

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FRANT PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT BELLS YEW GREEN VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 21st NOVEMBER 2018 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Rutherford – Chairman
Cllrs Mrs Howell, Mrs Park, Mrs Wallis, Stevens, Macdonald-Brown, Crookshank

Mrs R. Karim – Clerk
County Cllr Standley
Mr D. Huskisson – Friends of Frant Green Spaces
Ms J. Steadman – Friends of Frant Green Spaces (FOFGS)
One member of the public

1. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Rowland and were accepted.

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

Cllr Wallis declared that she lived on the same estate as the applicant for planning application WD/2018/2316/F. The Chairman thanked her and noted this was not a pecuniary interest.

3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting on 17th October 2018 as a true and accurate record

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. To determine matters arising from the previous meeting

- The Clerk said she had liaised with Orchard Landscapes about urban grass cuts and would forward the information to the Chairman;
- In reference to the street-lighting issue in Rushlye Close, Cllr Wallis said BT had responded negatively to attaching a light to one of their telegraph poles but that she was still in discussions with them. She said the cost of a new post, light and connection was prohibitive at £2,600 plus VAT. One of the issues that was adding to the problem in the Close was that hedges were not being cut back, making the steps more perilous and difficult to negotiate in the dark. It was agreed that Cllr Howell would establish which houses, if any, were Council owned so that it could be organised to have these hedges cut back. If any hedges were privately owned, it was agreed that the Clerk would write to the owners. Cllr Standley said he would raise the issues described by Cllr Wallis and suggested that match-funding could be an option for any solutions the Council might seek to undertake; **Action: Clerk/JH**
- The Clerk said the option of new signage at Cricketeers Close would be best raised at the next SLR meeting.

5. Public forum

The member of the public introduced himself as a local resident and said he was interested in the proposals for part of the green in Frant.

Ms Steadman went on to raise the following:

- To ask permission from the Parish Council to renovate around the Victoria Well with native species of heather. She said that FOFGS would pay Orchard Landscapes to carry out the work. Cllr Rutherford thanked Ms Steadman and it was agreed that this work could be carried out.
- To implement a plan for the area between Shernfold Park and Shernfold Park Farm, involving a planting scheme of native species and small shrubs devised by Mr Huskisson. The member of the public noted that he and his family have a gate onto this area and he asked that the path be included as part of the cutting plan.

Ms Steadman said that the cost of the planting scheme had been quoted at £2,800 and there were three options:

- The Parish Council pays for the work;
- FOFGS fund raise; or
- FOFGS apply for a Sussex Lund Grant

Cllr Howell said she had visited the area and agreed with the scheme put forward. Cllr Stevens cautioned that the Parish Council, in allowing a path to be established, should not inadvertently change the current legal position, in terms of rights of way across the green. Cllr Rutherford agreed and it was suggested further research needed to be carried out in this regard. He agreed that the concept was good in principle but that the amount was a lot for the Parish Council to fund; he also noted that the Parish Council would need to go to tender. He therefore encouraged FOFGS to seek funds through the Sussex Lund Grant.

Mr Huskisson noted that there were a number of trees, including a veteran oak (T1), that were on the original schedule from Treework; he said he had emailed Treework to provide a cost for carrying out the Picus Tomograph Assessment they had recommended for T1.

Cllr Rutherford said that the Parish Council was gradually working through this schedule and would review it again for works next year.

Cllr Rutherford suggested that item 7 of the agenda be brought forward for consideration at this point.

7. Green Spaces

7.1 The Green in Frant

Cllr Howell said that a vehicle had driven across the green and noted that a number of posts had been damaged and needed to be reinstated. It was agreed the Clerk would ask Mr McGregor-Gould to undertake this work.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Howell went on to express her dismay at the ongoing and worsening problem of people parking on the green. Councillors agreed that action needed to be taken as a deterrent. The Clerk noted that she had written to nearby residents asking them (and any contractors they employ) to refrain from parking on the green. Various options were considered, including white 'no parking' signs, natural barriers and post and chain fencing. It was agreed that Mr Huskisson would consider planting options that could act as a deterrent. Ms Steadman opined that these works could potentially be included within the Sussex Lund Grant application.

