

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FRANT PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT FRANT MEMORIAL HALL ON WEDNESDAY 15th MAY 2019 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Rutherford - Chairman
Cllrs Crookshank, Macdonald-Brown, Howell, Wallis, Luther

County Cllr Bob Standley
Mrs Rosie Karim – Clerk
Mr and Mrs C. Steadman
Mr D. Huskisson

1 To elect Chair

Cllr Howell proposed that Cllr Rutherford be elected to the post of Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Wallis and **unanimously agreed**.

2 To elect Vice Chair

Cllr Rutherford proposed that Cllr Crookshank be elected to the post of Vice-Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Macdonald-Brown and **unanimously agreed**.

3. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Park and these were accepted.

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

No declarations were received. Cllr Rutherford reminded councillors that they needed to submit their election expenses, even if a nil return, to Wealden District Council by the end of May. The Clerk asked that Councillors fill in the Declarations of Acceptance of Office forms at the meeting and their Register of Interests forms in due course.

5. To approve the Minutes of the meeting on 17th April 2019 as a true and accurate record.

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

6. To determine matters arising from the previous Minutes for updating and noting.

Cllr Rutherford recommended that Cllr Standley give his report from County at this point, as he had to attend another meeting elsewhere.

Cllr Standley noted that he had attended the County's Annual General Meeting the day before. Turning to more local matters, Cllr Standley read out a statement from Wealden District Council concerning the lack of streetlighting in Rushlye Close. He noted that the statement was not very positive about installing an additional streetlight in the Close but that the plant growth on the existing streetlight had been removed. Cllr Howell disputed one comment in the statement which suggested that the steps at the end of the Close were only used by the residents of one property. She said, in fact, many residents and visitors to the Close used these steps. Cllr Standley suggested that the residents of the Close make a petition which he would then take to the Chair of Highways and the Lead Cabinet Member.

Cllr Rutherford noted that he had been asked by Strutt and Parker whether the streetlight attached to the telegraph pole on the A26 at Warren Farm Lane was owned by the Parish Council, noting the East Sussex County Council had

confirmed it did not belong to them. Strutt and Parker said the Estate would like to move the pole (and light) to improve visibility at this splay. It was agreed that the Clerk would check the asset register to confirm ownership and it was agreed that, if owned by the Parish Council, then permission could be given. **Action: Clerk**

(Cllr Standley left the meeting)

7. Public Forum – time limit 15 minutes

Mrs Steadman noted that wooden inserts in the ground to the south side of the Victoria Well had been uprooted and need to be replaced. The Council agreed to pay for their replacement.

8. To receive reports from County and District Councillors

District

Cllr Howell raised the following items:

- The new chargeable garden waste service starts on 1st July. Residents can sign up to receive this service at an annual cost of £50. Cllr Macdonald-Brown enquired whether the existing bin would be collected if no longer required. *[Post meeting note: Wealden DC state that they would like the old bins returned in order to recycle them. Residents are asked to put them out on the scheduled collection days and they will be collected before the end of July];*
- Countrybike has established a website containing details of how to hire their bikes, collection and drop-off points and cost: www.countrybike.co.uk. There is also an app: Linka Go;
- National Dementia Action Week is taking place between 20th – 26th May. The next Dementia Action Alliance meeting will be held on 13th June, 10am-midday at Uckfield Civic Centre;
- Crowborough Community Café will operate every Thursday of the month, alternating between Woodlands (30th May) and Heather View (27th June), Beacon Road, Crowborough, 2pm-4pm; and
- Freedom Leisure is offering accessible swim sessions in Crowborough, suitable for people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and people living with dementia. These will be held every Tuesday, 10am-11am, during term time.

9. To consider and approve the renewal quote for the Parish Council's insurance policy

Cllr Wallis queried the figure given for the current value of the play equipment noted in the policy and asked if that included the play equipment in Bells Yew Green. If so, then the Village Hall in Bells Yew Green could cancel their insurance policy covering the play equipment. Cllr Wallis also asked if the Parish Council had a locked safe – the Clerk confirmed that it does not. She also queried the cover for mowers, etc. and noted that the postal address needed to be amended. It was thus agreed that the Clerk would examine the figures for the play equipment and circulate the findings via email to councillors. Subject to councillors' agreement via return of email, it was **resolved to approve** the renewal of the insurance policy for 2019/20.

10. Green Spaces

10.1 To discuss the revised report from Allen Scott concerning erosion around Frant green

Mr Huskisson noted that Allen Scott had responded to the issues he raised with them, incorporating them into their revised report tabled at the meeting. He noted that categories of work had been identified in the report; some of the proposed mitigation measures would be limited and more drawn out because Highways would need to be involved. He asked the Council if it was happy to now sign off this report. Councillors **agreed** that it was a comprehensive report and that the report could be signed off. Mr Huskisson intimated that he was content to liaise with Allen Scott on behalf of the Parish Council, suggesting that Allen Scott could potentially assist with the next stage. Cllr Crookshank noted that the Parish Council had CIL funds, which could go toward funding some of this work.

