

FRANT PARISH COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FRANT PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT ERIDGE VILLAGE HALL, ERIDGE GREEN ON WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH 2017 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Rutherford Chair
 Cllrs Mrs Best, MacDonald-Brown, Wright, Stevens
 Rosie Karim Clerk
 County Cllr Standley

1. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs Howell, Mrs Kinley, Mrs Hutchings, Breese and Rowland. 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 minutes of the Full Council Meeting on 22nd February 2017 as a true record

The minutes of the meeting were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

4. To determine matters arising from the previous minutes for updating and noting

4.1 Re: the fenced-in area of land at Mr Burgess' property - it was agreed to remove this from the agenda for now. Cllr Rutherford will continue to keep an eye on the situation and report back with any updates.

4.2 The Clerk is arranging website training for after the internal audit in April. Completed.

4.3 The Clerk noted that Reverend James had suggested some names to be added to the UKPN list of residents who may be vulnerable in the event of a power cut. Clerk to inform UKPN.

Action: Clerk

4.4 Fingerposts on the green. Carried forward.

4.5 Cllr MacDonald-Brown circulated website information about the Gatwick flightpath and councillors commented on the consultation. Completed.

4.6. The Clerk noted that enforcement had taken a first look at the kerbs along BYG Road. Cllr Standley forwarded some photographs of the kerbs to the Clerk and she will now forward these to the enforcement officer for further consideration.

Action: Clerk

4.7 The Clerk said she had written to the BYG Society to confirm the status of the internal road network at Broomfield as being unadopted. Completed.

4.8 Inserts re: local and crime and security will now be a regular feature in Frant Parish News. Completed.

4.9 The Clerk confirmed she had written to Highways to chase the outcome on various points raised at the SLR but had not received a direct response. Although some points have been actioned by the Highways Steward and wider team, there remain other actions outstanding.

4.10 The Clerk confirmed that ESCC should now be in receipt of the request and payment for the new grit bin for BYG. Clerk to chase.

Action: Clerk

4.11 The Clerk noted she had written to Wealdlink informing them of the Council's decision to cease funding. Completed.

- 4.12 The Clerk said she had spoken with Frant PO about changing the way in which Henry Smith recipients could use their funds. The PO was reluctant to change the current system as it would result in a lot more work, administratively. It was agreed to leave the system as it is. Completed.
- 4.13 Cllr Kinley had agreed to measure the green at BYG to determine the number of posts needed, in order to deter people parking around it. Carried forward. **Action: CK**
- 4.14 The Clerk confirmed that she had written to both Air Ambulance and The Samaritans re: their requests for donations. Completed.
- 4.15 The Clerk confirmed that the benches along the BYG Road had now been removed and the bench on the green in BYG had been repaired. Completed.

5. Public forum

There were no members of the public present.

6. To receive reports of County and District Councillors

County

Cllr Standley noted that, up to 2015, the county’s economy had grown some 5.2%, against 2.9% elsewhere and he said there was a considerable level of new business establishing itself in the county.

Cllr Standley also noted that he was advocating for different ways to administer the Apprenticeship Levy and the School Funding Foundation, in order to make them more inclusive and fair.

District

Cllr Rutherford advised that Wealden DC had re-issued the Draft Local Plan. Assuming its approval at Full Council the following week, Cllr Rutherford noted it would then be subject to a period of consultation, in which the Parish Council could get involved. He noted a key headline of the revised Draft Local Plan was that the number of dwellings proposed had been decreased to 11, 400 - the most number of dwellings considered viable in terms of least impact on the Ashdown Forest, and then with compensation measures attached. He noted that the Plan period for new housing had been brought forward to 2028 (rather than the previous 2037) to allow for the impact on the Ashdown Forest to be reassessed. He explained that the level of nitrates affecting the Forest was far exceeding the threshold and that the number of car journeys (which contribute to this level) were much more than had been previously thought, particularly along the A22.

Cllr Rutherford noted that a recent appraisal of Sussex Police had indicated it ‘required improvement’ and it had been assessed as lacking in areas such as neighbourhood policing, social disorder, petty theft, etc.

