/JH**

Mrs Best (ex-Parish Councillor) spoke next to enquire about progress on the provision of a new green in Eridge. The Clerk confirmed that the change of use application had been submitted to Wealden District Council. Mrs Best offered to assist at a later stage with drawing-up more detailed plans for the green. Cllr Rutherford thanked Mrs Best and noted that Eridge Estate were aware that the lease arrangements were conditional upon the change of use being granted.

(Two residents left the meeting)

6. To receive reports from County and District Councillors

County

County Cllr Standley said that ESCC would end the year with a small surplus, which was to be welcomed. However, he noted the continued strain on key services, such as adult social care and children's services, both of which had gone over budget.

County Cllr Standley highlighted the success of the apprenticeships programme which saw the County having the fourth highest number of apprentices across all counties.

Mrs Best asked about how the 100 new PCSOs were being funded and it was noted that the funds were derived from Council Tax increases.

District

Cllr Howell referred to recent voluntary awards dispensed by Wealden District Council and noted the contributions the winners in each category had made.

Cllr Howell noted that the District Council had received a gold award for its Big Wealden Switch initiative. She also referred to another initiative that might be of interest locally, called Streetwise Soccer, and suggested details of this might be inserted into Parish News. **Action: Clerk**

Lastly, Cllr Howell referred again to the incident at Lambs Larder and read out a statement from Chief Inspector Anita Turner. Councillors agreed that this was not an adequate response and the issue should be pursued further.

Cllr Rutherford noted that Stage 1 of the Examination in Public of the Draft Wealden Local Plan would commence in May. It was estimated that Stage 2 would begin in July.

7. Green Spaces

7.1 To consider a draft submission for a grant application

Mr Huskisson said it was intended to submit the application within the week. He noted that the grant would support the planting work, resulting in approximately £2000 over three years for the Parish Council to pay for ongoing maintenance. Cllrs unanimously **agreed** the content of the draft application. Cllr Howell said she wished the Parish Council to document its thanks to both Mr Huskisson and Mrs Steadman for the considerable amount of time they had spent on this and similar projects.

7.2 To review the report from Allen Scott about the green in Frant

Cllr Macdonald-Brown noted an inaccuracy on page two of the report where the location of the green was explained. Mr Huskisson agreed and noted that the report could be expanded in places. It was **agreed** that he would liaise with Allen Scott about this, on behalf of the Parish Council. **Action: Mr Huskisson**

Cllr Howell raised the issue of dog fouling in the High Street in Frant and noted recent correspondence from the Clerk with details of who to contact so that Kier could attend to clean up. She also raised the issue, following several complaints, about the potentially hazardous state of the brick pavements, again in the High Street. Both the Clerk and County Cllr Standley said they would follow up with Highways about this. **Action: Clerk/BS**

(Mr Huskisson left the meeting)

It was noted that the bank around the green in Bells Yew Green was to be replanted soon. Cllr Macdonald-Brown reminded councillors of the cycling race in the forthcoming weekend.

(County Cllr Standley left the meeting)

8. Finance (WR)

8.1 To approve the accounts payable

The Clerk told councillors that, with effect from 1 April 2019, her pay scale had been realigned. The Clerk went on to table the accounts to be paid, as follows:

Payee	Item	Cheque No.	Amount
N. McGregor-Gould	Maintenance of bus shelters: Jan-Mar 2019	3204	£105.00
ESCC	Urban grass cutting 2018-19	3205	£323.00
Frant Memorial Hall	Hall hire for Sept – Dec 2018 Inv date 13 th March	3206	£80.00
NALC/ESALC	Subscription 2019-20	3207	£481.93
Castle Water	Castle Water for supply to allotments	3208	£47.18
Staff	Salary/mileage and expenses, incl reimbursement for planning application fee	3209/12	£1,370.82
		TOTAL	£2407.93

The accounts were **approved**.

8.2 To approve the bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliation was **approved**.

The Clerk noted that several organisations were now not accepting cheques for payment, including Wealden District Council. She suggested that the Parish Council consider switching to online banking, enabling BACS payments. The Clerk noted that NatWest did not allow for double signatories on its online banking platform and it was agreed that the Clerk would investigate other banks. **Action: Clerk**

9. To review the recommendations from the Interim Audit

The Clerk noted that the many of the recommendations of the report would be resolved through the provision of the new website.

The recommendations were accepted.

10. To adopt Standing Orders

The Clerk tabled the 2018 Model Standing Orders from NALC, noting that they needed to be tailored to suit the Parish Council. It was agreed that these minor alterations would be brought to the next meeting for approval and, in the meantime, it was **unanimously agreed** to adopt these Standing Orders in principle.

11. To adopt Financial Regulations

The Clerk tabled the most recent Model Financial Regulations from NALC (2016) and, as above, noted that they needed to be tailored. As above, it was agreed that these minor alterations would be brought to the next meeting for approval and, in the meantime, it was **unanimously agreed** to adopt these Financial Regulations in principle.

12. Safety in the Parish

Cllr Rowland reported the following

- A knife amnesty initiative is running, with disposal bins at local police stations;
- 72 new PCSOs have been recruited and are undergoing 15 weeks of training;
- Over three years, 250 new officers will be recruited, as well 50 special investigators and a further 28 PCSOs;
- Police will be in attendance at the forthcoming Annual Assembly in Groombridge on 23rd March.