After some discussion about the various solutions offered in the report, it was agreed that Mr Huskisson would, with Allen Scott's help, prepare a suggested phasing, time-frame and budget for the various solutions, in order of priority. In this way, the Council could then address those areas most in need of remedial work first. **Action: DH**

10.2 To discuss the recommendations for the veteran oak on Frant green

Cllr Macdonald-Brown said he had carried out some research and thought the oak tree was some 250 years' old plus. Mr Huskisson said that the report into the health of the oak had recommended a minor trim to the branch stretching over the road and then an aerial investigation of the cavities – November being a good time to do this.

Mr Steadman enquired as to who would be carrying out the reviews of the oak and how often. Cllr Rutherford said the Parish Council was responsible and would commission the reviews. It was agreed to carry these out every two years on this particular tree. **Action: Clerk**

Mr Huskisson noted there is a cherry near the entrance way to Shernfold that requires attention. It was agreed to ask Treework to quote for any work required. **Action: Clerk**

10.3 To discuss a parish sign for Frant

Mrs Steadman said that, while liaising with local residents about the proposed information sign for the green, a number of people had confused this with a village sign, similar to the one in Eridge. She suggested that FOFGS worked in partnership with the Council to provide a village sign; she said they would fund raise and seek funds from the Canadian Army and that she had received a quote from Massons for a stone sign.

Cllr Rutherford noted that a campaign had been run by a tabloid newspaper in the 1930s, for villages to have their own signs to generate rural pride. At that time, Frant opted not to have one. Cllr Crookshank added that, at the time of Diamond Jubilee, Frant again rejected the idea of a sign, with Bells Yew Green opting for a sun dial.

Cllr Rutherford queried what the purpose of a sign would be, especially given that Frant had never one and a new sign would significantly alter the green and the wider landscape. He suggested it was something that people would either support or dislike. Cllr Crookshank agreed. Cllr Luther considered that the purpose of the sign had to be clear, given the plethora of signage already in place.

Cllr Rutherford suggested that Cllr Crookshank raise the issue at the Annual Parish Meeting on 23rd May. Mrs Steadman said she could produce a simple yes/no form for those attending the Open Gardens event and Cllr Wallis suggested an insert be put into the next edition of Parish News.

(Mr & Mrs Steadman and Mr Huskisson left the meeting)

11. Finance

11.1 To approve the accounts payable

The accounts were **approved**.

11.2 To approve the bank reconciliation and cash book

The bank reconciliation and cash book were **approved**.

11.3 To consider use of Henry Smith funds for First Aid courses

The Clerk tabled an email from the Red Cross, detailing the different first aid courses available and their cost. After some discussion, it was agreed to ask the Red Cross to run their longer course (four and a half hours) and the Council would invite key people from local businesses and organisations to take part. Suggestions included The George, The Abergavenny and Frant Stores (Cllr Rutherford to speak with them), The Brecknock Arms (Cllr Crookshank), the Cricket Club, the Friendship Group and the Bowls Club (Cllr Madonald-Brown). It was suggested that councillors should also attend. **Action: WR/SC/AMB**

12. To review customised Standing Orders and adopt

The amendments to the model Standing Orders were **agreed** and the Standing Orders were **adopted**.

13. To review customised Financial Regulations and adopt

The amendments to the model Financial Regulations were **agreed** and the Financial Regulations were **adopted**.

14. Safety in the Parish

Cllr Crookshank noted that a number of yellow signs had been put up along Dundale Road, directing traffic towards the Berkeley Homes development. Cllr Rutherford said that yellow signs were allowed to be posted on existing signs with Highways' permission. As some of Dundale Road fell within the Kent boundary, it was suggested that these signs may have been authorised by Kent Highways. However, Dundale Road extends into East Sussex too. It was agreed, therefore, that Cllr Macdonald-Brown would liaise with Highways about this. **Action: AMB**

15. Communications

None.

16. Highways and Lighting

16.1 Lighting in Rushlye Close, Bells Yew Green

Cllr Wallis asked for confirmation as to who Cllr Standley would be liaising with. Cllr Howell confirmed he would be speaking with the Lead Cabinet Member and the Chair of Highways once a petition had been generated.

16.2 To confirm two fingerposts for potential match-funding in 2019/20

In addition to the fingerpost identified for repair at the top of Bartley Mill Lane and Bayham Road, Cllr Rutherford suggested that the fingerpost at the first, right-hand junction on Broadwater Forest Lane be put forward for refurbishment. This was **agreed**. **Action: Clerk**

17. Planning

17.1 To approve the Draft Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 7th May 2019

The Minutes were **approved** and duly signed.