7. Finance

7.1 To approve accounts payable

Accounts Payable – March 2017

Payee	Item	Chq no	Amount
Frant CEP School (ESCC)	Contribution to school crossing	2909	£375.00
Swatlands	Repair of 2 no benches	2910	£250.00
Frant with Eridge PCC	FPN contribution	2911	£650.00
R.Karim	Salary, mileage & expenses	2912	£906.96
HMRC	Tax & NI	2913	£6.76
N. McGregor-Gould	Repair of 1 no bench & bus shelter cleaning x 3 months	2914	£557.00
J.Steadman	Contribution to Open Gardens event	2915	£50.00
Frant Memorial Hall	Hall hire x 5	2916	£60.00
TreeWork	Visual Tree Inspection	2917	£288.00
SLCC	CILCA registration fee	2918	£250.00
		TOTAL	£3,393.72

The accounts to be paid were approved.

7.2 To approve bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliation for March was approved. The Clerk also tabled two other items: a review of the budget (year to date and predicted) and total income received and expected in 2016/17. Both were considered by councillors and approved (appended to end of these draft minutes). The Clerk noted that these and other financial documents would soon be displayed on the website, to meet transparency and openness objectives.

8. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Rutherford noted that the development of the Neighbourhood Plan would need to be done so within the context of the new Draft Local Plan. He suggested that the Annual Parish Meeting would be a good opportunity to recruit volunteers to assist with the Neighbourhood Plan process. Cllr Wright suggested the meeting should be better advertised this year, perhaps with a more eye-catching advert in Parish News. Councillors agreed and noted that posting leaflets through letterboxes (ideally at the same time as Parish News is delivered) would also help to encourage people to attend.

Action: Clerk/CK

9. Update on risk assessment and the Asset Register

Cllr Rutherford tabled a list of assets within the Parish with their corresponding details and ward. He suggested that individual councillors volunteer to assess a series of items each on a regular basis and report back to the Council. This will be on a monthly or quarterly basis, or even semi-annually, depending on the asset. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the list of assets and councillors would respond via email with their chosen items. Each councillor would then assess these assets in time to report back to the April meeting. Cllr Stevens suggested that photographs of each asset be taken by each councillor so that, as with the fingerposts, a library of images could be generated. This was agreed and it was noted that this would assist the Council in assessing any deterioration in a given asset over time and would also be useful in terms of insurance.

Action: All

10. Safety in the Parish (MR)

Councillors discussed the issue of parking around the green in BYG, particularly noting their concerns of a recent report of abusive and threatening behaviour experienced by a representative of the BYG Society as he tried to deter drivers from parking there.

11. Highways and Lighting (SH)

11.1 To discuss new bollards and chevrons installed along the A267, near Frant

Cllr Rutherford noted that he had received a number of complaints about the new signage at Pocock’s Gate. Cllr Standley noted that naming it as a settlement in turn enabled the possibility of future interventions by Highways to slow down traffic in this location.

Cllr Rutherford said he had also received quite a few complaints about the installation of a number chevron signs and bollards on the hill up toward to Frant village. Councillors agreed that their provision seemed excessive and that they were inconsistent with the character of this particular part of the A267 and the approach to the village. Cllr Rutherford noted that the signage at the entrance to Frant (on approach from the Mark Cross direction) had not been standardised.

It was agreed that the Council would prefer to have more advance detail about such proposals in the future, in order that it might comment before the works are implemented.

11.2 To review results from the Bells Yew Green speed surveys and to discuss future surveys

Cllr MacDonald-Brown noted that the speed surveys had been conducted in two unrestricted speed areas. Cllr Rutherford noted that, as the majority of the speeds recorded were shown to be within the speed limit, Highways would be very unlikely to intervene. Cllr MacDonald-Brown pointed out that the results of the surveys did not take into account other risk factors, such as any water across the road potentially turning into ice, pedestrians in the road because of the lack of pavements, the double bends, deer, and so on. Cllr MacDonald-Brown agreed to raise this at the next SLR Meeting.

Action: AMB

Commissioning a speed survey outside Frant Memorial Hall was discussed and it was concluded that it would likely render similar results to those carried out in BYG. It was concluded that regular Speed Watch efforts might act as a deterrent over time. Cllr Rutherford considered that a 20mph zone in the village should also be explored.

(Cllr Standley left the meeting at 8.15pm).

12. Green Spaces (DW)

12.1 To discuss the proposals for the green presented at the last meeting

The Councillors discussed the proposals for ‘greening’ the green, including leaving the margins uncut (e.g. around the edges of the green and near Mastingate) and implementing a pictorial meadow. Cllr Stevens noted the two types of pictorial meadow whereby one draws on a specified range of wildflowers and the other uses flowers indigenous to the area. It was agreed that the latter was preferable. Cllr Rutherford noted the emergence of heather on the edge of the green and suggested the Council liaise with Wealden DC for support to encourage the growth of heather through their biodiversity programme.