Mr Huskisson said he had received a revised quote from Allen Scott for the consultancy work to address the erosion at the green in Frant. He noted that the quote had increased to £2,300 plus VAT. Cllr Crookshank suggested this could be funded with the CIL monies. How CIL monies can be used (eg for infrastructure) was considered and it was noted that 'infrastructure' was a loose term. Cllr Stevens said the CIL fund should be used strategically, rather than being bit into for discreet parcels of work, as and when they arose. Cllr Park agreed, noting that the Parish was extensive and the funds were not restricted for sole use in Frant. Cllr Howell noted that the green in Frant was one of the Parish's key assets, well used by a lot of people. Ms Steadman said that FOFGS had raised a considerable sum for works to the green, asking for only a small amount initially from the Parish Council. As Trustees of the green, she said the Parish Council had a duty of care to look after it.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would convene a separate meeting to discuss how the CIL monies be used in the years to come. As part of that meeting, the Parish Council would decide whether or not to pay for the erosion study from CIL funds or from ordinary funds. It was agreed that the Clerk would write a holding email to Allen Scott to this end.

Action: Clerk

6. To receive reports of County and District Councillors

County

Cllr Standley said the Core Offer was now out to consultation. He reported that the recent budget had allocated some £650 million for local government funding, a proportion of which would go to ESCC. He said he thought this allocation would now continue as a trend, year on year. However, Cllr Standley opined that, while this was of course positive, the reality was that ESCC would still run to a deficit over the next few years as budget cuts took their toll.

Turning to other matters, Cllr Standley noted the following:

- recent upgrading works to the A267 appeared to have gone smoothly;
- it had been finally concluded that trying to keep the household recycling centres open in both Wadhurst and Forest Row were not affordable projects, at an anticipated cost of some £90 000 per year;
- more information should be forthcoming in December about broadband delivery and that he was still looking into this important issue. Cllr Park noted that she had spoken to the contact at ESCC's Broadband Team about the problems being experienced in certain areas as a result of providers being allowed to 'cherry-pick' which postcodes they deliver broadband to. She said that funding for broadband per household had been cut by fifty per cent, to £1,700. Cllr Park said she believed that households with poorly-performing, or no, service were effectively being 'digitally disenfranchised', as their ability to interface with local and central government was restricted as a result.

District

Cllr Howell detailed a number of items of interest, including:

- a recent study showed that UK businesses were losing some £66 billion per year from online, cyber crime;
- Freedom Leisure is currently running a public consultation exercise; and
- the Citizens Advice Bureau has a new text and advice line and additional drop-in times;

Cllr Howell noted how well attended the memorial service on Remembrance Sunday and the recent quiz night had been. She said it had been encouraging to see the community coming together and called for more community events to be organised.

Cllr Rutherford said the Chairman's Community Volunteer Awards scheme was underway, with the deadline for nominations being 20th December. After some discussion, it was agreed to nominate long-term resident, Ms Carpenter, for her tireless contribution to Parish life over the decades.

Action: Clerk

8. Finance

8.1 To approve the accounts payable

Payee	Item	Cheque No.	Amount
WDALC	Subscription to 31 Mar 2019	3133	£21.00
Castle Water	Supply to allotments: 1 Jul – 31 Dec 18 Inv 1384665	3134	£47.01
R. Karim	Expenses & mileage	3135	•
R. Karim	Salary	3136	•
N. McGregor-Gould	Bus shelters	3137	£163.65
V. Best	Donation toward bench and paving in Eridge	3138	£195.95
Thomson Snell & Passmore	Eridge Estate's legal fees for new centenary green	3139	£3420.00
Treework	BYG hall – oak Inv 8256	3140	£1224.00

Cllr Wallis said that while the works to the oak and other trees at the hall in Bells Yew Green were being carried out, a branch had fallen and damaged the fence. It was agreed not to forward the payment until this had been resolved.

The accounts above were subsequently approved.

8.2 To approve the bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliation year to date was approved.

8.3 To consider the financial position year to date

Discussed together with item 8.4.

8.4 To consider proposed budget for 2018/19

There was discussion around the current position, noting that there was still four months until year end and thus more payments to be made. The Clerk noted that this year's amount from the Henry Smith Charity had been received, in the sum of £2,000. The Clerk also noted that some of the original categories in the nominal ledger had been altered with the implementation of the new accounting software. The Clerk raised the option of applying to bank online and possibly open a second account to hold monies over and above those guaranteed by the FSA. Cllr Rutherford said he thought this guarantee applied only to personal accounts/funds and said he would double-check this.