13. Communications (DP)

Cllr Park said she had reviewed the new website and considered it was beginning to take shape. The Clerk asked councillors if they could contribute any photographs of the Parish. She also noted that they would need to provide headshots for the new website.

Action: Cllrs

14. Highways and Lighting (AMB)

14.1 Lighting in Rushlye Close, Bells Yew Green

Councillors expressed their frustration at the ongoing delay in finding a solution to the lighting issue in this location. It was agreed to continue to actively pursue the matter and if it has not been resolved by September, to consider further action.

14.2 Summary of the SLR meeting on 18th March

Cllr Macdonald-Brown summarised the key points arising from the SLR meeting, including congestion on Dundale Road and the egress at Cricketeers Close, damaged chicane furniture in Bells Yew Green, the deterioration in the road surface in Bunny Lane and the recurrent flooding at the bridge in Bells Yew Green.

The worsening problem of frequent congestion on Dundale Road and Hawkenbury Road was discussed, with Cllrs Park and Crookshank recalling the problems of HGVs using these roads, meeting head on and being unable to pass, sometimes causing delays of up to half an hour. It was agreed that a petition should be started up, with photographic evidence, if possible, and that this should be presented to our County Councillor.

Cllr Howell said she had received complaints from some residents in Warren Ridge in Frant about the speed of traffic coming along the Bells Yew Green Road. It was agreed that reviving the possibility of installing village gates at the Frant end of this road may help to reduce drivers' speed. Clerk to investigate.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Park noted that complaints had been made to Wealden District Council about the contractors on the building site opposite the golf club on Hawkenbury Road and inconsiderate parking and driving. It was noted that no complaints had been forwarded to the Parish Council but it was pointed out that many of the residents along there might not

know they fall within the Parish boundary. Cllr Park said Mr Moss, from Wealden District Council, was in touch with the site manager and Cllr Howell said she would phone Mr Moss directly for an update. It was agreed the Clerk would write to the developer about this issue. **Action: JH/Clerk**

(Mrs Best left the meeting)

15.1 To approve the Draft Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 4th March 2019

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

15.2 To review recent correspondence in relation to WD/2019/0275/F – Chase Farm, Frant

Councillors agreed that recent comments from the agent, forwarded by the planning officer to the Clerk, did not change the Parish Council's original position on this application.

15.3 To consider planning and licence applications:

- **WD/2019/0143/FR – Comptons Oast, Down Lane, Frant, TN3 9HP**
Retrospective application for a log store.
Councillors raised no objection to this proposal.
- **WD/2019/0331/F – Conifers, The Green, Frant, TN3 9DS**
Relocation of the rear kitchen door, the inclusion of a new glazed storm porch and new sliding doors to the dining room.
Councillors raised no objection to this proposal.

15.4 To note applications approved, refused or withdrawn:

- **WD/2018/2725/F – Stone Farm, Bayham Road, Frant, TN2 5HU**
Two-storey rear extension.
Refused on 8th March
Councillors noted the decision.
- **WD/2018/0268/F – Keepers Cottage, Wadhurst Road, Frant, TN3 9EH**
A single-storey extension to the west and east elevations.
Approved on 8th March
Councillors noted the decision.

Cllr Crookshank enquired as to when the development at Fern Close would progress. Cllr Howell reported that Highways were now not in favour of a pedestrian crossing across the A267 in this location. It was also noted that the fencing had been blown down in the recent storms. Clerk to write to Mr Bee to inform him of this. **Action: Clerk**

16. Horizon scanning

Cllr Macdonald-Brown said he had identified eight local volunteers and one from Tunbridge Wells to assist English Heritage in opening and closing the Bayham Abbey site on a daily basis during the season starting on 1st April. He said he had penned an article about this for Parish News and was meeting the English Heritage manager responsible for this site on the forthcoming Saturday.

17. Chairman's announcements & correspondence for noting

None.

18. Urgent issues at the discretion of the Chairman, for discussion only

None from the Chairman.

Cllr Rowland noted that the bench at Warren Ridge was in need of repair.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Howell repeated her offer to take councillors' nomination forms for the upcoming elections to the Council offices in Hailsham.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

ACTIONS

Action	By whom
To follow-up with the police about the response to the recent burglary at Lambs Larder.	WR
To insert information about the Streetwise Soccer initiative into the next edition of Parish News.	Clerk
To invite the Church Youth Worker and Frant Friendship Group to speak at the Annual Parish Meeting in May.	Clerk
To liaise with Highways about re-bedding loose bricks on the High St in Frant.	BS/Clerk
To liaise with Allen Scott about their recent report for the Parish Council.	DH
To contribute photographs of the Parish for the new website.	All
To look into other online banking platforms with a view to switching banks.	Clerk
To investigate the possibility for installing village gates on the BYG Road.	Clerk
To liaise with Doug Moss at Wealden DC about the contractors on site along Hawkenbury Road. Clerk to write to the developer about the same.	JH/Clerk
To write to Mr Bee about the fencing around the Fern Close site.	Clerk
To organise for the bench at Warren Ridge to be repaired.	Clerk