Action: Clerk

The proposals were agreed in principle but it was suggested that the introduction of the meadow may be too late for this year. It was agreed that more information would be sought from the Frant Garden Society about the timescale for the meadow. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr Best agreed to clear the overgrown planting on and around the Eridge sign. **Action: VB**

The issue of dog mess in Frant was discussed and Cllr Wright said it was not a problem on the green, but had been raised as an issue in the churchyard. The Clerk noted that dog mess was a reoccurring problem along Church Lane, posing a particular hazard for the school children using this route to school from the High Street. Cllr Rutherford agreed to establish whether a dog bin could be attached to an existing post along here, that was without a sign at present. **Action: WR**

12.2 To discuss various areas of erosion around Frant village, notably near Stables Cottage and Mastingate

It was agreed to carry this item forward to a future meeting.

12.3 To review parking against the edge of the green in Bells Yew Green

Again, it was agreed to carry this item forward, pending more information about the number of posts required.

12.4 Cricket pitch

Cllr Rutherford noted that the Council had received an email from a resident opposite the green, adjacent to Frant Court, complaining about errant cricket balls. A video of a cricket match was attached to the email, appearing to show her neighbour's property being struck and the subsequent reaction of the cricketers. The email said the issue had been forwarded to a solicitor, who would be writing to the Cricket Club and copying in the Council. To date, no correspondence has been received.

It was agreed that Cllr Rutherford would engage the Cricket Club in discussion about this and seek an agreement establishing with whom the liability would lie in the event of a claim. **Action: WR**

12.5 To consider advice and quotation for works to trees on the green in Frant

Referring to the recent recommendations by Treework, Councillors noted that the sycamore tree at the far end of the green was diseased and in need of pollarding. Rather than undertake lengthy and expensive investigations of the tree and particularly in view of the potential risk it poses to users of the park, it was agreed that the tree should be felled, subject to any consent required from Wealden DC. It was also agreed that whether a replacement tree should then be planted in its place would be discussed at a later date. **Action: Clerk**

13. Communications (CK)

13.1 Annual Parish Meeting

Cllr Rutherford said he would be addressing a number of issues at the meeting on 25th May, including the green, open gardens event, trees, the centenary in 2018 and the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Stevens agreed it was a good opportunity to discuss 'greening' of the village given that the Council had recently acquired the green.

14. Planning Matters (VB)

14.1 To make recommendations about Planning Applications received:

WD/2017/0413/F – Edgend, Shernfold Park, Frant, TN3 9DL

New single-storey garage and high timber automatic roller gate at 1.8m.

Although it was acknowledged that the site is in a relatively private location, the councillors raised concerns about both the proximity of the new garage to the road and also whether the narrow space in front of the garage allows sufficient space for a car to easily manoeuvre. The councillors also questioned whether this is the right location for the garage within what is a relatively large site.

Notwithstanding these concerns, the Council raises no objection.

WD/2017/0436/F – Barelands Farm Cottages, Bells Yew Green Road, Frant, TN3 9BD

Single-storey extension.

The Council supports this application.

WD/2017/0437/F – 3 Rushlye Cottage, Hawkenbury Road, Frant, TN3 9AP

Single-storey rear extension including conversion of outbuilding

The Council supports this application.

The Clerk tabled an additional planning application for consideration, as follows:

WD/2017 /0419/F – Rowden Farm, Down Lane, Frant, TN3 9HP

Proposed ground floor, first floor extension together with a new porch.

The Council supports this application.

14.2 To note decisions from Wealden District Council and appeal decisions

Nil.

Cllr Best noted two issues for further investigation with Wealden DC. The first concerned the building in the woodland that had recently been demolished following intervention by the enforcement team. However, she said the building's foundations still remained, which would potentially allow for another building in the future to be quickly erected.

The second issue concerned the movement and deposit of some sort of waste at a farm along the A267. It was agreed that the Clerk follow both these issues up with the relevant authorities.

Action: Clerk

15. Chairman's announcements and correspondence for noting

Cllr Stevens noted that the Eridge Fair was fast approaching and Cllr Rutherford agreed that the Council should start to consider what shape its stall there would take. It was agreed to discuss this at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

16. Correspondence

Cllr MacDonald-Brown queried whether the woodland building at Bush House near Hawkenbury Road had been investigated. The Clerk said she had not yet had a response from Wealden DC and would chase this.

Action: Clerk

17. Urgent issues at the discretion of the Chairman for noting or inclusion on a future agenda
Nil.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:25pm.