Action: WR

It was agreed that councillors would give some thought as to what might need funding over the next 1-3 years and the budget would be revisited at the December Full Council meeting.

9. Safety in the Parish (MR)

Nil to report.

10. Communications (DP)

10.1 To discuss options for new Council email addresses

Cllr Park circulated detailed information about the options for generic email addresses to comply with GDPR requirements. Based on her research, she explained the details of her preferred option and the associated costs. Cllr Rutherford thanked Cllr Park and it was agreed that she and the Clerk would meet to discuss this option further.

Action: Clerk/DP

10.2 To discuss the Christmas Fair in Frant

Cllr Rutherford reminded councillors that this year's Christmas fair would be held on Saturday 1st December in the High Street. The idea of placing a Christmas tree on the green was discussed and Cllr Howell agreed to speak with the owners of Manor Farm on the Bells Yew Green Road about this.

Action: JH

11. Highways and Lighting (AMB)

11.1 To discuss the poor lighting in Rushlye Close

Discussed under item 4.

12. Planning (GB)

12.1 To approve the draft Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 7th November 2018

The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record and duly signed.

12.2 To consider licence and planning applications received and make recommendations

- **WD/2018/2248/F – Comptons Oast, Down Lane, Frant, TN3 9HP**

Single garage with log store. New access and turning space. Demolition of existing double garage.

Councillors raised no objections to this application.

- **WD/2018/2316/F – 4 Nobles Wood, Bells Yew Green, TN3 9EA**

Installation of garage door to existing building.

Councillors raised no objections to this application.

- **WD/2018/1007/F – Court Lodge Farm, Bayham Road, Bells Yew Green, TN3 9BN**

Conversion of rural building (the subject of a Certificate of Lawful Use as a single dwelling - WD/2017/2521/LDE refers), to provide 5 no. dwellings, being 4 x 3-bed dwellings and 1 x 1-bed unit, parking and access to Bayham Road.

Cllr Macdonald-Brown said he had visited the site and gave councillors a detailed summary. Cllr Howell said that the proposal contravened the new Draft Local Plan in that the 'flexible approach' no longer applies; she noted it was not a windfall site or a SHELAA site.

Councillors resolved to object on the grounds of the potential impact on the AONB, not conforming with emerging Local Plan policy, being inconsistent with the local vernacular, inadequate access and drainage, and the potential for flooding.

At this point, Cllr Rutherford informed councillors that he and Cllr Howell were meeting with a developer about a proposal in the Parish. It was noted that they were doing so in their capacity as District Councillors.

12.3 To consider enforcement matters

Cllr Howell said she thought that a mobile home had been installed at Chase Farm. It was agreed that Cllr Howell would liaise with Enforcement about this.

Action: JH

13. Horizon scanning

Cllr Stevens noted that the Eridge Fair would be taking place in June 2019 and, with this early notice, he asked whether the Council would be able to hold a stall. Cllr Rutherford agreed and asked for suggestions. The idea of selling cups/mugs with a detail from each of the three wards was put forward.

14. Chairman's announcements & correspondence for noting

Cllr Rutherford thanked councillors for their help with the event at the Memorial Hall on Remembrance Sunday and said he had received positive feedback about it, the 'tommies' in the church pews and the research about the fallen soldiers of the Parish he undertook, which was inserted into copies of Parish News.

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

Cllr Stevens reiterated his concern that the Council did not inadvertently grant a right of way across its green (see item 5 above) and suggested the Council should remain vigilant to this, perhaps undertaking yearly inspections. It was agreed that the Clerk would approach solicitors for their opinion.

Action: Clerk

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 9.10pm.

ACTIONS

Action	By whom
To establish which houses in Rushlye Close are Council-owned and which are in private ownership with a view to ensuring the hedges are cut.	JH / Clerk
To ask Mr McGregor-Gould to repair and reinstate the damaged posts on the green, near the Memorial Hall in Frant.	Clerk
To respond to Allen Scott about their quote for the erosion study on the green.	Clerk
To fill in the necessary forms for nominations under the Chairman's Community Volunteer Awards.	Clerk
To establish if the Council's funds are protected by the FSA guarantee.	WR
To liaise about the preferred option for a new email system for the Council.	Clerk/DP
To liaise with Manor Farm about a Christmas tree for the green in Frant.	JH
To liaise with Enforcement about a possible mobile home at Chase Farm.	JH
To approach solicitors regarding rights of way across the green in Frant.	Clerk