17.2 To consider planning and licence applications:

WD/2019/0817/F – Tethers End, Shernfold Park Farm, Frant, TN3 9DL

Remodelling of the interior layout, with corresponding amendments to the structure and openings, new windows, a new material palette and associated external landscaping.

Councillors discussed the proposals, acknowledging the need for the internal modifications. However, concerns were raised about the proposed external works, given the site's location within the Conservation Area and AONB and the proximity of the site to nearby Grade II and II* listed buildings. It was considered that the range of materials and breadth of the colour palette was inconsistent with neighbouring properties and at odds with the East Sussex aesthetic. It was agreed that the character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area would not be preserved through these proposals.

Turning to other planning-related matters, Cllr Howell said she had been approached by the Nevill Estate with reference to the delivery of a zebra crossing across the A267, stipulated in a condition attached to the Fern Close (phase II) planning permission. The Estate informed Cllr Howell that ESCC Highways did not support the provision of a crossing, despite the Estate providing the funds and suggested that these funds be given over to the Parish Council, such that it could deliver the crossing. It was agreed that this scenario was not acceptable and that the Estate should implement the crossing, It was agreed, however, that the Parish Council would do all it could to bring pressure to bear on Highways over this matter. Cllr Howell said that Cllr Standley was intending to liaise with Cabinet Members about this to understand why Highways would not support the crossing.

Cllr Howell raised a second issue concerning proposals for a large residential development at Little Mount Farm, adding that the agent had approached herself and Cllr Standley, seeking separate meetings with each. They had, instead, met with the agent together. She noted that the site is not identified as a development site in the Draft Local Development Plan and it is within the AONB. Cllr Crookshank expressed his concern at the ever-increasing encroachment of development toward Bells Yew Green, noting that the village could soon become more akin to a suburb of Tunbridge Wells. Cllr Rutherford noted that district and borough councils had a duty to cooperate with one another to deliver housing.

18. Horizon scanning

Cllr Wallis told the Council that the village hall in Bells Yew Green had received £900 from Wealden District Council to fund litter-picking exercises in the Parish. Cllr Macdonald-Brown added that the litter picking group in Little Bayham had received £300. He noted that the equipment (including high-vis vests, litter pickers, warning road signs, etc) was stored at the village hall and other groups in the Parish were welcome to use them. Cllr Luther suggested that teenagers could get involved, perhaps through the church youth groups. Cllr Howell said she would speak with a neighbour about finding volunteers to litter pick in Frant and Cllr Crookshank said he would raise it at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Action: JH

19. Chairman's announcements & correspondence for noting

Cllr Rutherford referred again to the letter from a local resident concerning the roof tiles on the Victoria Well. It was agreed that the Council would write a letter to the parent who had agreed to fix the tiles.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Howell raised the issue of parking on the green in Frant, noting that despite letters having been sent to those houses on and near the green and the various 'no parking' signs, people were continuing to park on top of the grass or directly up against it. It was noted that Mr Huskisson had agreed to consider options for deterring parking; Clerk to follow this up.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Rutherford informed the Council that the legal documents for the new green in Eridge were now complete. He confirmed it amounted to a 99-year lease at a peppercorn rent and that the Council would not sign the lease until planning permission had been received.

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

Cllr Macdonald-Brown noted that Network Rail's response to the Clerk's email about the broken downpipe at the railway bridge in Bells Yew Green had been unsatisfactory.

Cllr Rutherford reminded councillors that with the fête season up and running, various signs would no doubt be placed throughout the Parish. He advised councillors that if they felt the sign posed a danger, they could remove it and store it. Cllr Wallis said there was an advert placed in a verge in Bells Yew Green that had been there for some time. It was agreed that advert consent should be sought if it is intended to be a permanent feature; in the meantime, it was suggested that the sign be removed.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 9.25pm.

ACTION	BY WHOM
To ask Treework to carry out a review of various trees on the green.	Clerk
To prepare a suggested phasing and budget for the various solutions to the erosion on the green, in order of priority.	DH
To invite local, key people to attend First Aid course.	WR/SC/AMB
To initiate funding application for repairs to fingerposts.	Clerk
To speak with Highways about the yellow signs on Dundale Road, connected with the Berkeley Homes development.	AMB
To clarify ownership of the lamp on the A26 and confirm either way with Strutt and Parker.	Clerk
To write to local resident about repairing the roof tiles to the Victoria Well.	Clerk
To liaise with Mr Huskisson about options for deterring parking on the green.	Clerk
To liaise with neighbours about garnering volunteer support for a litter picking group in Frant.	JH